

# A preliminary evaluation of presenter effects in the delivery of abuse prevention interventions: Teacher and survivor perspectives

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*Few efficacy studies have explored the differences between types of presenter delivering school-based child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention programmes. This study was motivated by research which indicated that survivor presenters received substantially more disclosures of abuse than teacher presenters. Survivor experience suggested presenter beliefs about abuse may underlie these differences. The current exploratory study seeks to compare the beliefs of teachers and adult CSA survivor presenters in delivering programmes. An exploratory in-depth quasi-qualitative analysis is conducted on interview data from three guidance teachers, three primary school teachers and three adult survivors (CSA) following delivery of the Violence is Preventable programme. Findings suggest adult survivors held a more explicit goal and higher expectations of disclosure, sought to encourage more energised and interactive group processes and were more likely to emphasise children's rights and safety. Teachers valued having survivors available for advice but were concerned at times about pupil behaviour. Both teachers and survivors thought parents needed to be more involved in the programme. Recommendations include increased opportunity for programmes to be delivered by adult survivors alongside teachers, with evaluation embedded into everyday programme delivery.*

**Keywords:** child abuse interventions; presenter effects; adult survivors; child sexual abuse.

SCHOOL-BASED CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (CSA) prevention programme efficacy studies indicate programmes are delivered by a wide range of different types of presenters. Over the past 20 years efficacy studies of CSA prevention programmes have included teachers presenting on their own (Briggs & Hawkins, 1994; Jacobs & Hashima, 1995; MacIntyre & Carr, 1999; Madak & Berg, 1992; Warden et al., 1997); teachers and school counsellors (Sylvester, 1996); teachers and high school students (Oldfield et al., 1996); unspecified professional facilitators (Ko & Cosden, 2001; Pohl & Hazzard, 1990; Taal & Edelaar, 1997; Tutty, 2000); trained volunteers, counsellor and school nurse (Blumberg et al., 1991); community workers (Herbert et al., 2001); mental health professionals (Hazzard et al., 1990); theatre group (Tutty, 1994); actors and trained facilitators (Casper, 1999); trained volunteers and social service staff (Telljohann et al., 1997); and adult survivors

of CSA (Barron & Topping, 2013). Interestingly, none of these studies included educational psychologists as presenters and no theoretical underpinning for the choice of presenter was provided in any of the studies (Topping & Barron, 2009).

Despite the diversity of presenters, few school-age efficacy studies have examined the differential impact of who leads abuse prevention lessons. For those studies that have taken 'presenter' into account, differential rates of disclosure have been found. Hazzard et al. (1990) found rates of disclosures differed depending on whether the lessons were delivered by the teacher or by an outside consultant. Barron and Topping (2013) found that when survivors of abuse compared with teachers presented the *Tweenees* programme, higher levels of different types of disclosures occurred. Disclosures of CSA, however, tended to be small in number and made in private. In the absence of school-age studies addressing

presenter variables, limited pre-school studies suggest that teachers and parents can deliver abuse prevention programmes effectively (Wurtele et al., 1992a, 1992b).

Perhaps because the majority of CSA prevention programmes are delivered by teachers in schools, most literature reviews and meta-analyses of efficacy studies omit presenter as a factor for analysis. The main message from reviews suggest teachers deliver abuse prevention lessons at a primary prevention level, that is, increased personal protection knowledge and perceived gains for children in behaviour and self-confidence. Typically, only small numbers of child sexual disclosures are made and these tend to occur beyond the classroom context. Specific factors which are identified as influencing programme efficacy include longer duration programmes with booster sessions, instruction involving modelling, rehearsal and feedback and multi-systemic programmes that involve training others in the child's social network, for example, relatives (MacIntyre & Carr, 2000).

