



West Yorkshire

# Violence Reduction Partnership

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## IVISON TRUST PARENT LIAISON OFFICERS (PLO) EVALUATION

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Final report: March, 2024



protecting  
children, supporting  
families

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***Authors:***

***Dr Jonathan Hobson, Dr Daniel Ash, Dr Phillip Tyson, Dr Kerry Rees – EAP Research consultancy***

***Dr Sarah Hall – Ivison Trust***

## 1. Executive summary

This research was commissioned by the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) to evaluate the Ivison Trust (Previously known as PACE) Parent Liaison Officer (PLO) service. It was conducted by EAP Research, Pro Public, and an Ivison Trust qualitative between December 2023 and February 2024, and consisted of 43 survey responses from parents/carers that are or had been engaged with Ivison Trust, 17 survey responses from agencies that work with Ivison Trust, nine interviews with Ivison Trust employees, and a range of secondary data collected by the Ivison Trust programme. The work comprises a process and outcome evaluation, conclusions and recommendations. Full details can be found in the mains sections of the report, and we provide a summary of key issues here:

### Process evaluation summary

The process evaluation of the Ivison Trust PLO programme reveals several key findings that underscore its effectiveness and areas for enhancement. PLOs and their supervisors work effectively in safeguarding young people and disrupting exploiters, supported by robust management and clinical supervision, with their enthusiasm significantly enhancing their performance. The referral process, although dynamic, faces challenges like varying quality and numbers, particularly from schools, which has been partly addressed by integrating PLOs more directly into the process. Needs assessments and action plans are tailored and dynamic, revisited regularly to adapt to changing circumstances, though gaps exist in police training regarding missing children. The programme aims for a harm reduction model where success is defined by the safety and non-exploitation of children, creating achievable and positive outcomes. Offboarding is well-structured, offering continued support through online forums and other services, but there is a need for increased engagement from educational, health, and mental health services. Additionally, therapeutic support and a weekend support line have been beneficial, with potential for expansion through enhanced funding to include more PLOs, extended services, and possibly emergency accommodation, improving early intervention efforts and reducing pressure on local authorities. Feedback from partner agencies and parents has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting effective communication, trust, and a valued partnership, affirming the program's impact and areas for further development.

## **Outcome evaluation summary**

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The outcome evaluation of the Ivison Trust PLO programme has demonstrated significant positive impacts, enhancing the well-being of both parents/carers and children, and improving the skills of parents/carers in managing child exploitation. Key findings include a marked increase in parents' confidence in protecting their children, along with noticeable improvements in mental well-being, social connectivity, and parenting positivity. Moderate enhancements in stress management, future optimism, and physical health were also reported. Children showed significant benefits in educational engagement, emotional and physical well-being, and relationship improvements, although results were mixed regarding the reduction of social care needs, antisocial behaviours, and substance use. The programme has also significantly boosted parents' understanding of child exploitation dynamics, including grooming and trauma effects, and strengthened their trust in PLOs and social care services, albeit to a lesser extent. Referring agencies have positively assessed the program's impact on family dynamics and communication, highly recommending the PLO intervention for its effectiveness in supporting families and enhancing inter-agency collaboration.

## **Cost Benefit Analysis summary**

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The Ivison Trust PLO Programme has been identified as a cost-effective early intervention strategy that not only enhances the quality of life for families and children but also promises substantial fiscal savings across education, healthcare, social care, and the criminal justice system. Key findings demonstrate its broad impact: it addresses educational challenges like absenteeism, potentially reducing associated costs and disruptions; it improves emotional and physical well-being, which may decrease hospital admissions for mental health issues, thus saving on healthcare costs. In social care, the programme reduces demand, thereby averting expensive and complex cases. It has also successfully reduced antisocial behavior and criminal involvement among youth, leading to safer communities and potential savings in criminal justice expenditures. Additionally, the program's impact on reducing drug and alcohol misuse can prevent the escalation of substance-related health issues, contributing to long-term health and public health cost savings. Overall, the cost of the PLO's early interventions is significantly lower than late-stage interventions, highlighting its efficiency and economic benefits in addressing issues before they escalate.

## Areas of Good practice

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PLOs are an effective partnership and support system, working collaboratively with parents and partner agencies to safeguard young people and disrupt exploiters

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PLOs provide effective advocacy and relational safeguarding, helping parents navigate the complexities of child exploitation and maintain relationships with their children.

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There is a dynamic and responsive referral process, referrals coming from diverse sources, including social workers, youth justice services, and education providers.

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There is a comprehensive needs assessment process, which is dynamic and used effectively to gauge and track progress.

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There are Personalized, adaptive, and effective action plans that are developed collaboratively between PLOs and parents.

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There are clear criteria for success based in a harm reduction approach, with outcomes tailored to each family.

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There is a comprehensive offboarding strategy, which is co-created with parents to ensure continued support.

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There is an effective multi-agency engagement that engages with a variety of partner agencies, including social care and police.

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There is an overwhelmingly positive parent and referral agency experience.

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The enhanced therapeutic support programme has been very well received by parents.

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The programme's strategies are flexible and informed by ongoing feedback and data.

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## Development opportunities

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There is a need for greater engagement with the programme from the education sector

There is an opportunity to expand training for police and other agencies.

Although there is a comprehensive referral process, there is a need to improving consistency and quality of referrals received.

Broadening involvement from health services, especially CAMHS, and other relevant agencies to support a more holistic approach.

Scaling up the successful therapeutic support offer.

Improving accessibility and outreach of support services to ensure that more families are aware of and can access this support.

Expanding emergency accommodation options for families needing relocation.

Incorporating further long-term post-engagement support to help address ongoing challenges and the long-term effects of exploitation.

Strengthening partnerships with external agencies, particularly in new areas of work

Focusing on early intervention and prevention

Improving financial data to illustrate benefits/impacts of the programme

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## The impact of proposed funding enhancement

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Expansion of services and reach into more areas in West Yorkshire.

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Enhancement of the successful therapeutic support offering.

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Strengthening early intervention in greater collaboration with schools and community organizations.

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Increasing training and professional development for staff.

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Increasing emergency accommodation services for families needing relocation due to threats from exploiters.

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Broadening community outreach and awareness.

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## Feasibility of future delivery and expansion

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Resource availability, including from diverse sources like government grants, private funding, or partnerships with other organizations.

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Models for increasing staffing and specialized training in child exploitation

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Proportional increases of infrastructure and support systems

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Partnership development, particularly in new geographic areas.

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Further community engagement and awareness to support expansion.

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Adaptability to diverse needs, including different contexts, communities, and demographics.

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Robust evaluation and feedback mechanisms to ensure consistent data collection and evaluation.

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Assessing the impact of expansion on current services.

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## Specific and achievable recommendations

### Supporting PLO Deployment & Expansion

- 1. Co-develop a strategic expansion plan:** to work with partners, including the VRP, to create a detailed plan outlining the geographical areas for expansion, the number of additional PLOs needed, training requirements, and timeline for deployment.
- **Establish partnerships with educational institutions:** as identified across the report, increasing effective collaborations with schools and (potentially also) universities would help with increasing early identification of at-risk children and young people.
- **Recruit and train new PLOs:** Implement a recruitment campaign focusing on attracting candidates with relevant, and diverse backgrounds. Provide comprehensive training on child exploitation, trauma-informed care, and relational safeguarding.

### Improving Programme Monitoring and Performance Monitoring

- 1. Expand the data management system:** Utilize a software solution for data collection, case management, and reporting to streamline processes and improve data accuracy. This can be bespoke or specialist.
- **Feedback mechanism:** Establish a structured feedback mechanism from families and partner agencies to continually assess and improve service delivery.
- **Outcome-based measurement tools:** Develop clear outcome-based measurement tools that align with the program's goals, such as changes in family dynamics, children's well-being, and parental satisfaction.

### Research Tools for Future Evaluations

- 1. Longitudinal studies:** Consider the use of longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of the PLO programme on families and children.
- **Utilization of standardized assessment tools:** Use standardized tools for measuring psychological well-being, family functioning, and child safety to allow for comparison over time and with other similar programs.
- **Cost-Benefit analysis tools:** consider how to integrate cost-benefit analysis methods to evaluate the economic impact and efficiency of the program.

## 2. Introduction

### The evaluation

EAP Research Consultancy and Pro:Public, in partnership with an Ivison Trust qualitative researcher, Dr Sarah Hall, were commissioned to conduct an evaluation of the Ivison trust Parent Liaison Officer (PLO) service. The evaluation began in September 2023, and ended in March 2024.

EAP and Pro:Public oversaw the evaluation process and undertook the survey and secondary data analysis; Ivison Trusts internal researcher undertook the qualitative interviews and their analysis. The team worked together to write the report and present the findings.

The research took the form of a process and outcome (impact) evaluation framework, based on the well-established 'QUALIPREV' framework. This is a mixed-methods framework that uses flexible measures allowing a bespoke model for the PLO evaluation. The analysis focuses on the:

- role and responsibilities of Parent Liaison Officers towards parents;
- integration of Parent Liaison Officers with other agencies;
- outcomes and impacts on children and parents.

The approaches included primary and secondary quantitative and qualitative data, including semi-structured interviews, surveys, and secondary data. Further details on each element of the data collection follows.

### Data collected for the evaluation

**Interview data:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine respondents from Ivison Trust. They were the CEO; Head of Parent Services and Partnerships; PLO team co-ordinator; four Parent Liaison Officers; one Volunteer co-ordinator and therapeutic worker. The interviews ranged from 50 mins to 80 mins. Interview questions included:

- **How well is the PLO process is working**, including: what an average week looks like; how the referral process works, including for parents/carers and partner agencies; the needs assessment; safety plan creation and monitoring; criteria of success case closing, partner agencies.
- **What works about Ivison Trust PLOs**, including: What works well; good practice; key challenges; changes or improvements to the service; measuring what works; distance travelled for parents/carers engaged with Ivison Trust; impacts on issues such as School absence and exclusion, mental health problems, economic inactivity, and anti-social behaviour.

**Survey data:** We conducted two mixed methods online surveys with tailored and standardised questions using Likert scales, sliding scales, multiple choice, and thematic qualitative questions. The first was with parents and carers that had worked or were still working with the Ivison Trust PLO programme; the second was with agencies that interface in some way with the Ivison Trust PLO programme.

- **Parent/Carer survey:** There were 43 responses to the parent/carers survey. Most participants were over 35 years of age, Woman, heterosexual and White / British. Very few reported the

presence of a physical disability or a neurodiverse condition. The relationship status of respondents was varied, as was the number of children they had.

- **Referring partner surveys:** There were 17 responses to the Referring Partner Survey. Responses came from across the four areas in which Ivison Trust PLOs were active.

**Additional and secondary data:** In addition to the primary data, as part of the evaluation we requested and were provided a range of secondary data from the Ivison Trust team. This included:

- Financial data relating to service funding and costs.
- Participation data related to service use.
- Responses from parents as provided on Ivison Trust feedback forms.
- Case study examples from those engaging with the service.

## Reports

An interim report was produced for the VRP in January 2024. This set out the methodological approach, progress to date, and project timelines. This final report is structured around the process and outcome evaluation, combining the quantitative and qualitative data. The following sections include:

- A summary of the Ivison Trust PLO programme
- The process evaluation, exploring the deployment of the programme.
- The outcome evaluation, exploring the impact of the programme.
- Case studies, to illustrate the nature and impact of the programmes work.

## 3. The Ivison Trust PLO programme

### Description and approach

Parent Liaison Officers work with multi-agency partners to tackle child exploitation as an independent source of support and contact for parents and carers whose children are being sexually and criminally exploited external to the family. The PLO programme works in four geographical areas across west Yorkshire: Kirklees, Wakefield, Bradford, and Calderdale.

PLOs liaise between statutory agencies and families to maximise the ability of all parties to safeguard a child at risk of/or being sexually and criminally exploited. PLOs are generally located within multi-agency child exploitation teams. PLOs work in a non-judgemental, anti-discriminatory manner. PLOs work collaboratively with other safeguarding partners and advocate that parents are worked with from a strengths-based approach.

### Aims of the programme

The aims of the programme are:

- To work with multi-agency partners, attend team briefings, and take on referrals of parents whose children are at risk of/or are being sexually and criminally exploited.
- To form and maintain professional, supportive, empowering relationships with the parents/carers affected by child exploitation.
- To liaise on behalf of individual parents/carers.
- To maintain good professional practice and ensure ongoing development.
- To establish, maintain and develop good working relations with professionals and organisations both statutory and voluntary.
- To challenge prejudice towards families affected by sexual and criminal exploitation within the wider community through talks etc.
- To advise other professionals of good practice issues related to working with parents/carers of exploited young people.

### Theory of change

Ivison Trust, along with the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership, are working on a Theory of Change for the programme based on the current deployment model. This considers the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact of the programme's work.

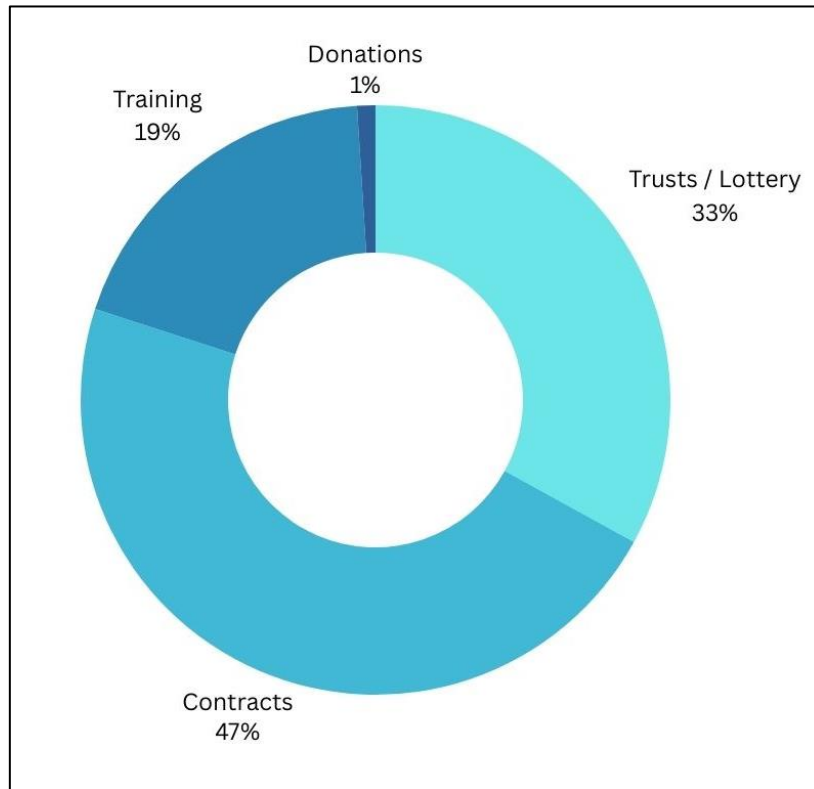
### Cost and Reach of the programme.

