

# Improving data on Violence Against Children in the UK

**Izzy Millward**

Senior Researcher

Office for National Statistics (ONS)

[Isobel.millward@ons.gov.uk](mailto:Isobel.millward@ons.gov.uk)



# Current data and gaps

Indicators from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW):

Prevalence of lifetime childhood violence (sexual, emotional, physical)

Prevalence and nature of (non-sexual) violence against children (aged 10-15) in the past year

Evidence gaps:

Comparable measure of VAC for children under the age of 18

Experience of VAC in non-household populations

Current scale of sexual violence in the UK

# Improving measure of VAC in the UK

1. Transforming the children's CSEW to push-to-web data collection
2. Feasibility study to determine whether a new national survey could provide an effective source of data on the current scale of child abuse

# 1. Push-to-web data collection for the Children's CSEW

# Measuring VAC through push-to-web data collection



## Separating data collection from adults

Creates opportunity for increasing the achieved sample of children

Opportunity to expand survey to children aged 16 and 17



## Sampling children from administrative data sources

Opportunity to include children in non-household populations

Auxiliary information used to oversample small populations



## Developing an online self-complete questionnaire

Re-developed interviewer administered questions for self-completion

Cognitive testing with children



## Safeguarding children during online data collection

Survey responses lock down as survey progresses

Targeted signposting to support service

## Next steps

- Evaluation of pilot – explore response rate and data quality to inform decision around future of push-to-web data collection for the children's CSEW
- Ongoing questionnaire development and cognitive testing with children and young people

# 2. Child abuse feasibility study

# Child abuse feasibility study – survey design

- Phase 1 – qualitative research, stakeholder engagement and public consultation
- Phase 2 – development of questionnaire, safeguarding approach and carrying out a pilot



## Questionnaire

- Community violence
- Intimate partner violence
- Physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- Witnessing domestic abuse
- Criminal exploitation
- Risk & protective factors



## 11-16 years school

- In classroom, self-completed on a tablet – security screens
- Year 7 & 8 - opt out permission
- Year 9 onwards – provide own consent



## 16-25 years Online

- Postal invitation letter
- Untraceable link
- Survey locks down as questions answered
- All participants provide own consent



# Developing a safeguarding approach

- Mixed views on safeguarding approach and anonymity of survey
- Agreed design: Survey will be anonymous

No mandatory referrals

Safeguarding built in throughout the survey

Children have autonomy over type of support received

- Developed through consultation with experts, professionals, ethics boards, and focus groups and 1:1s with children and young people, both with and without known experience of childhood violence

# Questions?