Although not an evaluation of the impact of different types of presenters, a small number of efficacy studies have sought to assess presenter behaviour in relation to programme protocols. Warden et al. (1997) used a teacher questionnaire after the programme had been delivered to assess the extent to which teachers adapted the *Kidscape* programme. Variations were found in method of delivery; for example, some children received discussion while others also received role-play, there was a wide variation in the number of sessions delivered (10 to 20 sessions) and only some children received follow-up sessions. The findings, however, are limited as retrospective self-report measures are notoriously unreliable. More robustly, Herbert et al. (2001) audio-taped all sessions and a research assistant and community worker completed a checklist which checked whether the activities and specific objectives had been delivered as planned. A high degree of conformity was reported across the experimental groups,

with 58 of the 61 content elements of the programme being delivered with integrity for all the presentations. Finally, Barron and Topping (2010, 2011) utilised a novel framework to assess the nature of facilitative or restrictive presenter communication on children's disclosures. The observation framework included non-verbal (including posture), para-verbal (tone of voice) and verbal communication (length of turns, type of communicative initiative and response). The study found that children tended to make more frequent and longer initiatives as well as disclose more when presenter communicative behaviour included open body language, warm voice tones, open questions and frequent, affirming verbal feedback.

In summary, it appears that a significant omission in CSA prevention programme efficacy literature is an exploration of factors associated with the nature and type of presenter. School-based studies have not only failed to explore presenter capacity to follow programme protocols but perhaps more importantly have failed to explore the potential differences in programme outcomes with different types of presenter. As a consequence, the current study begins to explore possible reasons underpinning why presenter effects may be a more significant factor in the effectiveness of CSA abuse prevention programmes than has hitherto been realised. This exploratory study aims to identify a range of presenter factors that may influence programme outcomes. Specifically the study investigates the thinking underlying programme delivery of two types of presenters – teachers and adult survivors of child sexual abuse. By utilising in-depth interviews and a quasi-qualitative approach to analysis, the current study identifies previously unidentified differential aspects of presenter mind sets that could potentially influence programme outcomes. As well as informing the development of future research questions and design, it is anticipated such information is useful to educational psychologists offering advice on the

application of abuse prevention programmes in schools. The study utilises a real world approach to research (Robson, 2011) which seeks to be systematic in research design and analysis, embed research into the everyday delivery of programmes and present findings in an accessible style for educational psychologists, teachers, survivors and other professionals in practice.

## **Method**

### ***Participants***

Three primary school teachers, three secondary guidance teachers and three survivors of abuse presenters were interviewed. The latter three were all volunteers for a survivor of a child sexual abuse helpline. All teachers and survivors were purposefully selected because of their experience in delivering and co-delivering the Violence is Preventable (ViP) programme (Matthew, 2007) in schools over at least a three-year period. While survivors had co-delivered over many years together, teachers were new to co-delivering with survivors of abuse.

The ViP programme, over four sessions, aims to enable children to disclose abuse in order for adults to act to keep children safe and to provide appropriate support for abusive experiences. The programme includes content of safe and risky people, places, touch, secrets and situations. Provocative statements are used (for example, 'It's ok to hit a woman') to generate group and class discussion. The length of sessions is designed to fit into the school timetable. All presenters were female and all aged 30 to 40 years. All teachers were middle class while all survivors were working class. All presenters were native to Scotland. All schools ( $N=4$ ) including one secondary and three primary schools were within urban working class areas within a medium-sized Scottish city. All presenters had experience of working with each other.

### ***Interview structure***

An interview was developed for use with presenters in order to gain an understanding of presenter thinking about delivery of abuse prevention lessons (Appendix 1). Questions were developed from survivor and teacher wisdom (for example, the importance of commitment, confidence levels) and from gaps within efficacy study research (for example, the omission of the detrimental impact of programmes, reception of disclosures). All presenters experienced the same semi-structured interview format. A variety of question types were utilised including open and scaling questions. The following issues were explored: self-reported presenter commitment, perceived benefits for pupils and others, a view on co-presenters contribution to facilitating or limiting programme delivery, presenter confidence, presenter response to disclosures, views on the role of parents and perceived detrimental effects of lessons on pupils.