#### *Parents supported:*

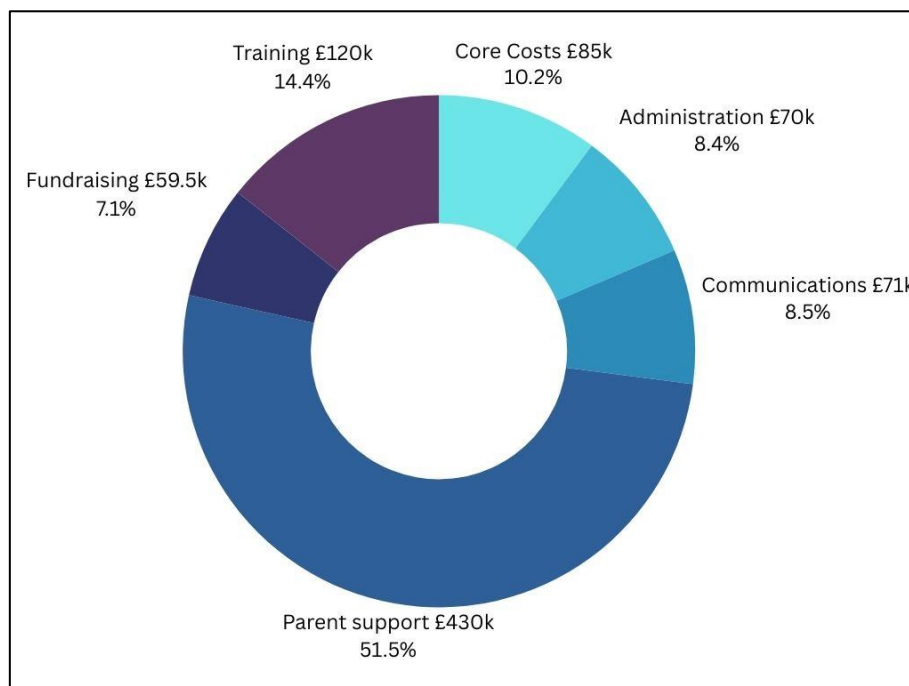
Ivison Trust supported a total of 530 families in 2022/23, with total charity expenditure at £835,400. This equates to a total cost of £1,576 per family.

*Income and Costs for year 2022/23*

**Figure 3: 2022-23 income breakdown**



**Figure 4: 2022-23 expenditure breakdown**



**Expenditure category descriptions:**

- Core Costs includes accommodation, utilities, office costs, finance, legal.
- Administration includes CEO and admin staff.
- Communications includes staff, domain, website costs.
- Parent Support includes 11 PLOs and 2 managers.
- Training includes 2 trainers, guest speakers, awards.
- Fundraising includes CEO input, funding manager, bid writer, digital comms.

The VRP did not fund the Iverson trust (then PACE) in 2022-23, however between April 23-Mar-24, the VRP funded the work for £42,460.

## 4. Process Evaluation

### Process evaluation key findings.

#### *The Ivison Trust PLO approach*

- **The role of PLOs and supervisors:** PLOs are working effectively in partnership with parents and partner agencies, helping to safeguard exploited young people and disrupt exploiters. There is effective support in place to support the roles, including management oversight and clinical supervision. The PLOs themselves are extremely enthusiastic about the role, which supports their effective working.
- **The referral process:** When there are concerns about a child at risk of exploitation, referrals are made into children's social care by area social workers; the youth justice service; parents and occasionally education. At times, there are issues with the numbers of referrals, for example some schools appear reluctant to refer. Similarly, the quality of referrals can vary particularly in risk categories. One strategy to address this in part has been a push to get the PLO at the referrals process and to provide access to social care systems in support of tuis.
- **Needs assessment:** The needs assessment process is dynamic and used effectively both to gauge needs and to chart progress. It is created at the point of referral and then revisited regularly, especially if the risk level is high, and consequently also enables the PLO to chart distance travelled.
- **Action plans:** Action plans are devised collaboratively with the PLO and the parent as early on in their relationship as possible. Plans are bespoke to parents and are revisited and adjusted in line with the parent's changing needs and situation. There is some disconnect when parents report children missing to the police, which highlights the need for police training on child exploitation and responding to missing reports.
- **Criteria for success:** Overall aim is that the children of those engaging with the programme are no longer being exploited, and they and their family are safe; achieving this is challenging. Instead, the team work to what is broadly a harm reduction model in which outcomes are specific to the needs of each family. In this context, the outcomes feel achievable for each family and can contribute to a positive momentum.
- **Offboarding:** Offboarding categories are well defined, enabling the services to understand the trajectory of those engaged. Parents and PLOs co-create an exit strategy and all parents are offered on-going support from Ivison Trust if they so wish. This includes an online parent forum and signposting to other services where relevant.
- **Agencies that are engaged and missing:** although most partners such as children's social care and the police are engaged, an increase in engagement from services and agencies in education, health and CAMHS would support the ongoing work.

#### *The VRP-funded services*

- **Therapeutic support:** All parents who are supported by a PLO are offered access to six free sessions with a therapist whose expertise is in child exploitation and trauma informed practice. This service has had a significant uptake from parents and provides a valuable service both for parents and in aiding the PLOs to better support those with whom they work.
- **Support telephone line:** In response to feedback from parents, Ivison Trust established a popular support line on Friday and Saturday evenings. Parents who are supported by a PLO



can contact Ivison Trust volunteers for emotional support and practical information or can request a call back from the volunteers on these evenings, through their PLO.

- **Enhanced funding:** This would enhance the PLOS service by enabling Ivison Trust to employ more PLOs and to expand the therapeutic service and the weekend support line. A shift manager could also be recruited for the support line. Ivison Trust would have more scope to deliver early intervention work, particularly with education. The availability of emergency accommodation for families who need re-locating due to threats from the exploiters, is lacking. Increased funding would enable Ivison Trust to be able to offer such facilities easing pressure on local authorities.

### *Perspectives on working with Ivison Trust PLOs*

- **Partner agency perspectives:** partner agencies were overwhelmingly positive when describing their engagement between with the Ivison programme and the individual PLOs. This included very strong favourable options on communication, trust, speed of response, and reflective of needs. There was unanimous positive feedback on the programme being a useful, valued, and supportive partner.
- **Parent perspectives:** Parents /carers that were or had been working with the Ivison Trust programme were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences of engagement. Those responding said that they were listened to, understood, and their difficult experiences felt validated.

The following sections provide more detailed data and analysis of each of the above headings.

## The Ivison Trust PLO approach

### *The role of PLOs and supervisors*

The role of the PLO and supervisors is multi-faceted but essentially, they work with parents as safeguarding partners to safeguard their children and work collaboratively with parents and partners to disrupt exploiters. To achieve this outcome, PLOs utilise Ivison Trusts Relational Safeguarding Model which asserts that:

- Parents should be worked with as key safeguarding partners.
- Safeguarding plans should address the extra-familial risk.
- The intelligence that parents have access to, about offenders, locations, and young people, should be used to disrupt exploiters and safely recover the child.

PLOs offer information, support, and signposting to parents when their child is identified as low risk (early intervention work), right through to a child experiencing the highest level of harm from exploiters. Even after cases are closed, parents can still receive support from Ivison Trust in various forms. For example, being supported by a volunteer/befriender; involvement in the Parent Participation programme and utilising the support helpline. Ivison Trust delivers a unique 'wraparound' service for parents, with no time limit.

On average, PLOs have a caseload of 12-15 parents. PLOs offer emotional/practical support and advocacy to parents. They visit parents in their homes and talk with them on the phone, as little or as much as is required.

*“The PLO is the first person asking how they (parent) are...what’s going on with them...the parent opens up”. (PLO)*

Due to the nature of child exploitation, PLOs are constantly reacting to crisis situations within families. Their work is proactive and strategic planning to enable the parents to maintain resilience in extremely complex and distressing circumstances. PLOs signpost parents to other services where necessary and enable parents to disseminate intelligence to the police.

PLOs are involved in the screening and reviewing of new referrals and attend weekly triage meetings. PLOs also work closely with their policing and social care colleagues, amongst others such as health, youth justice and youth workers. PLOs provide a vital conduit for services and families. They manage the expectation of parents in terms of what police and social care can provide. Likewise, they work closely with partners to enable them to better understand the parents' situations and concerns.

***“The PLO is a conduit; bridges trust and connections and a pathway, so families can provide information that is unique to them”.*** (Manager)

***“PLOs are a critical friend to partners”.*** (PLO)

A significant part of the PLO role involves listening to parents in a non-judgemental manner, challenging any self-blame they may feel and ensuring that they feel less isolated. The PLOs aim is to maintain parent, child relationships and in turn, increase the safeguarding of the child.

***“If mediation between child and parent results in maintaining the relationship-that is massive success”*** (PLO)

This is achieved by providing parents with a better understanding of child exploitation, the tactics of exploiters and how trauma manifests in their child. Furthermore, PLOs help parents to recognise and deal with their own trauma. They recognise that each family has different needs, and that the levels of support required by families may vary.

***“Wins we can achieve are different, resilience building...parents feeling stronger. Parents who feel the situation is just as crap but feel stronger to deal with it and keep going and have a support network...little bit of hope”.*** (PLO)

The PLO supervisors closely manage and support the PLOs. Regular managerial and peer supervision is provided, and all PLOs have access to clinical supervision. All the PLOs felt supported in their work by management and the organisation in general.

***“I love my job and I love my parents. Don't forget to say how much I love my job!”***  
(PLO)

The 'wraparound' nature of Ivison Trust's work is evident. From the beginning to the end of a parent's contact, they are offered support and a safe place. There is no 'cliff edge' of support where Ivison Trust withdraws. There is support for parents at whatever stage they are at on their journey, and PLOs say they work hard to show parents they can talk openly about their circumstances.

***“(Ivison Trust) Only place they can talk about themselves. Having to put a mask on and roleplay to be able to function, overwhelming, and always playing that role, all about the child, no space or time for parents. Burn out happens, so who is there for the child? Space for parents to build resilience and continue to be there for the child...the parent needs to be well to keep the family together, to look after the child...it is a form of torture for parents”.*** (Manager)

### *The referral processes.*

Young people are identified by Children's Social care (CSC) after a referral has come into their Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Referrals to CSC come from different agents and organisations who have identified emerging exploitation risk factors. The main referrers are parents; Youth Offending Teams; Early Help; Co-located Child Exploitation teams; Area social work teams; Health; youth workers and, notably, to a lesser extent, education. Lack of referrals from education is an area of concern for PLOs. It was suggested that this could be due to a lack of awareness within education of child exploitation and the indicators. Furthermore, PLOs stated that education is often being absent from multi-agency meetings in certain areas of West Yorkshire. The fact that most meetings are held during the school day and the considerable pressure on teacher's time, were given as a possible explanations for this.

*“Few schools are referring, one DSL (one who is referring) is willing to do something in school. One school has 4 young people identified.” (PLO)*

The quality of referrals can vary. Information referrers provide may be limited and therefore a level of expertise in exploitation is required to identify indicators other partners may not recognise. This is needed as it helps assess the level of risk a young person is experiencing from exploiters. The PLOs role in assessing referrals therefore, alongside partners, is vital. Often PLOs identify risks that others do not.

*“Level of risk is discussed...PLO feeds into that and gives opinion on risk level. The PLOs viewpoint is listened to”. (PLO)*

Young people are referred into CSC across a spectrum; from young people where there are early concerns of exploitation, to young people who may already be experiencing high levels of harm. If young people do not meet CSC risk thresholds for opening a case, they may not receive any level of intervention. However, when PLOs are involved in assessing such referrals, they can direct families to Ivison Trust for low level support, such as access to online parent guidance and information. The contribution PLOs make to the referral and assessment procedure is influential and indeed adds an extra layer of safeguarding for the child:

*“Some (children) are assessed at low risk, and I was clear it was higher- I can challenge decisions about the level of risk, my input is important. I recognise stuff others don't.” (PLO)*

If parents are deemed to be doing all the 'right things' by CSC, the child may be assessed as being at lower risk. For example, if a parent is putting in boundaries with their child, the child is attending school and parents are reporting missing episodes the risk is perceived as lower level. The main reason for this, is because CSC traditional child protections systems- set up solely to respond to intra-familial risk and harm- are still applied to cases of extra-familial harm. These systems place the primary safeguarding responsibility with parents, even when the harm is outside the home. Although the Contextual Safeguarding Approach (Firmin, 2020) is advocated for in West Yorkshire, the systemic changes, as in, accepting referrals of extra-familial harm and being able to effectively respond, are not fully embedded yet. Therefore, it is important to have PLOs as a 'critical friend' in the review and assessment process. PLOs advocate for the Contextual Safeguarding approach and highlight the need to consider risks and harms outside the home.

*“If it is not an appropriate referral Ivison Trust can turn it down. Referrals process is constantly reviewed. Ivison Trust does its own risk assessment as well as the one from*

*CSC also talk to parents, social workers, and other professionals to determine risk and need. Often Ivison Trust sees things differently from CSC". (PLO)*

*"Ivison Trust needs to be at the referral process to prompt and question. Early Intervention might not happen if the PLO is not there, their input might stop child exploitation escalating". (Supervisor)*

It can be difficult if PLOs do not have access to social care systems, for example Liquid Logic. This means ongoing information, post referral can be unknown and hard to track. Another issue is the high turnover of social workers, as the work of the PLO must be re-explained to the new social worker involved in the case. One PLO mentioned a parent who had ten social workers within a seven-month period. However, the consensus from the PLOs is that Ivison Trust's reputation is good, which aids them in developing relationships and trust.

### *The needs assessment*

The needs assessment is dynamic and revisited regularly, especially if the risk level is high.

*"It is a dynamic risk assessment. Assessed continuously, depending on what level of risk they (child) is at. The level of risk is discussed every week at MATRIX. I feed into that and give an opinion on risk level. My viewpoint is listened to". (PLO)*

PLOs stated that returning to the original assessment reminds them of the case's context and the reason for the referral. This is also an opportunity to evaluate how far parents have come since their involvement with Ivison Trust.

*"You can go back and unpick things and help parents understand why/what has happened and impact on behaviours. It is helpful to look back and measure. Tell parents where they have come from and highlight the wins." (PLO)*

The needs assessment is not a static document. It not only contributes to assessing the child's needs at the point of referral but is updated as the family's situation invariably evolves. PLOs felt that being able to use the assessment as a tool to understand the distance travelled is also useful.