### ***Procedure***

Ethical approval was through the University of Dundee Research Ethics Committee requiring active informed consent. Presenter interviews were piloted to ensure questions were easily understood, maintained presenter attention and measured what they set out to measure. Two teachers and two adult survivors who were not part of the evaluation volunteered to pilot presenter interviews. All interviews were conducted by the researcher. Adult survivor presenters were interviewed at the helpline centre and teaching staff were interviewed in their schools. Only the interviewer and the presenter were present during the interview. Interviews were designed to last 50 minutes to fit into school timetables. All interviews were digitally recorded.

### ***Analysis***

An approach recommended for use by researching psychologists, Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step systematic thematic

analysis, was adapted and used to analyse the data. Adaptation involved transferring each participant's responses into tables for ease of analysis. Each question had its own table with individual teacher and survivor response listed vertically with corresponding response noted horizontally. This structure of laying out the data facilitated eye balling and familiarisation. Familiarisation involved re-reading participants' statements and writing initial ideas for patterns of meaning. Initial codes were generated with presenter statements of meaning collated under each code. Where possible codes were named using participants' words rather than being theory driven. Where there were sufficient numbers of codes they were collated with the set of statements into identified themes (reported in italics); codes and statements were frequency counted and initial codes and themes were reviewed and checked against student statements; themes were named with a rationale for connection to the data. Finally, manuscript drafting and re-drafting enabled a further level of analysis with the identification of exemplar statements for codes. Inter-rater reliability was provided by a second rater independently analysing the data. The second rater was the *Violence Is Preventable* programme author who provided an 'expert' analysis of presenter comments, that is, goodness of fit with the author's mind set. Inter-rater reliability across all questions is communicated as Cohen's Kappa.

## **Results**

The structure of the results section follows the interview question structure and reports on the differences in presenters' commitment, goals, perceptions, confidence and response to disclosure. In short, survivor presenters reported holding higher levels of commitment, broader goals, greater confidence and a more single focus on enabling disclosure. Teachers on the other hand reported having to fit the programme into a stretched and varied timetable. Inter-rater reliability was high at Kappa=0.86. This level of commonality may partly reflect the long-

standing collaborative relationship between the two researchers (10 years).

### ***Differing commitment***

All three survivors rated themselves as 10 out of 10 for commitment as did one primary and one secondary teacher (see Table 1). The other two primary teachers rated their commitment six and the other two guidance teachers rated their commitment eight and nine respectively. In short, the survivors in this small sample reported higher rates of commitment. Reasons given for commitment included the following: 'preventing long term consequences of abuse', 'change attitudes, let children know its appropriate to tell, give younger children someone to tell', 'inviting disclosure, hear it, take it and deal with it', 'not hiding abuse away, one tell all tell', 'the right to a good childhood' and 'kids know the survivor helpline offer a confidential service'. Survivors gave responses that were concrete and specific, numerous and demonstrated a depth of understanding of child protection. In contrast teachers (primary) comments regarding commitment included 'accepted the training', 'valuable experience children need in this day and age, especially in this school' and a 'good idea to talk about but there was a lack of control with the class'. Overall, the teachers gave short single reason responses, potentially suggestive of less informed commitment.

Teachers who rated less than 10 identified the following factors that would raise their commitment: 'smaller groups would help', 'getting more feedback each week' (from co-presenter) and for the teacher scoring six, she felt she 'was told to do it' but 'would have liked the choice'. Although two secondary teachers rated themselves as highly committed their elaborated responses suggested otherwise: 'Given lessons were programmed into our normal delivery of SE lessons, I felt pupils missed out on other things such as computer safety'; 'there was too much of the same kind of personal safety being delivered' and '10 means fully

**Table 1: Summary of perceived differences on outcomes by survivors vs. teachers.**

Area of disagreement	Survivors	Teachers
Commitment (0–10)	10 Importance of disclosure and child safety.	6–10 Valuable experience; good for pupils to talk; other curricular demands.
Goals	Large number and wide range. Communicative context for disclosure.	Narrow range of goals. Awareness raising; place to talk about abuse.
Benefits	For all pupils. Got a 'voice'. Listened to others	¼ to ½ to ¾ of pupils. Awareness raising. Hearing different viewpoints.
Facilitation	Teachers: Managing behaviour; Know the class personally; Deliver the materials.	Survivors: Provided materials and training; More than one person in class to hear pupils; Available for consultation/ advice.
Hindrances	Teachers' intrusive behaviour management. Teachers unprepared for disclosures. Teachers' right or wrong mind set. Survivors – not sufficiently familiar with schools.	Other school demands. Pupil behaviour. Difficulty hearing what pupils said. Limited experience. Need for more lesson planning.
Confidence/skills/knowledge	Very confident.	Quite confident. Need – counselling training, more experience and discussion with parents.
Disclosures (0–10)	7–9 Getting into schools and getting the results. Building relationships with pupils and teachers helps. Record disclosures. Improving our policy on how to respond in schools and when someone discloses something we always learn.	5–6 Lack of experience responding to disclosures. More aware of words I use to respond at the time.
Detrimental effects	None	Pupil behaviour difficulties; increased anxiety; interrupts innocence.

committed when in the classroom delivering the lessons, but there were so many other timed things to do'. The third secondary teacher suggested 'more discussion and support' amongst presenters as a way of encouraging teacher commitment. In contrast to survivors then, teachers reported a range of commitment and reservations.

#### ***Differing goals***

Survivors' goals included 'helping children know the difference they can make, for example, they can change things for the better in an abusive relationship by telling'; 'things they can do to stop escalating the violence... listen all the time for what's being said by pupils that will stop the violence'; 'think for themselves rather than be influenced by others'; 'creating a climate to enable disclosures, for example, bring the playground environment into the classroom... creating chatty casual situation, to enable children able to tell'; 'use a Socratic method to challenge views and get them to challenge one another, for example, about violence; what makes a bully, explore consequences for actions'; 'awareness raising of safe and unsafe situations'; 'teach young people to listen to their feelings and share'; 'what to do if mum or dad don't listen and identify a wider range of people to tell'; 'awareness raising of how others feel about things, for example, not saying things that offend other people'.

Primary teachers' goals covered a narrower range, such as, 'awareness raising of dangers, how to keep safe' and 'what do if harmed', 'create an environment to disclose abuse', 'change their lives to the way they want them to be' and 'aware of right and wrong'. Likewise secondary teachers emphasised 'how common abuse is', 'awareness raising of dangers', 'what to do if harmed', 'create a place to talk about abuse issues' and 'see how pupils reacted'. It appears survivors hold more and a wider variety of child protection goals than teachers delivering the programme. Further, greater emphasis is placed on disclosure for survivor presenters

than for teachers. These were perceived by the expert rater to fit better with the wide ranging programme goals.

#### ***Differing perception of proportion of class gains***

All survivors and one secondary teacher judged all pupils to have benefited from the lessons: 'they heard others' opinions and gave their own opinions as well', 'all stayed interested and got involved in lively discussion', 'the quieter ones got a voice... always someone there to listen to their view', 'everyone took an active part', 'all benefited at varying levels' and 'some could have listened better'.

One teacher and two secondary teachers rated that three-quarters of pupils benefited: 'the boys tend to think they are invincible, boys think they can fight as well', 'a lot know about these things anyway, no one disclosed afterwards', 'they discuss and get points of view across' and 'not sure what will benefit, don't know if it will stick for them or benefit them for the future'. The other two primary teachers rated much lower with two rating half: 'boys went to the "men hit women" (statement) just for the sake of it' and 'some pupils need brought back on board'. One teacher rated only one-quarter benefited from the lessons because the pupils did 'not fully understand the nature of lessons'. In conclusion, survivors believed that all pupils benefited, whereas there was a wide range of teacher perspectives. Survivors appeared to be identifying pupil participant as more of a gain than teachers.