### *Action plans for parents*

All parents co-create an individual safety plan with their PLO. This happens within the first few visits, as the relationship is established, and the PLO gets to know the parent.

*"Everyone is different...we do it with the parent, might take two to three sessions. Bespoke and creative, opens the parents mind". (PLO)*

Parents and their situations are different, so bespoke safety plans are necessary. The plan must work for the parents. The PLO asks the parents what specific concerns they have about their child, for example, mental health, self-harm, and substance misuse, and then they compile the plan together. The PLO explores with the parent what immediate needs there are, e.g., if a door camera is required. Then, they make longer-term plans. The best practice is to make sure the parent's safety plan is linked with the social worker so that everyone is working in alignment. The plan is revisited and reviewed as it is futile if it does not work for parents; if it is not working, the plan is changed. Child exploitation is complex, and plans need to be responsive and fluid. However, PLOs know that there is also no point in 'nagging' parents about following the plan; it is ultimately up to them if they choose to follow it or not.

*“Bespoke to parents. Sensitive approach. Co-created with parents...not to prescriptive...has to work for them. Different parents have different ideas about boundaries for example”. (PLO)*

The child can be involved in the co-production of the safety plan, although this is rare. The plan is different to those of the statutory sector as it is designed to be owned by the parent and is flexible in nature. With PLO support, the parents determine the formulation of the plan and its execution. It must be realistic or is pointless.

*“We base our planning on what the parent needs...” (PLO)*

Parents report difficulties with plans created by children’s social care, for example, parents may be told to go looking for their missing child and this is simply not possible in some circumstances.

*“CSC tell parents to go and look for their child and they can’t, they have smaller children for example...parents feel blamed”. (PLO)*

This exemplifies why plans must be bespoke and realistic. Another issue some parents raise is the response they get when reporting their child missing to the police.

*“Biggest downfall is reporting their children to the police, because of the response they get”. (PLO)*

This highlights the ongoing need for police training on child exploitation and responding to missing reports. Education for all partners about the reality of what parents’ experience is vital if partnership working and responding to exploited young people and their families is to be effective. The PLOs ability to assess risks and notice details other services do not due to pressures on time of lack of training is a vital part of providing a holistic safeguarding response to children and young people.

### *PACE criteria of success*

The PLOs and supervisors all agree that ultimate success is a young person who is no longer being exploited. However, defining success in the context of exploitation is complicated and requires more nuanced consideration. The PLOs and supervisors all assert that the ‘ultimate’ success is rarely achieved, particularly for criminally exploited young people. This is extremely demoralising for parents and those supporting them. Therefore, it is contingent on the PLOs identifying what may be viewed as ‘lesser’ successes, but significant within the context of exploitation. The success parents and partners most want to see is the exploitations of their child to end.

*“There was a parent who spoke to a PLO and texted saying, thanks for listening to me, that’s the first time I have eaten anything in three days”. (PLO)*

*“You’ve spent time, normally social workers are in for 10 minutes and then gone”. (PLO)*

Success is different for each family and, what to the observer might not be deemed as a success for families dealing with the exploitation of their child, the all-important, ‘small wins’ are highly significant. However, it is often only when the PLO identifies these ‘wins’ that parents recognise them.

*“I think the major outcome is the parents turn around and say they feels less anxious, worried and more able to cope...doesn’t mean things are rosy but...” (PLO)*

The PLOs agree that parents define what success looks like to them. However, this may also be elicited through the 'Journey travelled' evaluation or in conversations with the PLOs. The PLO point out successes and how things may have improved for the parents/child, even when it may feel like there is very little to be hopeful about.

*“The journey travelled...this asks, have they coped better, managed better, are relationships better, engagement with education better.” (PLO)*

The PLOs aim to build up resilience with parents so that they can better understand and support their child and advocate with professionals.

*“Wins we can achieve are different...resilience building, parents not relying on PLO, parents feeling stronger, going to meetings alone-biggest win. Parents who feel stronger to deal with it all and keep going and have a support network. Working with them, rather than against them...little bit of hope”. (PLO)*

Disempowerment and isolation are everyday experiences for parents, and PLOs try to counter this in their support. Parents are 'book-ended'. From the time they are first referred to Ivison Trust until often years after the exploitation has ended, Ivison Trust is there to support affected parents. All the PLOs and supervisors commented on the uniqueness of this wraparound service.

*“Invisible arm going round families. They have access to peer support as isolation is such an issue...often a cliff edge to support, we don't do that. Meet families at every stage”. (PLO)*

*“You take it at their pace. Others tell them that were wrong and not listening. PLO role changes everyone's perspective”. (PLO)*

PLOs provided examples of 'success' that illustrate the complexities of child exploitation and how desperate parents can feel about their children. One parent's son was put in prison for the criminal offences he had committed because of the exploitation. His mother was 'relieved', as she believed that if he were in prison, the exploitation would stop and he would be safer. Another mother's son moved in with a friend and is now safe from exploitation. However, for now, she feels she has lost her son. A young person who is being exploited left the family home, and therefore, their siblings are now safe. The PLOs suggest that the bar is set low if these are defined as 'successes'. Often, PLOs are responsible for the relocation of families; this would not have happened if it were not for the PLO's involvement. This may be assessed as a successful outcome- the family are now safe- but this does not always mean that the child is not being exploited or that other young people are not being exploited.

Statutory services that PLOs work alongside also have different criteria for success.

*“Success for a statutory professional can be extremely different, it can be the other way around, police may say, he is no longer in trouble, not associating with these gangs so he is safe, but parents say, well he is, he is just not getting caught.” (PLO)*

The advocacy and awareness raising that PLOs provide to their partners in this regard is important. PLOs can advise the police that all may not be as it seems, adding an additional layer of safeguarding. PLOs often shift their partners perspectives on a situation, a 'voice' that without a PLO would not be there.

*“Make them (Statutory services) think about how parents felt and why they might be in denial” (PLO)*

*“We manage relationships between social workers and parents”. (PLO)*

Success is a myriad of things; for some parents the exploitation does end but the legacy of that trauma can stay with families for many years. Parents may participate in ongoing work with Ivison Trust in various ways. But every story is different. The PLOs keep looking for the ‘little wins’, of which there are many.

*“It’s the little things; a text saying they had a good weekend, went out for a day, not done that for ages. Parents want to tell me they’ve had a good time, they they’re managing”. (PLO)*

*“A parent who said I had shifted her view on child exploitation, she had not wanted to recognise the exploitation...I sent her a newspaper article, and she related to it”. (PLO)*

*“One mum, she was on the phone screaming at me to take her child away, she hated her, she kept running away...now, we’ve been to trial, relationship is amazing, both grown as people”. (PLO)*

*“Someone to be at peace in terms of understanding and reconnecting with their child where the relationship is fractured, abused by their child, don’t like their child, house has been robbed...” (PLO)*

### *How offboarding works*

There are four categories for offboarding- parent declined the service, non-engagement of parent, parent withdrew consent, and exploitation risk decreased. Parents who have received support from a PLO, co-create the exit strategy in a manner that feels comfortable for them. No parent is left without ongoing support if they so wish. As part of offboarding, all parents are offered the online parent forum and the parent participation programme. If there are any other identified needs, parents can be signposted to further support.

*“Long arm of support can continue. Even if case is closed, for example, the young person starts to understand what has happened to them and the parent wanted support around that...there is a long legacy with child exploitation”. (PLO)*

*“Risk may reduce, but needs are still high because of PTSD, long-term trauma for months maybe years”. (PLO)*

For some parents, there is a ‘natural ending’. The child may no longer live with the parent, the risk has reduced, and PLOs cannot help in terms of reducing the risk any further. Parents may tell their PLO that they are grateful for their time and don’t wish to take any of the PLO’s time away from other parents who may need support. Sometimes, the situation with their child improves and the parents backs off from support. If the PLO senses that the parent is withdrawing from support, they may suggest they take a break from contact, but they can always come back; the door is never closed.

*“Parents are never left without support at any stage”. (PLO)*

Parents may not want to stop working with the PLO, even though it is time, as the risk has reduced. In that case, PLOs gently encourage parents to access other forms of support that Ivison Trust offer.

*“The aim is to not be needed anymore really, building them up to do it on their own”. (PLO)*

A successful outcome for the PLOs and supervisors is that parents feel equipped to self-advocate and strong enough to continue their lives post support.

*“Get parents resilient enough to do it themselves...professionals listen to them”.*

(Supervisor)

Each situation is unique and requires a bespoke and sensitive response from Ivison Trust. If required, cases may be re-opened for example, if a case goes to court. There is no time limit regarding how long Ivison Trust can be involved. This is because the long-term impact of child exploitation on families is unpredictable and therefore a flexible response and attitude is needed.

*“Wraparound support is so important, how we are doing is, from the very beginning the parents has support from us, whether on a waiting list, crash pad even, or close of case and then they have the forum. Amazing way in which parents can be supported by us, risks go up and down, remain in touch and come back, it’s wonderful”.* (PLO)

### *Agencies that are engaged and missing.*

The PLOs and supervisors generally felt that most agencies who needed to be engaged were. However, education was consistently cited as less likely to be actively engaged in safeguarding processes for exploited young people and their families. Education is often not present at safeguarding meetings about young people. This is concerning considering that a significant proportion of children who are exploited are recorded as poor school attenders. The need for education to be present as a key partner was asserted by PLOs and supervisors.

Health and Early Help services also need to be more engaged. Furthermore, post-Child Sexual Exploitation/Child Criminal Exploitation services are also perceived as lacking. There is recognition of the long-term impact of child exploitation on the child and family mental well-being, yet services which offer relevant support are limited. Mental health services such as CAMHS are considered difficult to engage and access. More support is also required around child to adult abuse, a common theme arising in the context of the PLOs work. PLOs and supervisors commented that they could see the difference in partners understanding of child exploitation if they have attended Ivison Trust training.

### **The VRP-funded services**

Consultation with parents informs the processes and policies at Ivison Trust. Two key developments are the weekend support telephone line and the therapeutic service. Both of which have been developed because of parent demand for such services and these are currently being piloted in West Yorkshire.

#### *Therapeutic support*

Parents supported by Ivison Trust have, for many years, spoken about their desire for therapeutic support. Likewise, Ivison Trust have wanted to offer this service for a long time, as they recognised the high level of need. Since September 2023, a therapeutic worker has been delivering outdoor and online therapy to parents. PLOs in West Yorkshire promote the service to parents they support, and the service has been inundated with referrals. There is no waiting list, it is free, and the parents initially receive six sessions. The parents can choose whether they would like to do the therapy, walking outdoors, or online. Parents know that the worker is part of Ivison Trust and that gives the therapist an ‘in’, trust can be built quickly. The worker’s experience of working in the field of child exploitation for many years gives them a unique understanding of what parents are going through.



*"It felt more relevant [than counselling through work] because she's coming from an Ivison Trust background so she actually knows what it's like."* (Parent on evaluation form)

*"The therapy is part of the same organisation (IT) that is a lifeline anyway, we are wrapping around them".* (Worker)

Since September 2023, there has been 38 referrals, 11 from parents affected by CSE; 24 from parents affected by CCE and 3 parents affected by both CSE and CCE. Out of the 38 parents, 5 did not wish to pursue counselling; 16 parents completed and closed; 9 are ongoing and there are 8 parents waiting to be allocated.

Parents can bring whatever they want to talk about to the sessions Often it is not about the exploitation of their child, but issues that have brought up because of the trauma they are going through.

*"They present with whatever they want to talk about. You might assume it's the exploitation of their child...they bring so much more than that, sometimes very little about child exploitation".* (Worker)

A main feature of Ivison Trusts Relational Safeguarding Model is to support parents around their own trauma, so that they remain resilient. If parents are enabled to better support their child, this in turn can increase the safeguarding of the child. The therapy provides space for the parent to explore their trauma responses; an opportunity to enable them to regulate their own emotions, process their thoughts and feelings and go back to their child refreshed. The trauma the parent and their child are going through moves quickly and the therapy give a space for parents to slow things down.

The therapy provides a safe space for parents to say whatever they want. Parents have their pain validated, they are listened to and not judged.

*"Sometimes parents need to be victims as well and heard and understood as victims. Hierarchy of pain is a real thing. My child has made me feel like this...that's ok, we explore that in therapy...it's a space to be cross with your child.... can't do that anywhere else, if you deny and repress that anger, it will come back".* (Therapist)

*"Confidential, non-judgemental, safe specific for them, whatever's living, its black hole you can stick your head in and shout whatever you want, and it will never come back out."* (Therapist)

So far, the referrals have all been women and there is clearly a need for men to access therapy too. Plus, counselling for couples together. The need is there for more therapeutic workers, with varying modalities, according to PLOs and supervisors.

The feedback from users of the service so far, has been very positive. Interestingly, one parent expressed feeling of guilt that they have received therapy while their child has been waiting two years for mental health support. Despite some initial anxieties, parents experience of working with the therapist has been good.

*"I've just completed 7 sessions... and I'm a new woman! My initial Wellbeing score was 32. I'd had enough and retreated to curl up in a dark place. It wasn't that I couldn't see any light / a way out, I'd given up lifting my head to even look and was simply unhappily existing. Talking with the worker has changed all that. She's guided*

*me to look at things differently, helped me to understand why I've reacted to things the way I have and reactivated my holistic self-care. She has a way of seeing straight through things right to the heart of the issue, despite what you think the issue is. Quite frankly she's bloody brilliant. My current Wellbeing score is 7 and I feel reborn. I'm lighter, happier, and noticing things around me that give me joy. I still have work to do, but my head is up, and I feel rooted and secure that I can deal with whatever life throws me next. I'm living."* (Parent on evaluation form)

*"Thank you for all your wisdom, expertise and kindness, I felt safe bearing my soul and have learnt so much about myself and going forward I feel like I am in a much better place to cope with whatever comes my way".* (Parent on evaluation form)

*"I went into the therapy with Ivison Trust with an open mind, not knowing if it would be for me. I am finding it hugely beneficial; the worker is very talented and holds vital skills. Ivison Trust has gone above and beyond for me".* (Parent on evaluation form)

The therapeutic service is valued by other PLOs and supervisors too. For a PLO to know that the parents they are supporting are getting therapy is a relief and it adds a layer of support. The only thing missing is more therapeutic staff are needed, as there is certainly the need. It would be good to have a longer period than 6 weeks too.