#### ***Differing perceptions of benefits***

Benefits for children as perceived by survivors were wide ranging: 'to be listened to', 'learned strategies for survival', 'a new way of learning/listening to each other', 'see benefits not just dangers in strangers', 'its fun', 'feel safe enough to talk about things' and 'someone to disclose to, including helpline'. Expert rater analysis of survivors' comments indicated survivors recognised the importance of creating a communicative context for enabling disclosures. This was

less apparent from teachers comments. Primary teachers perceptions of benefits for children were at four different levels: 'hearing peers' experiences' and 'that others have different viewpoints', 'awareness raised of dangers', 'awareness raised of agencies' and 'more free to talk to the teacher/ someone to go to'. Not all perceived benefits for children were shared across the three primary teachers. Secondary teachers observed benefits for pupils at three levels: 'information received, awareness raised', 'hear different viewpoints' and 'seeing abuse in different people lives'.

Survivor presenters identified a wide range of gains for teachers in delivering abuse prevention programmes covering three identified themes:

*Communication with children:* 'talk to children differently', 'realised assumptions made about kids may not be accurate' and 'reflected about self and made changes to how being with children'.

*Child protection processes:* 'practice child protection skills', 'more motivated, recognise must do something/hearing child determined to tell/saw it working', 'real life cases to handle', 'can invite outside agency in and it can work' and 'went off and talked about child protection'.

*Quality of lesson delivery:* 'see methods and style of delivery over a few weeks', 'increase in awareness of answers to questions', 'now have materials provided and have learned to use the materials' and 'seeing a different way of doing it, even if didn't like it... out of comfort zone'. These aligned closely to programme aims.

Primary teachers self-reported benefits were themed at four levels: 'know pupils better', 'more aware of agencies roles and that they respond', 'more aware of legal issues' and 'felt more supported'. Secondary teachers saw the benefits for themselves at two levels (competency and relationship): 'to do better next time' and 'to get to know pupils better'.

Survivors reported four main benefits for schools: *closer relationships with the voluntary sector*, 'refer to the helpline'; *independence in delivering lessons*, 'see resources and a new way of doing it, materials spread and adapted throughout the school'; *reduced bullying, the school being a safer place*, 'children disclosing and being properly supported', 'kids listened to and feel more secure', 'more open climate for children to disclose abuse', 'increase awareness and staff more likely to hear those children trying to tell and wanted small group afterwards to support kids'; and *child protection being a topic talked about in school*. Primary teachers perceived the benefits to the school as 'to help colleagues understand children's behaviour better', 'to have the lessons into classes' and for 'staff to be more open to the issue'. Secondary teachers perceived the benefits to school as 'children feeling supported with somewhere for pupils to talk'. Two of the guidance teachers were not sure of any benefits to the school. In summary, survivors seemed to have a greater awareness of benefits for schools or perceived more benefits for schools than school staff.

Survivors perceived the benefits for parents of children and young people in primary as: 'more aware to help children keep themselves safe', 'give their child reassurance... and more likely to tell if bullied', 'more likely to stop sibling bullying', 'incarcerated when caught abusing', 'more peace of mind when children share more and see child differently' and 'more confident and skilled communication different with kids'. Primary teachers were not able to suggest any benefits for parents but commented that some parents were not willing to help and that teachers didn't know if children went home and shared the experience. The same pattern occurred with secondary teachers responses. It would seem there may be a need for some teachers to be more aware of the potential impact of abuse prevention programmes on parents.

### ***Differing perceptions of facilitation***

Perceptions of teacher facilitation were as follows: *Survivor perception* – ‘teachers took part’, ‘followed up content’, ‘managed behaviour’ and ‘knew names when got disclosures’. *Primary teacher perception* – ‘timetabled lessons’, ‘set up groups’, ‘reinforced what said’, ‘made it fun’ and ‘shared from own life’. *Secondary teacher perception* – ‘worked hard’, ‘delivered appropriately’ and ‘familiar with materials’. Presenters perceptions of teachers indicated the main roles were ‘taking part’, ‘managing behaviour’, ‘knowing the class personally’ and ‘delivering the materials’. Survivors communicated a detailed understanding of their role in facilitating the programme: ‘wrote the materials and knew them inside out’, ‘adapted lessons to the class and for pupils with learning difficulties’, ‘delivered the lessons’, ‘supportive of school staff and pupils’, ‘offered to go in and prepare teachers beforehand’, ‘listened to what children were saying’, ‘invited and facilitated discussion’, ‘gave advice on how to deal with disclosures’, ‘gave teachers control of the materials, what include/remove’, ‘let teachers know when coming back’, ‘gave information on helpline if children didn’t want to disclose in school’, ‘gave out pens, pencils, info, provided work and answer sheets’, ‘prepared and ready to deliver’ and ‘let teacher manage class transitions/routines’.