*"Not many (parents) who have not engaged with it. All positive stuff. Needs to be bigger i.e. stable unit of therapy workers covering all areas and for national team, over the phone. Bigger pool. Maybe do couples therapy and family therapy. Need more than one therapist. Maybe a male therapist. Be tricky to get therapists with CE knowledge."* (Supervisor)

### ***The Support Line***

Parents have consistently fed back to Ivison Trust through evaluations and conversations that they would like to be able to access support on Fridays and Saturday evenings; it is often on weekends that crisis situations happen with their child. Although parents are signposted to alternative support that is available on the weekends by their PLO, parents have said that these other organisations do not always understand child exploitation and what they, as a parent, are going through. Other organisations do not know the parent's specific and often very complicated situation, which means the parents must repeat their story to a stranger. This can be traumatic and exhausting for the parent, especially if they are in the middle of a crisis with their child. Therefore, they would like to be able to talk to an Ivison Trust worker, as they know they understand the situation they are in. Parents whose cases are now closed, also suggested that having a helpline they could call if they needed to, would be helpful.

*"Evidence shows that parents want to talk on Friday and Saturday evenings...about feelings and well-being. Support line was missing link...now have therapeutic service as well, alongside that."* (Supervisor)

In response to this request, Ivison Trust now operates a support line on Friday and Saturday evenings. This is run by volunteers and overseen by a manager. Parents who are supported by a PLO in the West Yorkshire area can call the line at those times, as can parents whose cases have been closed. The service is still developing, with very few incoming calls so far. This is probably due to it being a new service, and not well-known. However, volunteers staffing the line, have been initiating calls with parents. During the week, PLOs ask parents if they would like a call over the weekend, and

if they do, volunteers call them and check how they are. This is not only helpful for parents, but reassuring for PLOs, who do not tend to have contact with parents over the weekend. PLOs have spoken about the worry they feel about some parents and what a relief it is to know a volunteer is going to be calling them.

Since December 2023:

- 53 phone support sessions have been delivered by volunteers.
- 30 families whose children are affected by CCE/CSE have been supported.
- 66% of parents accessing the support line reported that it helped reduce their feelings of anxiety.
- 83% of parents who accessed the support reported that they were supported to address safeguarding issues that arose within the call.
- 50% of the parents accessing the support line reported that it helped them feel more confident in managing behaviours linked to exploitation.

### *Enhanced funding from the VRP*

A funding enhancement would mean that more PLOs could be recruited to meet the need of families in West Yorkshire. The workload of PLOs is considerable and increased staffing would benefit parents, children, and partners alike. More parents could be supported which means that the safeguarding of (more) children would increase. Also, with more PLOs comes the opportunity for more intelligence to be collected from parents and this will increase the chances of disrupting and stopping the exploiters. Moreover, and just as importantly, the early intervention work that is so needed to prevent CE escalating could be developed, leading to less children being exploited in the first place.

The funding would enable Ivison Trust to expand their therapeutic offer by recruiting more therapists. Evidence from the pilot, even at this early stage, clearly demonstrates the desire parents have to access therapy and the benefit they get. Therapy of this type is limited, and yet evidentially desperately required by traumatised parents. In-turn, this enables parents to better support their exploited child.

Multi-year funding for such services is vital if the excellent and well-trained staff Ivison Trust attract and recruit are to be retained. All of which benefits parents and children. More broadly, the fiscal implications of not providing these services are clear.

*“If no additional support for mental health needs...they break down. The number of families that break down means that young people end up in the care system. The cost of that on outcomes financially...keeping families together has far reaching consequences”. (Supervisor)*

The enhanced funding would enable the support line to operate more frequently and widely. A shift manager could be employed, and the service would be expanded so that more parents can access vital out-of-hours support.

More broadly, the funding enhancement would aid Ivison Trust when it is involved in relocating families away from exploiters. Such accommodation is scarce and expensive. Enhanced funding means emergency accommodation could be offered in these situations. This would result in increased safeguarding for families but also ease pressure on statutory services.

Iverson Trust would also like to put more support workers within schools, fund research, and focus on child-to-adult violence.

Enhanced funding would ensure that Iverson Trust and the support that they offer are more widely known. A media campaign to extend Iverson Trust's reach would be of significant benefit in ensuring families and potential partners know about the organisation. Increased opportunities to work with education, health, and early intervention services would be hugely beneficial.

## Perspectives on working with Iverson Trust PLOs

### *Parent perspectives*

Parents/carers that are/were working with the Iverson Trust programme were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences of engagement. Thirty-five parents /carers (83%) that responded to the survey rated their overall experience of Iverson Trust as 'Very Positive', while another 4 (10%) rated this as 'Positive'. Therefore, 93% of participants were very happy with the service provided. Only 3 parents/carers (7%) did not give wholly positive ratings, but these were in the 'Unsure' category rather than a negative rating. In addition, feedback collected by PLO workers reflects a similar positive engagement experience.

Many survey participants identified the Parent Liaison Officers (PLO) as the most positive aspect of the service, and the parents/carers said that they were listened to, understood, and their difficult experiences felt validated. Having someone to talk to either in person or on the phone made them feel that someone was there to offer emotional support. Figure 5 shows the word cloud for this survey response:

**Figure 5: Word cloud on parents' responses for which part of their involvement with the PLO programme was most appreciated:**



In the more extended responses, there was much positive reflection on engagement. One parent/carer stated:

*“Our PLO was our saviour. We had no one with any value helping us before. All services were involved and were not effective. When our PLO began, support things started to change. She really listened to us and took our concerns seriously. She also strongly blamed the offenders. She helped us gather information to try and stop the offenders. Before this we felt really helpless. She was by our side throughout support and because the exploitation got so bad then helped us to relocate*

*and tried to sort a school placement out for our son. Nothing was too much of an ask for her. We left the area we used to live in, and she's still supporting us and has made a referral to the national team. Unfortunately, our son keeps going back to the area we moved from because the offenders have such a grip of him. We honestly would not have been able to cope without Pace. Pace helped keep our family together. The parent network event was absolutely fantastic too. We met other parents going through the same as us and made us realise we are not alone. We had the opportunity to speak to a parent and child who had gone through the same and the boy helped us understand from his side of things. Everything Pace have offered has been so helpful in so many ways."*

Another positive aspect of the PLOs was that they assisted with practical tasks, such as creating safety plans and helping with educational issues.

Example responses from parents/carer for these positive features of the programme include:

*'My Parent Liaison Officer has help me create safety plans and has got my child involved so it gave my child an opportunity to have their say. The safety planning seems to be working at the minute but it's early days. I look forward to our sessions and know that I'll walk away feeling more knowledgeable and confident as a parent'.*

*'My pace worker also helped me find a placement for education that was more suited to my boy. At the time it was horrendous but me and my pace worker managed to get my boy in a place where he was no longer being exploited. He's doing really well now'.*

The parents and carers also appreciated the non-judgemental approach of the PLOs, which contrasted with the approach of the police and social services. Positive comments were also relayed about the counselling services. For example:

*'My worker was brilliant, always there when I needed, didn't judge and I felt had my back'.*

*'The Counselling really helped'.*

Responses to feedback received by the PLOs in their engagement with parents included:

*'It felt like someone was there if I needed them and that put me at ease. It was nice that someone checked in.*

*'I felt listened to without judgments.*

*'The volunteer was lovely and listened'.*

*'I felt a lot better when I spoke to the lady; knowing that what my son was doing was not my fault'.*

Although parents/carers were overwhelmingly happy with the Ivison Trust programme, they identified a few areas where changes could be made to improve or support engagement. Those responding reported wanting earlier information about Ivison Trust and earlier referrals. For example:

*'Earlier information about Pace would have helped'.*

*'I think you should be allocated a PACE worker as soon as something has happened'.*

Parents/carers also stated that an increase in the number of events with parents and carers would be helpful, and overall, a longer time being engaged with Ivison Trust and more regular contact with their PLO. For example:

*‘More events with other parents and carers.’*

*‘More meet ups on the weekend sessions. This was so helpful. I don’t usually do any mental health stuff, but this was really good and being with others too’.*

*‘PLO having more time with parents’.*

More than one PLO in a designated area was also requested, and further assistance in working with social services was also identified as an area for enhancement:

*‘More than one worker for our area’*

*‘Help with working with social care’.*

### *Partners agency perspectives*

The survey with partner agencies produces an overwhelmingly positive picture of engagement between those agencies, the Ivison programme, and the individual PLOs.

Regarding communication and processes, the referring agency respondents were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences working with the PLOs.

- **Clear communication between the PLO and the referring agency:** 15 respondents (93.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that there is clear communication between the PLO and themselves. 1 respondent (6.3%) was undecided.
- **PLO creating a trusting relationship with the referring agency:** 15 respondents (93.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that the PLO quickly created a trusting relationship with them. 1 respondent (6.3%) was undecided.
- **PLO responses to referrals:** All 16 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that the PLO is quick to respond to referrals.
- **PLOs being responsive to the needs of the referring agency:** 15 respondents (93.8%) agreed or strongly agreed the PLO is responsive to the needs of staff in my organisation. 1 respondent (6.3%) was undecided.
- **PLOs being responsive to the needs of parents/guardians:** 15 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs are responsive to the needs of parents/guardians.

The referring agency respondents were unanimous in their perspective of the PLO as having an important and supportive role:

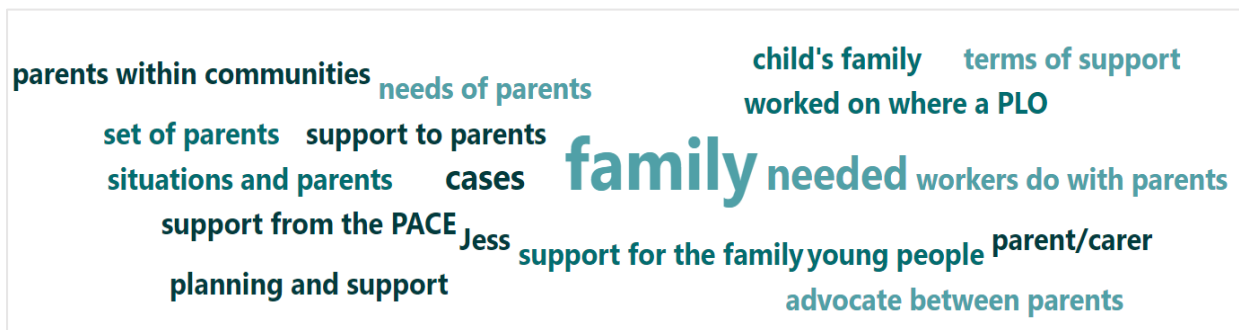
- **Useful partners:** All 16 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that the PLO was a useful partner.
- **Valued partners:** All 16 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that the PLOs are valued partners.
- **Supportive partners:** All 16 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that the PLOs are supportive partners.

Perspectives on confidence and trust were equally unanimously high amongst referring partners.

- **Trust in the PLOs:** All 16 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed the PLO is a trusted partner.
- **Confidence in the PLOs:** All 16 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that they have confidence in the PLO.

Overall, 100% of those referring agencies that responded rated the overall experience of working with the PLO as good or very good. Figure 6 shows the word cloud for the referring agency survey response on what they value about the PLO programme:

**Figure 6: Word cloud on referring agency responses for what they particularly value about the PLO programme:**



In the surveys' free text comments, the responding agencies had the opportunity to identify things they might want to change about the PLO programme if they were able. The most common response was a variation on wanting more PLOs to be available:

*“More workers”*

*“We need more PLOs; they are a key agency in protecting children from exploitation.”*

## 5. Outcome Evaluation

### Outcome evaluation key findings

#### *Distance travelled.*

- **The impact of Ivison Trust PLOs on Parents/carers:** As a result of the Ivison Trust programme, parents and carers felt overwhelmingly more confident in being able to protect their child, and they also had enhanced mental well-being, social connectedness, and positive feelings about being a parent. Improvements were also seen, but to a lesser degree, in parents/carers ability to cope with stress and everyday challenges, positive feelings about their future, and their physical well-being. This improvement was mirrored by the referring agencies, who were also overwhelmingly positive in their assessment of the service, both in dealing with their own needs and in supporting parents/carers to deal with the needs of their children.
- **The impact of Ivison Trust PLOs on children:** Parents and carers felt that the most impactful part of the Ivison Trust PLO programme for their children was improvements in engagement with education, training, or employment in their child's emotional well-being and in improved relationships and physical well-being. There were split opinions as to whether the Ivison Trust programme had reduced the need for social care involvement, reduced anti-social behaviour and criminality, and reduced the use of alcohol and drugs. Referring agencies were also very positive about the impact they felt the Ivison Trust PLO programme was having on children. This included reductions in problematic substance misuse, increases in engagement with training education and employment, reduced need for social care interventions and reductions in ASB and crime.

#### *Parents /Carers skills and knowledge*

- **Knowledge and Understanding of Child Exploitation and Support Services:** It is clear from the survey results that the Ivison Trust PLO programme has dramatically improved parents/carers knowledge and understanding of child exploitation. This includes knowledge about grooming and child exploitation, the effects of trauma on children and adults, understanding of safety plans, knowledge of who to contact when there are concerns over a child, knowledge of safeguarding agencies and the help they can provide, and understanding of how to pass information onto the police.
- **Trust and Confidence in Support Services:** An overwhelming majority of parents/carers engaging with the programme reported trust and confidence in their relationship with the PLO. In addition, the majority (although not all) of parents/carers also stated that their engagement in the programme increased their trust and confidence in Social Care Support Services.
- **Referring agency perspectives on the impact for parents/carers:** Referring agencies were overwhelmingly positive in their survey responses regarding the work of the PLOs, with the majority stating that the PLO intervention works for the family and helps improve communication between families, young people, and referring agencies. All who responded would recommend the PLO service to other child exploitation teams.

The following sections provide more detailed data and analysis of each of the headings above.



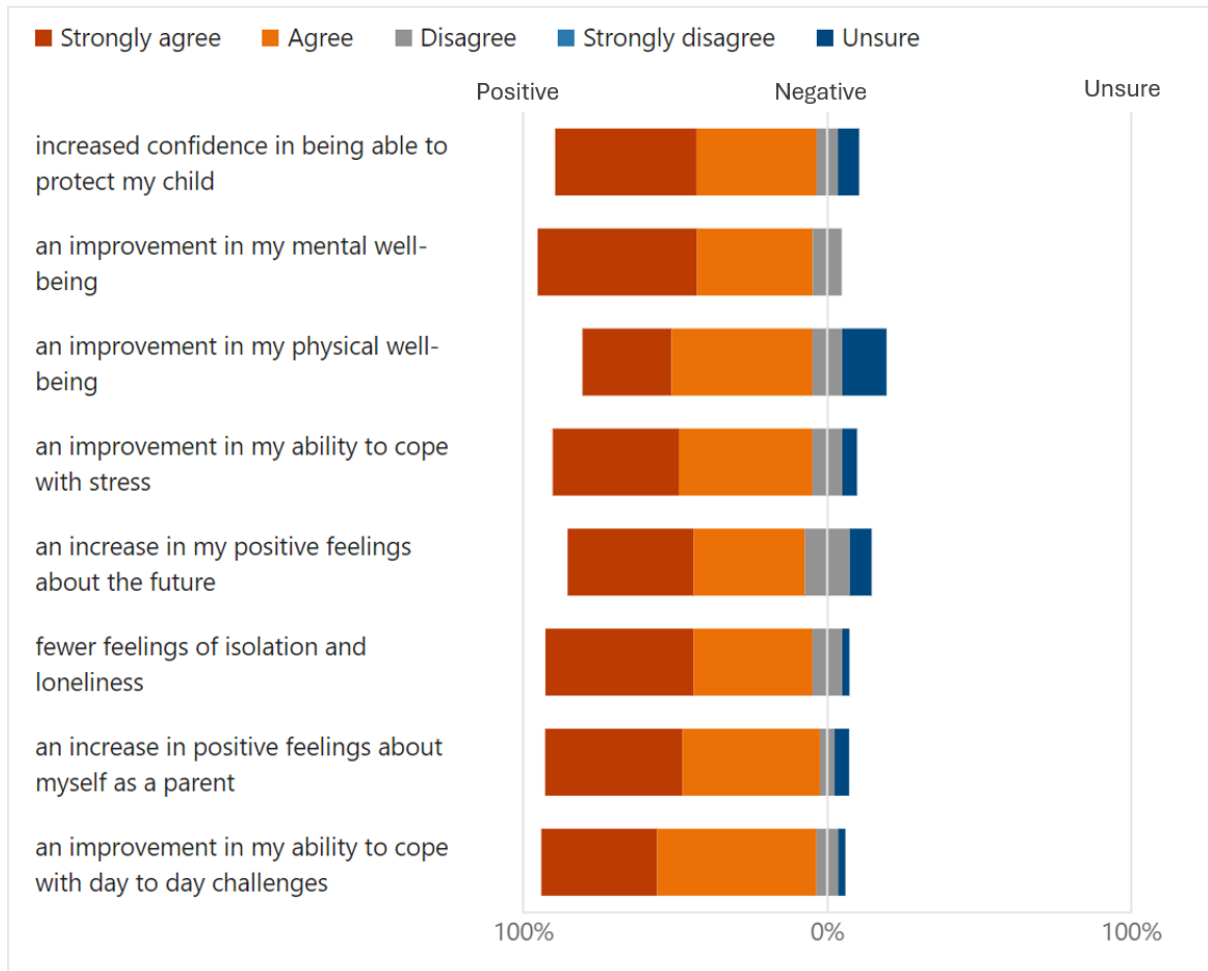
## Distance travelled

### *The impact of Ivison Trust PLOs on Parents/carers*

As a result of the Ivison Trust programme, parents and carers felt overwhelmingly more confident in being able to protect their child, and they also had enhanced mental well-being, social-connectedness, and positive feelings about being a parent. Improvements were also seen, but to a lesser degree, in parents/carers ability to cope with stress and everyday challenges, positive feelings about their future, and their physical well-being.

- **Increased confidence in being able to protect my child:** Thirty-seven (86%) of the parents/carers stated that because of the PACE programme, they had increased confidence in protecting their child. Only 3 respondents (7%) disagreed with this statement, whilst another 3 (7%) were unsure.
- **An improvement in my mental well-being:** Thirty-eight respondents (90.5%) agreed that being involved in the PACE programme had enhanced their mental well-being. Only 4 parents /carers disagreed with this statement (9.5%) and 1 person did not respond.
- **An improvement in my physical well-being:** An improvement in physical well-being was reported by 31 (75.6%) parents/carers, whilst 4 (9.8%) disagreed with this assertion and 6 (14.6%) were unsure of the physical impact of the programme. Two individuals did not respond to this item.
- **An improvement in my ability to cope with stress:** Thirty-five parents/carers (85.4%) agreed that their ability to cope with stress had improved because of the PACE programme. Only 4 (9.8%) respondents disagreed with this suggestion, whilst 2 (4.9%) were unsure, and there were 2 missing responses.
- **An increase in my positive feelings about the future:** Most participants (78.1%) reported an increase in their positive feelings about the future because of the PACE programme. Only 6 (14.6%) disagreed with this statement, whilst 3 respondents (7.3%) were unsure. There were 2 missing responses.
- **Fewer feelings of isolation and loneliness:** Thirty-six parents/carers (87.8%) felt they had fewer instances of isolation and loneliness since participating in the PACE programme. Few did not agree with this statement (4: 9.8%), whilst 1 person was unsure (2.4%) and 1 did not respond.
- **An increase in positive feelings about myself as a parent:** The PACE programme resulted in a very high proportion of respondents feeling more positive about themselves as parents/carers (38: 90.4%), with 2 (4.8%) disagreeing with this statement and a further 2 (4.8%) being unsure. One person did not give a response.
- **An improvement in my ability to cope with day-to-day challenges:** An equally high proportion of parents/carers (38: 90.5%) reported that the PACE programme had improved their ability to cope with everyday challenges, and only 3 respondents (7.1%) did not agree with this statement. One participant was unsure about their response (2.4%), and data from 1 individual was missing.

**Figure 7: Heatmap response for parents' perspectives on 'Involvement with the PLO programme has...':**



The survey with referring agencies also provided perspectives on the impacts of the Ivison Trust PLO programme on parents. As with parents, the referring agencies were overwhelmingly positive in their assessment of the service, both in dealing with their own needs as well as in supporting parents/carers to deal with the needs of their children:

- **PLOs help parents understand the effects of trauma:** 17 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help parents understand the effects of trauma.
- **PLOs help parents deal with the effects of trauma:** 15 respondents (93.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help parents deal with the effects of trauma. 1 respondent (6.3%) was undecided.
- **PLOs help parents deal with ongoing challenges:** 17 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help parents deal with ongoing challenges.
- **PLOs help parents understand the support available to them:** 17 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help parents understand the support available.
- **PLOs help create trusting relationships between families, young people, and support agencies:** 17 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help create trusting relationships between families, young people, and support agencies.

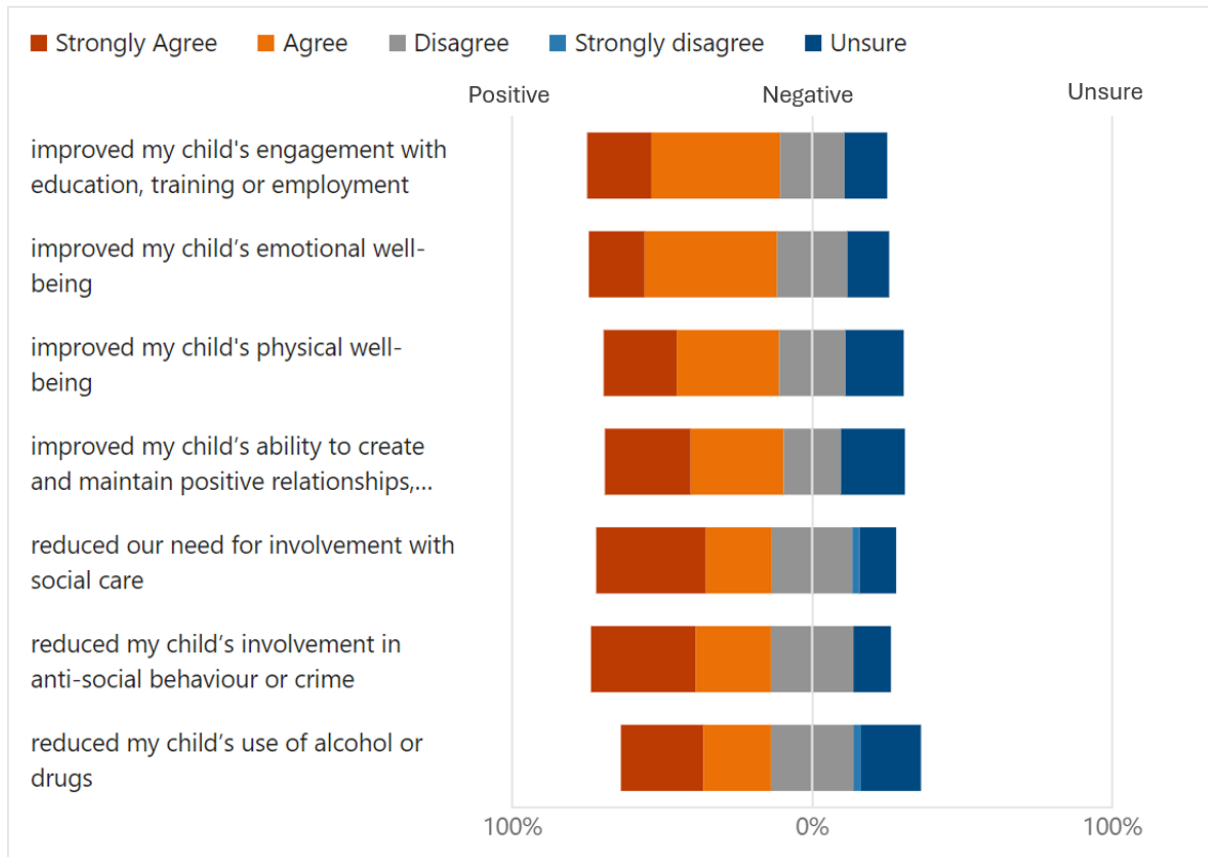
- **PLOs produce positive outcomes for parents/guardians:** 16 respondents (94.1%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs produce positive outcomes for parents/guardians. 1 respondent (5.9%) was undecided.
- **PLOs help provide hope for parents/guardians:** 16 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help provide hope for parents/guardians.

### *The impact of Ivison Trust PLOs on children.*

Parents and carers felt that the Ivison Trust PLO programme's most impactful part for their children was their engagement with education, training, or employment and in their child's emotional well-being. Improved relationships and physical well-being were also reported, although this was not as clear an improvement as in other areas. Similarly, there were split opinions as to whether the Ivison Trust programme had reduced the need for social care involvement, reduced anti-social behaviour and criminality, and reduced the use of alcohol and drugs.

- **The Ivison Trust programme improved my child's engagement with education, training, or employment:** Twenty-seven parents/carers (64.3%) agreed with this assertion, although 9 (21.4%) disagreed and 6 (14.3%) were unsure. One person did not respond to this item.
- **The Ivison Trust programme improved my child's emotional well-being:** Similarly, 27 (62.8%) participants asserted that the Ivison Trust programme had enhanced their child's emotional well-being, but a notable minority of 10 (23.3%) did not feel that this was the case. Six individuals (14%) were unsure about this item.
- **The Ivison Trust programme improved my child's physical well-being:** Twenty-four (58.5%) of the parents/carers asserted that their child's physical well-being had improved because of the Ivison Trust programme. However, 9 participants (22%) did not agree that this was the case, and 8 (19.5%) were unsure. There were 2 missing responses here.
- **The Ivison Trust programme improved my child's ability to create and maintain positive relationships, e.g., with family and friends:** Over half of parents/carers stated that the Ivison Trust programme had enhanced their child's positive relationships (25: 59.6%), whilst 8 (19%) disagreed with this assertion. Nine participants (21.4%) were unsure about this statement, with 1 missing response.
- **The Ivison Trust programme reduced our need for involvement with social care:** Twenty-four (58.6%) participants agreed that the Ivison Trust programme had reduced their need for social care involvement, but a notable minority (12: 29.2%) did not feel that this was the case. A further 5 parents/carers were unsure (12.2%), and there were 2 missing responses.
- **The Ivison Trust programme reduced my child's involvement in anti-social behaviour or crime:** A reduction in their child's involvement in crime because of the Ivison Trust programme was reported by 24 parents /carers (60%), but 11 respondents disagreed with this statement (27.5%). 'Unsure' responses were given by 5 individuals (12.5%) and there were 3 missing responses here.
- **The Ivison Trust programme reduced my child's use of alcohol or drugs:** Exactly half of the parents/carers reported that their child's use of alcohol or drugs had decreased because of the Ivison Trust programme (20: 50%), although 12 (30%) did not report that this was the case and 8 (20%) were unsure about this issue. Three participants did not respond here.

**Figure 8: Heatmap response for parents' perspectives on 'Involvement with the PLO programme has...':**



In their survey responses, the referring agencies were also very positive about the impact they felt the Ivison Trust PLO programme was having on children. This included reductions in problematic substance misuse, increases in engagement with training education and employment, reduced need for social care interventions and reductions in ASB and crime.

- PLOs help a child or young person's engagement with education, training, or employment:** 14 respondents (87.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help a child or young person's engagement with education, training, or employment. 2 respondents (12.5%) were undecided.
- PLOs help reduce the need for involvement with social care:** 12 respondents (70.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help reduce the need for social care involvement, while 5 respondents (29.4%) were undecided.
- PLOs help reduce a child or young person's involvement in anti-social behaviour or crime:** 15 respondents (93.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help reduce a child or young person's involvement in anti-social behaviour or crime. 1 respondent (6.3%) was undecided.
- PLOs help reduce a child or young person's use of alcohol or drugs:** 15 respondents (93.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that PLOs help reduce a child or young person's use of alcohol or drugs. 1 respondent (6.3%) was undecided.