Teachers on the other hand had a much more limited view of survivor facilitation. Primary teachers commented on survivors ‘providing materials with good scenarios’, ‘having more than one person in class to hear pupils’, ‘provided training’ and ‘being available for consultation’. Secondary teachers valued that survivors ‘provided materials’, ‘were available for advice’, ‘prepared the group’ and were ‘helpful when in class’.

### ***Differences in perception of factors limiting programme impact***

Survivors perceived that teachers limited the programme in the following ways: ‘intrusive behaviour management’, ‘unprepared for

disclosures’ and holding a ‘right or wrong answer mindset’. Primary teachers reported that it was ‘difficult to hear what children said sometimes’ as well as ‘having to deal with pupil behaviour’. Secondary teachers felt they had ‘too many things to do and felt had to do it’, that the ‘classroom was too small’ and they themselves had ‘limited personal experience’. Survivors perceived that schools limited programme effectiveness by ‘not allocating enough time’, by ‘being fearful of disclosures’ and by the ‘lack of communication within school’. Primary teachers reported that the programme would be ‘better delivered in a smaller space, taught in too large classes’ and two were not sure how the school limited programme effectiveness. Secondary teachers reported that ‘large class sizes’, ‘other demands’ and ‘similar projects running’ in school all limited programme impact.

In terms of survivors limiting programme impact, survivors noted that there was ‘not enough preparation time with teachers’ and they did ‘not always understanding how schools operate’. Primary teachers were concerned that survivors were ‘not managing pupils’ behaviour’, were ‘not pushing pupils seriously enough and let them talk over each other’ and ‘some of the lessons a bit samey’. Secondary teachers felt ‘some lessons were not planned enough for teachers to deliver’. In short, a range of limiting factors were identified across the three groups of participants. If not addressed, it is suggested that these limitations could undermine programme effectiveness.

### ***Differing confidence levels***

All survivors were ‘very confident’ as was one primary teacher in delivering the programme the following year – ‘easy to deliver, well explained in training, and activities were fun’. The other class teachers were ‘quite confident’ with comments including ‘teachers need training in counseling’, ‘there is a need to deliver the lessons over a longer period’, ‘we know the children better

and the programme needs to be harder hitting' and 'we need to have a discussion with the parents'.

All three secondary teachers were 'quite confident' about presenting the lessons with 'some adjustment in lesson content, for example, inclusion of internet grooming in lessons'. They reported they were 'comfortable with the materials, as had done it three times before. PSE classes, however, are difficult and hard to manage... it goes better in English classes', 'as worked through it, became better at group work and leading' and it was 'difficult managing pupils being enthusiastic and letting others speak, as used to math classes being silent' and 'better in smaller classes'. There may, therefore, be a need to explore ways of increasing teacher confidence with abuse prevention programmes.

#### ***Differing response to disclosure***

Perhaps not surprisingly, survivors rated themselves more confident in receiving disclosures either within or beyond the classroom. One rated this at nine, 'every confidence in receiving disclosures', while the other two rated seven to eight: 'getting into schools more and getting the results; building relationships with pupils and teachers helps', 'we now count and record disclosures', 'improving our policy on how to respond in schools' and 'when someone discloses something we always learn, increases your experience and adds to your awareness level'. Primary and secondary teachers on the other hand, however, rated between five and six. Comments indicated a considerably lower level of confidence primarily linked to the lack of experience of hearing and responding to disclosures: 'equipped me a bit more, not as scared to accept a disclosure', 'not getting many disclosures'; 'don't know not heard any' and 'made me more aware of words I use to respond at the time'.