## Parents /Carers skills and knowledge

### *Knowledge and Understanding of Child Exploitation and Support Services*

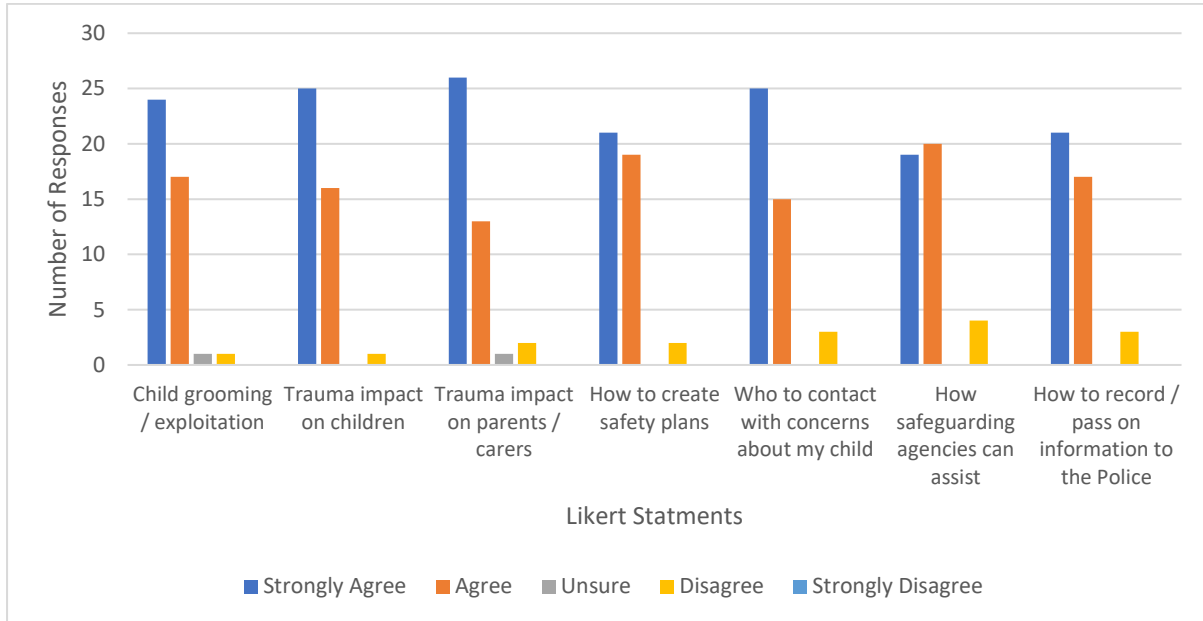
It is clear from the survey results that the Ivison Trust/PLO programme has dramatically improved parents/carers knowledge and understanding of child exploitation.

- **Knowledge about grooming and child exploitation:** Nearly all the respondents (41: 95%) stated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that their knowledge about grooming and child exploitation had increased because of their engagement with the Ivison Trust programme. However, 1 participant disagreed with this assertion, and 1 was unsure.
- **Understanding of trauma and how it affects children:** Similarly, all but 2 of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statement that they had a better understanding of trauma and how it affects children due to their involvement with the Ivison Trust programme (41: 95%). Again, 1 parent/carer disagreed with this statement, and 1 person did not respond.
- **Understanding of trauma and how it effects parents /carers:** In terms of parent / carer understanding of trauma, this was reported to have been enhanced because of the Ivison Trust programme for 39 (91%) of respondents, whilst 2 participants (4.8%) disagreed with this statement, 1 was unsure (2.4%) and 1 person did not answer this question.

In addition to an increase in knowledge around issues related to exploitation, engagement with the programme also has a positive impact on parents/carers capacity to understand effective support, including the creation of support plans, the service that can support them, and how to access that support when required:

- **Understanding how to create safety plans:** Because of the Ivison Trust programme, 40 parents/carers (93%) stated that they now understand how to create a safety plan for their children. However, 2 participants disagreed with this statement (4.8%), and 1 person did not respond.
- **Understanding who to contact if I have concerns about my child:** Forty (93%) of the parents /carers reported that they understood who to contact if they have concerns about their child since engaging with the Ivison Trust programme. However, 3 respondents (7%) did not report that this was the case.
- **Understanding of how safeguarding agencies can assist me:** An understanding of how support agencies could assist individual parents/carers because of engaging with the PACE programme was reported by 39 (91%) respondents, although 4 (9%) participants disagreed with this assertion.
- **Understanding of how to record and pass on information to assist the Police:** Thirty-eight (88%) of parents/carers said they now understand how to record and pass information on to the police. However, 3 respondents (7%) did not feel that this was the case, and 2 responses were missing.

**Figure 9: As a result of the Ivison Trust PLO programme, I now have increased knowledge / understanding of...**



### *Trust and Confidence in Support Services*

An overwhelming majority of parents/carers engaging with the programme reported that they had trust and confidence in their relationship with the PLO.

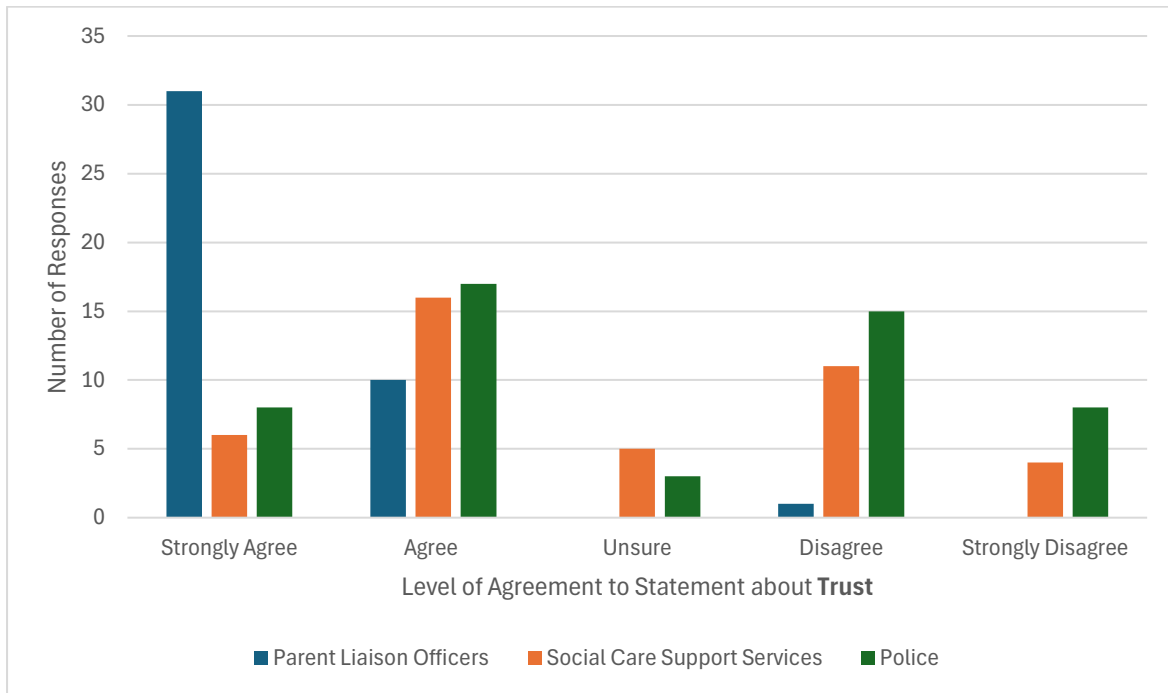
- Parent Liaison Officers: Trust and Confidence:** As a result of engaging in the Ivison Trust programme, 41 out of the 43 parents/carers (97.6%) reported that they had trust in Parent Liaison Officers, with only 1 participant indicating a lack of trust. One response was missing in this data. In terms of confidence, similarly, positive results were obtained, with 40 participants indicating confidence in Parent Liaison Officers (97.6%), whilst 1 respondent reported a lack of trust. There were 2 missing responses for this item.

In addition, most parents/carers also stated that their engagement in the programme increased their trust and confidence in Social Care Support Services. However, a notable minority did not give such positive responses. Similarly, although most parents/carers reported confidence and trust in the Police, a significant proportion did not.

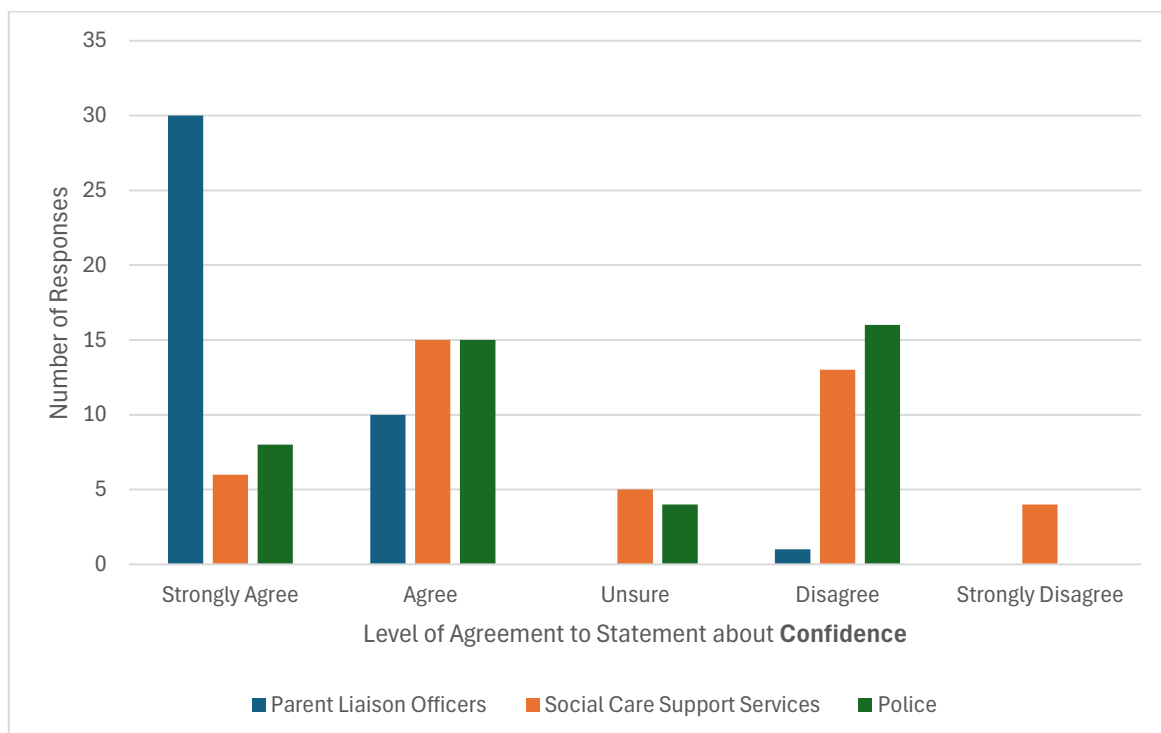
- Social Care Support Services: Trust and Confidence:** There was a mixed picture when considering trust and confidence in Social Care Support Services. Although just over half of parents /carers indicated trust in these services (22: 52.4%), a large proportion of the remaining respondents stated that they lacked trust (15: 35.7%). In addition, 5 respondents (11.9%) indicated that they were 'unsure' of their trust in Social Care Support Services. When asked to rate their confidence in these services, nearly half of parents/carers reported such confidence (21: 48.99%), whilst 17 (39.5%) stated that they lacked confidence. Five participants (11.6%) were unsure about their confidence level in Social Care Support Services.
- The Police: Trust and Confidence:** Trust of the police was reported by 25 respondents (58.1%) whilst 15 (34.9%) did not assert that they had such trust. Three respondents (5%) were unsure about their level of trust in the police service. Similarly, confidence in the police

was reported by 23 (53.5%) of parents/carers, whilst a lack of confidence was indicated by 16 (37.2) respondents. Four participants (9.3%) were unsure of their confidence level in the police.

**Figure 10: I have *trust* in these services.**



**Figure 11: I have *Confidence* in these services.**



*Referring agencies' perspectives on the impact for parents/carers*

As we have seen elsewhere in this report, the referring agencies were overwhelmingly positive in their survey responses about the work of the PLOs. In the context of

- **The PLO's intervention is working for the family:** 15 respondents (93.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that the PLO's intervention is working for the family. 1 respondent (6.3%) was undecided.
- **I would recommend PLOs to other child exploitation teams:** 16 respondents (100%) agreed or strongly agreed they would recommend PLOs to other child exploitation teams.
- **The PLO helping to improve communication between families / young people and the referring agency:** 15 respondents (93.8%) agreed or strongly agreed the PLO helped improve communication between families / young people and with them and colleagues. 1 respondent (6.3%) was undecided.



## 6. Cost-benefit analysis

### Key findings

The outcomes of the Ivison Trust PLO programme, as reported through this evaluation, demonstrate significant improvements across multiple areas. These improvements enhance the quality of life and prospects for the children and families involved and suggest substantial potential savings in educational, healthcare, social care, and criminal justice expenditures.

- **Educational Engagement:** There are indications that the programme is effectively addressing key issues leading to school absenteeism and exclusions. These improvements, vital for the participants' academic and social development, indicate potential savings by preventing the expensive repercussions of educational disruptions, thus aligning with strategic objectives in educational policy and intervention.
- **Emotional and Physical Well-Being:** Reports indicate that improvements in emotional and physical well-being contribute to the children and parents' overall health and quality of life. This includes potential reductions in hospital admissions for mental health issues and self-harm and the opportunity to pre-empt more severe health complications.
- **Social Care Need:** As reported by parents and agencies, a reduction in the need for social care points to the programme's efficacy in early intervention. This includes potentially significant fiscal savings from helping to prevent complex and costly social care cases, improving family dynamics and child welfare, and easing the burden on other social care services.
- **Crime and Antisocial Behaviour:** The observed decrease in antisocial behaviour and criminal involvement among the programme's participants is a significant indicator of its success in behavioural change. This improvement contributes to safer and more stable communities and implies a considerable reduction in costs associated with the criminal justice system. The programme's impact in this area extends beyond immediate savings, potentially influencing long-term societal outcomes and aligning with broader efforts to reduce youth crime and improve community safety.
- **Drug and Alcohol Misuse:** The significant reduction in drug and alcohol misuse, as reported by both parents and agencies, suggests substantial healthcare cost savings and reflects the programme's role in preventing the escalation of substance-related health issues. This has implications beyond immediate financial savings, contributing to long-term health outcomes and addressing a critical public health concern.

More broadly, the Ivison Trust PLO Programme represents an effective early intervention for families and children facing various challenges. The [Early Intervention Foundation \(EIF\) Technical Report](#) (against which this analysis was conducted) details higher costs associated with late-stage interventions in areas such as education, social care, and criminal justice. For instance, the cost of dealing with a child in the youth justice system or a case of school exclusion, as per the EIF data, significantly exceeds the Ivison Trust's average spending per family. This highlights the cost-effectiveness of the PLO programme, suggesting that early intervention can be a more economical approach compared to addressing issues after they have escalated.

## Approach

This cost-benefit analysis aims to evaluate the fiscal effectiveness of the Ivison Trust Parent Liaison Officers programme. This investigation delves into quantifying the programme's financial impact, balancing its outcomes against the expenditures incurred. The central aim is to assess whether the programme's benefits—specifically in reducing the need for late interventions in social care, education, health, and criminal justice—justify the costs of its implementation. This analysis endeavours to illuminate the programme's return on investment, thus shedding light on its overall economic value and effectiveness.

In this cost-benefit analysis, the primary data sources are survey responses from parents and agencies involved with the Ivison Trust PLO programme. These responses are invaluable for assessing the perceived impacts of the programme across various domains, including educational engagement, emotional and physical well-being, social care needs, antisocial behaviour, and substance misuse. The insights from these perspectives are critical for evaluating the programme's effectiveness in these key areas.