#### ***Commonality of view: Parental involvement***

All presenters thought that parents should be actively involved. Six different roles were identified – 'parents already teach personal safety', 'to back up lessons', 'to stop undermining some of the lessons given, for example, not hit back', 'get information about lessons', 'to teach parents before lessons begin and whether parents accept this responsibly' and 'sometimes parents are the danger'.

#### ***Lack of detrimental effects?***

All three survivors reported that the programme led to no detrimental effects for children. Two of the primary class teachers were concerned about pupil misbehaviour, one was concerned children 'did not always commit to an answer' and another noted 'a couple of girls got a bit paranoid about everyone, so I needed to explain this'. Two of the three secondary teachers reported no detrimental effects and one noted that the lessons 'introduced abuse to a wee naïve child that didn't need to know'. Teacher attitudes may reinforce ideas which can potentially undermine children's safety – such as that children should not be informed about abuse prevention as it stops them being naïve and innocent.

#### **Discussion**

Teacher and survivor responses in interview indicate differing mind sets underpinning the delivery of programmes. This was expressed through differing levels of commitment, differing programme goals, identifying different expected benefits for pupils, perception of different gains for teachers and schools, differences in understandings in the roles of facilitation of partners and differences in experience and confidence in responding to disclosures. Indeed there appear to be remarkably few issues of commonality other than believing that abuse prevention programmes should be delivered in schools, that they benefit pupil safety, that they appear to do little harm and that they require the active

involvement of parents. Given the disparity of views expressed, it is all the more concerning that presenter effects have failed to be a factor addressed within programme efficacy literature.

Specifically, indications are that survivors offer a unique voice in the delivery of abuse prevention programmes. Survivors communicated a strong focus on preventing others from being abused and encouraged early disclosures from children, perhaps because of their experience of the long-term consequences caused by abuse. It is suggested that teachers may struggle to have this single focus. Survivor presenters may be able to apply their negative childhood experiences positively within preventative work through their awareness of the different ways that children can be affected. For example, as one survivor stated: 'the ways some abused children try to disclose, the behaviour some display, the creative ways children hide the abuse, how children can split themselves up, forget, distance or live in different compartments of their mind and the too many reasons for abused children maintaining silence'.

Survivors appeared to work from the starting position that there 'will be children present within most classes who have been or are being abused'. It is not clear that teachers have this same starting position. The survivors also held the beliefs that 'some children are just waiting to be asked, some do not want to tell, particularly those suffering severe abuse and many will lie to protect the abusers'. Again such beliefs were not apparent from teacher responses. The survivors also believed that 'even if a child does not tell, there can be value over time for the child knowing that an adult cared enough to notice them or ask'. This was reported as a factor in healing. Interestingly, survivors reported they were 'attuned to identifying other survivors, even children'. They spoke of being 'good at spotting a child, making eye contact and letting the child know that they know'.

Teachers and other professionals, of course, may also be survivors. They may, however, be less likely to disclose the abuse they experienced, may have not taken time to heal and may be uncomfortable with abuse being discussed in class. It may be that the myths about survivors and the shame is too powerful for some. From one survivor's perspective, there was 'nothing worse than trying to run an abuse prevention session with kids when there is an adult with unresolved issues present'. It is unknown whether this was the case in this study. What this may mean is that not all survivors who are teachers may be ready or able to deliver or to be part of abuse prevention work with children.

### ***Limitations***

This study has a number of limitations. It utilised a very small sample size which may not be representative of the general populations of teachers and survivors. This makes it difficult to generalise findings beyond the study. Further, there was no assessment of the influence of culture and socioeconomic background on middle-class teachers and working class survivor responses. All teachers in this study were middle-class and all survivors were working-class, and the study was conducted with an urban working-class school population. As presenters were a similar age it was not possible to explore whether teachers and survivor presenters of different age groups may yield different responses. Since all presenters were experienced in delivering programmes there was no assessment of differential experience of programme presenting. Such data may have been informative. While participant responses indicated that interviews elicited opinion and experience, it may be that responses were constrained or biased in some way by the focus of the questions asked. Teachers, for example, may have needed more prompts to enable them to think more deeply about issues that were more transparent to survivors of abuse. Future research may need to consider the value of differential prompts for different types of presenters.