The Ivison Trust PLO programme data is analysed using the 'read across' methodology, which bridges the subjective nature of survey data with objective fiscal metrics. This approach compares the anecdotal experiences and perceptions from the surveys against the solid backdrop of established cost data for addressing similar issues at later stages, as outlined in [the Early Intervention Foundation \(EIF\) Technical Report](#). By translating the qualitative survey findings into quantifiable financial impacts, this methodology provides a unique lens to estimate potential cost savings attributable to early intervention. This approach enriches the analysis with a better understanding of the economic consequences of the programme's outcomes and offers a comprehensive view of its broader impacts.

The EIF Technical Report derives its costings for specific units through a detailed, multi-step process:

- **Identification of Key Intervention Areas:** The report first identifies areas where late interventions are common, such as education (school exclusions), social care (child protection plans), mental health, youth crime, and substance misuse.
- **Data Collection:** For each area, EIF collects detailed data. This may include government and public service financial records, as well as statistical data from relevant studies and reports. For example, the cost of school exclusions might involve data from educational authorities, while youth crime cost data could come from the justice system's financial reports.
- **Unit Cost Calculation:** The report calculates the average cost per unit (e.g., per case of school exclusion or child in the youth justice system). This involves analysing direct costs (like service provision or intervention costs) and indirect costs (such as long-term societal impacts or loss of productivity).
- **Adjustment for Variables:** Costs are adjusted for factors like regional cost variations, inflation, and policy changes. The EIF report might use standard economic methodologies like Consumer Price Index adjustments to ensure that costs reflect current values.
- **Benchmarking and Cross-Validation:** Costs are often benchmarked against similar studies or reports to ensure consistency and accuracy. Cross-validation with other data sources helps in corroborating the cost figures.

- **Analysis of Complex Cases and Overlaps:** The report acknowledges that some cases might be more complex and, hence, more expensive. It also considers overlaps in services (a child might need social care and educational support) and adjusts costs to avoid double-counting.

For example, to derive the cost of a child in the youth justice system, the EIF report analyses expenses related to court proceedings, custody, police involvement, and rehabilitation programmes. These figures are then averaged per case to provide a unit cost.

The cost figures from the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) Technical Report, based initially on 2016/17 data, have been updated to reflect 2024 prices. This adjustment uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation data from the Office for National Statistics. This ensures that the cost-benefit analysis is relevant to current economic conditions and accurately estimates the programme's financial impact.

## Findings:

The data collated for this evaluation indicates a positive impact of the Ivison Trust PLO programme across various areas. This feedback, predominantly from parents and agencies, suggests the programme's effectiveness in contributing to fiscal savings and societal benefits.

### *Educational Engagement*

The substantial increase in educational engagement, as observed by parents and agencies, suggests that the programme is effectively addressing key issues leading to school absenteeism and exclusions. These improvements, vital for the participants' academic and social development, indicate potential savings by preventing the expensive repercussions of educational disruptions, thus aligning with strategic objectives in educational policy and intervention.

#### **Survey Results:**

- **Parents:** 64.3% reported their children showing greater engagement in education.
- **Agencies:** 87.6% recognised the programme's positive influence on educational involvement.

#### **Potential Savings (per case)**

- **EIF Cost Items:** Related to school absenteeism and exclusions.
- **Financial Impact:** £2,463 for persistent absenteeism, £3,324 for exclusions.

### *Emotional and Physical Well-Being*

The reported improvements in emotional and physical well-being are critical, as they contribute to the children's overall health and quality of life. The potential reduction in hospital admissions for mental health issues and self-harm, as indicated by these improvements, not only aligns with healthcare objectives but also suggests a decrease in long-term costs for the healthcare system. This aspect highlights the programme's role in pre-empting more severe health complications and aligns with broader public health strategies.

#### **Survey Results**

- **Emotional Well-Being:** 62.8% improvement noted by participants.
- **Physical Well-Being:** 58.5% of parents reported better physical health.

#### **Potential Savings (per case)**

- **EIF Cost Items:** Self-harm and mental health hospital admissions.
- **Financial Impact:** £2,927 for self-harm, £55,168 for mental health admissions.

### *Social Care Need*

As reported by parents and agencies, the reduction in the need for social care points to the programme's efficacy in early intervention, which is crucial in preventing complex and costly social care cases. This outcome underscores the programme's impact on improving family dynamics and child welfare and indicates significant fiscal savings. It reflects a proactive approach to social care, potentially easing the burden on social care services and aligning with broader objectives to enhance child and family welfare systems.

#### **Survey Results**

- Parental Perception: 58.6% observed less need for social care.
- Agency Feedback: 70.6% confirmed reduced social care involvement.

#### **Potential Savings (per case)**

- EIF Cost Items: Looked After Children, Child Protection Plans, Children in Need (CIN).
- Financial Impact: £7,292 per Child Protection Plan, £2,125 per CIN.

### *Crime and Antisocial Behaviour*

The observed decrease in antisocial behaviour and criminal involvement among the programme's participants is a significant indicator of its success in behavioural change. This improvement not only contributes to safer and more stable communities but also implies a considerable reduction in costs associated with the criminal justice system. The programme's impact in this area extends beyond immediate savings, potentially influencing long-term societal outcomes and aligning with broader efforts to reduce youth crime and improve community safety.

#### **Survey Results**

- Parental Feedback: 60% witnessed a decrease in antisocial behaviour or crime.
- Agency Perspective: 93.8% affirmed programme effectiveness.

#### **Potential Savings (per case)**

- EIF Cost Items: Costs related to the justice system and antisocial behaviour.
- Financial Impact: £11,796 per case involving the justice system.

### *Drug and Alcohol Misuse*

The significant reduction in drug and alcohol misuse, as reported by both parents and agencies, not only marks a vital success of the programme but also has profound implications for public health and safety. These behavioural changes among the participants suggest substantial healthcare cost savings and reflect the programme's role in preventing the escalation of substance-related health issues. This achievement has implications beyond immediate financial savings, contributing to long-term health outcomes and addressing a critical public health concern.

#### **Survey Results**

- Parental Feedback: 50% noted a reduction in substance misuse.
- Agency Perspective: 93.8% confirmed reduction in misuse.

#### **Potential Savings (per case)**

- EIF Cost Items: Hospital admissions for alcohol and drug-related issues.
- Financial Impact: £2,311 for alcohol-related cases, £575 for substance misuse.

## Considerations on the cost-benefit analysis

**Survey Data Interpretation:** The survey responses uniformly indicate the positive impact of the Ivison Trust PLO programme across multiple areas. While these improvements align with agency feedback, translating them into fiscal savings is complex due to their subjective nature. The variability in actual outcomes highlights the need for caution in making definitive financial conclusions from this data.

**Fiscal Impact Assessment:** The analysis considers unit costs related to issues like school exclusions, social care needs, and youth crime. However, reliance on subjective data hinders accurately quantifying the fiscal impact. Incorporating objective data from external sources such as police records and educational statistics would enhance the accuracy of the financial assessment; collecting and using this data is a recommendation from this overall report.

**Savings Estimation and Interpretation:** The savings estimated in the analysis assume that survey responses reflect real-world changes. Given the lack of concrete data on actual reductions, these savings are indicative rather than conclusive. The analysis underscores the importance of corroborating subjective feedback with objective data to validate the potential fiscal and societal benefits.

**Quantifying Qualitative Outcomes:** While the programme's social and behavioural outcomes have been translated into monetary terms, some benefits, particularly qualitative ones like improved family dynamics and overall well-being, are difficult to quantify financially. This limitation suggests that the programme's full impact may extend beyond the scope of measured fiscal savings.

**Assumptions in Cost Calculations:** The unit cost calculations, which consider the duration and complexity of each case, are subject to variations based on individual circumstances. Additionally, potential overlaps in costs with other services provided to the children must be considered, as they could influence the interpretation of the programme's total potential savings. This consideration is crucial for a more comprehensive understanding of the programme's economic effectiveness.

## Further considerations:

**Survey Data Interpretation:** The survey responses uniformly indicate the positive impact of the Ivison Trust PLO programme across multiple areas. While these improvements align with agency feedback, translating them into fiscal savings is complex due to their subjective nature. The variability in actual outcomes highlights the need for caution in making definitive financial conclusions from this data.

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## 7. Conclusion: Key learning from the evaluation

### Areas of good practice

There are a wide range of good practices identified across the evaluation. It is clear that the PLO programmes comprehensive approach helps to tackle/prevent child exploitation, emphasizing partnership, personalization, support, and adaptability. In particular:

1. **An effective partnership and support system:** The PLOs work effectively in collaboration with parents and partner agencies to safeguard young people and disrupt exploiters. The support system for PLOs, including management oversight and clinical supervision, is robust, contributing to their effectiveness.
2. **Advocacy and relational safeguarding:** PLOs advocate for parents, helping them navigate the complexities of child exploitation and maintain relationships with their children. The relational safeguarding model recognizes parents as key partners in safeguarding.
3. **A dynamic and responsive referral process:** The programme demonstrates a dynamic referral process, with referrals coming from diverse sources, including social workers, youth justice services, and education. The involvement of PLOs directly in the referral process adds value, particularly in handling variable referral numbers and quality.
4. **A comprehensive needs assessment:** The needs assessment process is dynamic and used effectively to gauge and track progress. It is revisited regularly to monitor developments over time, especially for high-risk cases.
5. **Personalized and adaptive action plans:** The use of personalized action plans, developed collaboratively between PLOs and parents is highly effective. These plans are adaptable, catering to changing needs and situations, and address gaps in knowledge around child exploitation.
6. **Clear criteria for success based in a harm reduction approach:** Success is approached through a harm reduction model, with outcomes tailored to each family. This personalized approach contributes to a sense of achievable progress and addresses the complex nature of child exploitation.
7. **A comprehensive offboarding strategy:** Offboarding categories are clearly defined, aiding in understanding engagement trajectories. Exit strategies are co-created with parents, ensuring continued support through online forums and other service referrals.
8. **Effective multi-agency engagement and inclusivity:** The programme successfully engages with a variety of partner agencies, including social care and police. They are actively seeking increased involvement from education, health, and CAMHS to bolster the programme.
9. **Positive parent and referral agency experience:** Both parents and partner agencies report overwhelmingly positive experiences with the program. Parents feel listened to, understood, and validated, while agencies appreciate the communication, trust, and responsiveness of the program.
10. **Enhanced therapeutic support:** Parents can receive therapeutic support tailored to their needs. This relatively new addition to the programme includes a support telephone line for additional assistance, indicating a responsive approach to parent feedback and needs.

11. **Informed and flexible intervention strategies:** The program's strategies are informed by ongoing feedback and data, allowing for flexibility and adaptation in response to evolving needs and circumstances.

### Development opportunities

Although the programme is effective in its approach and delivery, there are development opportunities in which the PLO programme could further strengthen its approach, enhance its effectiveness, and expand its reach and impact. In particular:

1. **Enhancing engagement from the education sector:** There is an identified need for greater engagement and involvement from the education sector. Addressing this gap could improve early identification and intervention for children at risk.
2. **Expanding training for police and other agencies:** Improved training on child exploitation, particularly for police officers dealing with missing children reports, is necessary. This could enhance the overall response and support system for exploited children.
3. **Improving consistency in referral quality:** While the referral process is comprehensive, there are challenges with the consistency and quality of referrals, especially in terms of partners identification of risk categories. Standardizing referral processes or providing referral training for key partners could help address this issue.
4. **Broadening involvement:** Increasing involvement from health services, especially CAMHS, and other relevant agencies could provide a more holistic approach to child exploitation cases.
5. **Scaling up the therapeutic support offer:** While the therapeutic support has been positive, there is an opportunity to scale this up, possibly including more therapists and diverse therapeutic approaches to meet varying needs.
6. **Improving accessibility and outreach of support services:** While the support telephone line is a valuable resource, its visibility and accessibility could be improved (for example, by increasing the evening it is available) to ensure that more families are aware of and can access this support.
7. **Expanding emergency accommodation options:** Providing more emergency accommodation for families needing relocation due to threats from exploiters could be a critical addition, especially with enhanced funding.
8. **Incorporating further long-term follow-up and support:** the mechanisms for ongoing communication are well-received by parents. Developing further mechanisms for long-term follow-up and support post-engagement could help address ongoing challenges and the long-term effects of exploitation.
9. **Strengthening partnerships with external agencies:** Fostering stronger collaborations and integrations with external agencies, including social services and mental health services, could improve the overall effectiveness of the program.
10. **Focusing on early intervention and prevention:** There is an opportunity to focus more on early intervention and preventative measures, particularly in collaboration with education and community organizations.
11. **Improving financial data to illustrate benefits/impacts of the programme:** Incorporating objective data from external sources such as police records and educational statistics would



enhance the accuracy of the financial assessment; collecting and using this data is a recommendation from this overall report.

### Feasibility of future delivery and expansion

The feasibility of future delivery and expansion of the PLO programme is contingent on resource availability, staffing, infrastructure, partnerships, community engagement, adaptability, evaluation mechanisms, sustainability, policy compliance, and the impact on current services. A strategic approach that addresses these areas will be crucial for successful expansion. Considerations for this include:

1. **Resource availability:** Expansion requires adequate funding and resources. While the programme has shown effectiveness, scaling up will need increased funding. The VRP have begun finding the programme, and there are opportunities from diverse sources like government grants, private funding, or partnerships with other organizations.
2. **Staffing and training:** Expanding the programme would require recruiting more PLOs and ensuring they receive the necessary training and support. The feasibility of finding qualified staff and providing them with specialized training in child exploitation, trauma-informed care, and relational safeguarding needs consideration.
3. **Infrastructure and support systems:** Expansion will require a proportional increase in infrastructure, including office space, technology, and support systems. The programme must assess whether it can scale up its operational capabilities to meet increased demands.
4. **Partnership development:** The effectiveness of the PLO programme depends significantly on multi-agency collaboration to support a growth in numbers of families supported. Expanding the programme may require establishing new partnerships in new areas, and will likely require strengthening existing ones, especially in areas like education, healthcare, and community services.
5. **Community engagement and awareness:** another option to enable successful expansion is to support increase in awareness and engagement within the communities served. This involves outreach and education to ensure that families and potential referrers are aware of the programme and its benefits.
6. **Adaptability to diverse needs:** Expansion into new areas or communities may present diverse challenges and needs. The programme must assess its ability to adapt and tailor its approach to different contexts, communities, and demographics.
7. **Evaluation and feedback mechanisms:** As the programme expands, robust mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and feedback are important. This includes approaches to consistent data collection, tools for impact assessment, and adaptability based on feedback from clients and stakeholders.
8. **Impact on current services:** Assessing how expansion might impact current services is important. The programme must ensure that quality and effectiveness are not compromised in existing areas while expanding to new ones.