In addition, the causes of any differential outcomes of teacher and survivor presenters require further exploration. For example, in delivering a programme like this teachers hold a complex role. Unlike survivors, teachers are part of a child's ongoing experience, often over a period of years, and they also have a role which is based on authority. Survivors are visitors and they are not part of the structure of authority to which a child must respond.

A further limitation is that as this was a preliminary study no views were sought from the recipients of abuse prevention programmes, that is, parents and children. Future studies would need to explore different stakeholders' perceptions of programmes delivered by different presenters. Finally, there is a need for the development of theory underpinning the choice of abuse prevention presenter. The current paper suggests such theory should include the importance of presenter belief about abuse and the resultant impact on programme effectiveness.

### **Conclusions**

Within this small sample, survivors and teacher presenters held different beliefs about the delivery and impact of CSA prevention programmes. While the teachers had a concern for child safety, responses indicate they can experience anxiety about classroom management and behaviour which could potentially undermine programme goals, especially programmes similar to the ViP programme, which seek to energise children to enable them to share with each other. The survivors on the other hand reported no such anxiety and actively encouraged children to talk amongst themselves. Survivor responses indicate a focus on creating communicative environments for enabling disclosures. In contrast, while reporting the importance of disclosure, teachers tended to emphasise awareness-raising. Given the diversity of responses, especially across and at times within groups, indications are that presenter effects are

likely to be a significant factor underpinning the effectiveness of abuse prevention programmes. A specific finding of the current study is that survivors may bring a unique perspective to abuse prevention programme presentation which warrants further examination.

### ***Implications for practitioners***

It is suggested that future delivery of abuse prevention lessons should include the involvement of survivors of abuse. Given the discrepancies between survivor and teacher interview responses, where such lessons are to be delivered collaboratively the following should be discussed in training and planning meetings: expectations, goals, commitment, sense of competence, training needs, recognition, recording and reporting of disclosures, how to communicate with each other when concerns arise and the methods of delivery and behaviour management. The authors suggest that educational psychologists are well placed to build relationships with survivor services, negotiate programme delivery partnerships between survivors and schools and facilitate discussion of facilitating and limiting factors.

### ***Recommendations for research***

This study was exploratory in terms of discovering different types of presenter beliefs underpinning programme delivery. Future research needs to evaluate the effectiveness of different types of presenter and identify the range of salient factors which may influence any differential outcomes. Building on the current study, the views of other stakeholders including parents and children need to be studied in relation to such presenter effects. Given the uniqueness of the survivor perspective, there may be value in systematically exploring on a large scale the impact of survivor versus other types of presenter. Finally, educational psychologists are in a position to encourage and facilitate the embedding of evaluation into abuse prevention programme delivery regardless of who delivers.

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**Appendix 1: Interview schedule.**

*How committed were you to delivering the ViP lessons (0–10)?*  
*(i) Reason for level of commitment (ii) What would have made you more committed?*  
*What were you hoping to achieve in delivering the lessons?*  
*What proportion of the class benefited from the lessons?*  
*(i) What benefits do you think the lessons provided for pupils, teachers, schools and parents?*  
*(ii) What was it about each partner listed that facilitated the effective implementation of the lessons – teachers, school, survivors?*  
*What was it about each partner listed that limited the effectiveness of the lessons – teachers, school, survivors?*  
*How confident are you to run the ViP lessons next year?*  
*Rate how much better are you at receiving and responding to disclosures because of the lessons? (where 0 is 'very much better' and 10 is 'not at all better')*  
*What role do you think parents should play in a personal safety lessons?*  
*What detrimental effects did you notice the lessons had on any pupils?*  
*What do you think would make the lessons more effective?*

## References

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