## Insight into the impact of proposed funding enhancement on Pace's work

Enhanced funding for the Ivison Trust PLO programme has the potential to significantly increase its capacity to serve families, expand its reach and services, improve the quality of support, and contribute to systemic changes in addressing child exploitation. For instance:

1. **Expansion of services and reach:** Additional funding would enable the expansion of the PLO program's reach into more areas in West Yorkshire. This would require increasing the number of PLOs to manage a larger number of cases across effectively and expanding operations into new geographical areas.
2. **Enhanced therapeutic support offering:** The report indicates that therapeutic support is highly valued by parents. Increased funding could allow for the hiring of additional therapists, potentially with varied specializations, to cater to a broader range of parental needs and reduce waiting times for these services.
3. **Strengthening early intervention:** Enhanced funding could facilitate more proactive early intervention and prevention efforts, particularly alongside increased collaboration with schools and community organizations, to identify and support at-risk children before issues escalate.
4. **Increased training and professional development:** More funds could support an increase in comprehensive training programs for staff, enhancing their skills in dealing with complex cases of child exploitation and improving service quality.
5. **Increasing emergency accommodation services:** The report highlights a need for more emergency accommodation for families needing relocation due to threats from exploiters. Enhanced funding could be directed towards developing such facilities, offering immediate safety solutions.
6. **Broadening community outreach and awareness:** Additional funding could support broader community engagement and awareness campaigns, ensuring that more families are aware of the PLO programme and can access its services.

## Specific and achievable recommendations to:

The following recommendations are mapped to the findings and themes in the report, ensuring they are grounded in the documented evidence and analyses. They are divided into three areas: supporting PLO deployment/expansion; improve programme monitoring and performance monitoring; and suggested research tools for future evaluations.

### Supporting PLO Deployment/Expansion

1. **Co-develop a strategic expansion plan:** to work with partners, including the VRP, to create a detailed plan outlining the geographical areas for expansion, the number of additional PLOs needed, training requirements, and timeline for deployment.
2. **Establish partnerships with educational institutions:** as identified across the report, increasing effective collaborations with schools and (potentially also) universities would help with increasing early identification of at-risk children and young people.
3. **Recruit and train new PLOs:** Implement a recruitment campaign focusing on attracting candidates with relevant, and diverse backgrounds. Provide comprehensive training on child exploitation, trauma-informed care, and relational safeguarding.

### **Improving Programme Monitoring and Performance Monitoring**

1. **Expand the data management system:** Utilize a software solution for data collection, case management, and reporting to streamline processes and improve data accuracy. This can be bespoke or specialist.
2. **Feedback mechanism:** Establish a structured feedback mechanism from families and partner agencies to continually assess and improve service delivery.
3. **Outcome-based measurement tools:** Develop clear outcome-based measurement tools that align with the program's goals, such as changes in family dynamics, children's well-being, and parental satisfaction.

### **Research Tools for Future Evaluations**

1. **Longitudinal studies:** Consider the use of longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of the PLO programme on families and children.
2. **Utilization of standardized assessment tools:** Use standardized tools for measuring psychological well-being, family functioning, and child safety to allow for comparison over time and with other similar programs.
3. **Cost-Benefit analysis tools:** consider how to integrate cost-benefit analysis methods to evaluate the economic impact and efficiency of the program.

## 8. Case studies

The following case studies have been chosen to provide examples of different aspects of the PLO intervention process. No names or identifying factors have been included.

1. **Case study 1** is an example of a case with the family of a 16-year-old child. It illustrates the impact of the process on the family using a range of quotes from those engaged.
2. **Case study 2** is an example of a case report, illustrating processes followed during an intervention.
3. **Case study 3** is an example of an intervention summary that details the process and impact of a PLO process.

### Case study 1 – case example for 16-year-old child, February 2023

Pace received a referral for a 16-year-old child in February 2023. The referral came from a locality social worker following sexual communication offences being reported to the police, with the child as the victim. Communication took place between the child's schoolteacher and himself via social media.

Management within the child exploitation social work and police teams did not consider this case applicable to be brought to the Multi-agency Child Exploitation team discussion or to receive a child exploitation risk assessment. However, within the social worker's Single Assessment, there was clear evidence of long-term grooming by the teacher over 5 years. Until the PLO's involvement, the child had only been referred to an organisation which related to his sexual orientation, and his needs in relation to exploitation had not been addressed. For this reason, the PLO advocated for the child to receive appropriate support to address the grooming and exploitation of which he had been a victim. The child was therefore allocated a Child Exploitation Project Worker (CEPW), who was able to support the child's understanding of his experiences and his feelings towards the perpetrator. This work also supported future safeguarding as it came to light that the child had met alone with a young adult who had been in contact with him through a dating app. The CEPW's intervention supported the child's understanding of how to date/meet people safely, including meeting people in public spaces and informing his mother where he was going.

The parent also felt that the child's school had not acted appropriately in handling the initial report/disclosure, a view supported by the police, who had been delayed in their ABE (Achieving Best Evidence) process. The PLO liaised with the school and supported the parent at meetings where she could establish what process had been followed and raise her concerns. The PLO also supported the parent in submitting a complaint to LADO.

The parent's experiences led her to want to be involved in impacting the experience of future victims and parents, so she was referred to the Pace Parent Participation group. The parent, therefore, remains involved with Pace and can use her experiences to inform policy and professional training.

Through the PLO's support and advocacy, the child was recognised as a victim of exploitation and received appropriate support. The parent was also enabled to advocate for herself and her child and to receive professional acknowledgement and understanding of the family's experiences. Upon the

PLO closing the case, the police investigation remained ongoing. The parent can re-refer themselves back into the service for further support if/when the case goes to court.

**Parent 1 to 1 feedback:**

*“It’s been very important coming from a place that someone understands, and it’s been really good for school for someone to have your back. Sometimes school don’t listen unless you take someone else, and they don’t action things as quick as what they’ve have done since you’ve been involved. You’ve been very helpful.”*

*“You’ve been the best we’ve dealt with. We’ve been able to contact you on WhatsApp immediately and you’ve been responsive, looked into stuff and leant on social workers a bit.”*

*“You’ve been very informative and told me things, like when I was thinking that it’s not police or social workers’ jobs to help with a kid that’s playing up.”*

*“You made me realise that shouting and arguing just raises it more and more, and you’ve taught me how to keep my calm.”*

*“[The perpetrator] doesn’t bother me anymore. We’ve moved past it.”*

*“Unlike most professional people you don’t look down your nose and you’re on the level. It doesn’t get your back up because you don’t talk to us like a piece of crap. You’re down to earth and help me with my anger and you can have a laugh.”*

*“The support you’ve given me has been amazing and the help in meetings. You stood in for me straightaway and you don’t take sides.”*

*“You’ve learnt me how to manage it a bit better than we was doing.”*

*“You have a good knowledge and understanding of the whole situation. Other places don’t have that knowledge.”*

*“It was good explained and some connection between the activity the bad people do and recognise where the problem could start.”*

*“Very supportive and that’s what I needed.”*

*“You were there with [my child] through court. Everything you’ve done and taught us has been really useful.”*

*“You took your time to explain everything; what exploitation is and working with the police, especially regarding children’s welfare. You’ve had a listening ear to whatever concerns that I’ve had regarding my son and been a good sport.”*

*“You’re very supportive and understanding. You’re not judgmental. You’ve been fantastic, honestly you have.”*

*“It’s specialist support from someone who understands, not just a supporter who doesn’t understand what’s going on.”*

**Parent Awareness Session Feedback:**

*“Thank you. Great sharing of information in all sessions.”*

*“I mainly just want to say a big, big thank you to you both for providing the training. I found it to be really positive and useful tool, in both the situation we are going through with [our child] ourselves but also in general. It’s something I’ll go on to have discussions with family and friends about to make them aware of things they probably haven’t thought much about either in order to help keep their children safeguarded from these dangers. I feel I have gained lots of knowledge around a subject I had previously known very little about. Thanks so much again.”*

**Professional feedback on Awareness Sessions:**

*“The session reinforces the best ways to notify parents about safeguarding their children.”*

*“Very informative.”*

*“I learnt about Pace and how they can support parents whose children have been exploited.”*

*“The videos hit home.”*

*“The session supported my existing knowledge of CVE/CSE/CCE. It was informative and delivered well.”*

*“I gained further knowledge in respect of websites/internet use.”*

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## Case Study 2 – Pace intervention example, February 2023

A 14-year-old child had been reported as missing, there were concerns around her escalation in behaviour, on this occasion, she was missing for over 24 hours, during this episode, she experienced sexual harm and unprotected sex. Child A alleged that she was 16 years old and that she consented to having sex. Child A was not in education, vulnerable due to her age and using cannabis. There were 3 reported missing episodes since Nov 2022. Child A had been in touch with an older male, 20-year-old. They claim to be friends only but seem to be a close friendship. There were concerns that the male may attempt to take advantage of the child A although no indication of harm was disclosed.

The allocated Social Worker attended the meeting and shared:

- After the assessment period the plan was too close to CSC, with referrals to breaking the cycle and Youth in Mind to be made
- Concerns around Child A’s low mood
- Missing episodes were escalating in November, and Child A shared that she had sexual contact with another young person and alleged this was consensual. Child A also shared that she was under the influence of alcohol and cannabis.
- The parent was observed as protective, took her phone away, grounded her at the time of the incident, and adhered to the safety plan.

- Mother has removed the Wi-Fi.
- Recent missing episode where Child A was in company with an adult male raises concerns around contextual safeguarding or whether Child A was being groomed by this person. Parent-reported that she met the adult male on Snapchat after he commented on a video/social media platform where comments posted were unkind to Child A. The adult male sounded sympathetic, and subsequently, they became friends. The adult male came to the house and met mother, brother, and her sister.
- The parent was concerned that the male said he was 15; however, it was discovered 3 days prior to the missing episodes that he was actually 20 years of age. The parent also discovered that the male has additional needs, which is the reason he presents in a younger manner.
- Child A shared that they kissed; nothing else had happened. Child A didn't believe that she was being groomed and that they were just friends.
- Child A was adamant she still wanted to see the male, and if she were not allowed, she would kill herself. The male was also contacting the mother, stating the same. The parent was advised to report to the police.
- Parent shared concerns that she was not in education and was in a low mood. The parent was advised to take her to A&E if she is worried about her mental health as her GP will not see her, Advice was also given to lock medication away.
- Child A shared that she wanted to come into care as she felt that her mother was suffocating her.
- Child A was on roll at an Academy, and there was a managed move imminent to a college; however, the parent feels that this was too far for her to travel to and from.
- A strategy meeting was held, and professionals agreed that the threshold was not met for section 47 as the mother was doing everything she could.

### *Police Information*

- Child A is quite well known. Present during at domestics when younger.
- Child A has been missing quite a few times since November:  
07/11/2022  
28/11/2022
- 24/01/2023: The incident we are referring to occurred when she was missing overnight.
- Previous crime recorded in December, where Child A said that she'd had consensual sex with another male but wouldn't name this male where there was cannabis and alcohol involved.
- Concerns that she only turned 14 in October.
- Clearly been groomed by an adult male who is now harassing Child A and his mother, which had been reported. The male was arrested, interviewed, and bailed with conditions. Previously bailed for possession of indecent images, concerns that he's predatory.

### *PACE Intervention Summary:*

This case was in crisis when I introduced myself to parent. Child A's relationship was fragile with her mum when I contacted parent via phone on the 2nd of February.

On the 20th of February my contact with parent revealed that Child A had been reported missing over the weekend, whilst Child A had been located, she was refusing to return home. Child A took an undisclosed amount of medication and as a result was admitted to hospital.

Child A requested to come into care. This was a pivotal moment whereby parent was supported and guided to respond differently to her daughter.

I provided parent with sessions on her understanding of grooming and exploitation. Parent told me: *"I get it now and I recognise the trauma in myself too."*

The direct work emphasised behavioural trauma responses which her daughter and herself were displaying. This acknowledgement and awareness impacted on the parent. Child A was assigned to a specialist child exploitation social worker and with additional partners. This collaborative working together resulted in Child A disclosing her abuse and completed a video recorded interview.

The partnership working ensured, I was in communication with social workers to be available to provide parent with the emotional support at the appropriate times.

Parent engaged with focused work on understanding grooming and exploitation. I provided parent with mobile phone safety plans and materials relating to online applications that her daughter could access, and the risks they pose.

The trauma awareness helped parent to reduce the guilt she felt and could recognise behaviours relating to both her own abuse and that of her daughter's.

At the time, the parent and Child A were living in a property which was known by associates of the adult male, whereby threats of harm were directed to both parent and Child A.

I established links with Bradford Council and located the area's housing manager. I requested urgent assistance on behalf of the parent and her daughter to be rehoused. To support my application, I contacted investigating police officers, and they agreed to provide me with a supporting evidential statement.

This request was successful. The family were relocated to an area of Bradford close to family members which enhanced their support networks. The move was completed in two weeks.

The impact of the relocation strengthened parent and Child A's relationship. A significant factor parent said was, *"we feel safe, and we can make this our home."*

The element of feeling safe afforded parent to receive direct work about coping strategies and self-reflection. With encouragement, parent agreed to a referral to Together Women in Bradford. I promoted this service to parent as her experiences and trauma had compressed her confidence and well-being.

#### ***Outcomes:***

Following family sessions with both parent and her daughter regarding self-care for each other, Child A began to explore her educational needs. Mother and daughter each agreed, if Child A returned to learning, then parent would attend the Together Women Project.

Parent was supported with physical trips to view potential school placements and assistance with completing online school applications.

I completed a referral to the Buttle UK fund and was successful in obtaining the below Award:

- £175.00 Horse therapy
- £100.00 Uniform
- £350.00 Teen bed and bedding



- £262.00 Teen bedroom storage
- £100.00 Window coverings
- £250.00 Soft furnish / decoration.
- £1,237.00 Total Amount

Child A has a bedroom she can feel safe in, personally chosen items which has contributed to an improvement in her mental health.

Parent has begun to attend Together Women and I hope this will aid her to build her confidence and potentially trigger enthusiasm for further education or employment which she has discussed with me previously.

Child A has returned to a mainstream school on a staggered basis. This is a tremendous achievement given Child A had not attended school for a considerable length of time.

Child A is about to commence her horse therapy where she can receive treatment for her trauma.

All core groups were attended, RAM meetings, Strategy meetings and an ICPC were an integral piece of work to benefit my work with parent.

I will be supporting parent at the court trial in October.

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### Case study 3: intervention summary, July 2023

#### *Contextual Information*

A male child had been within a group of young teenagers with repeated reported missing episodes and concerns that; county lines could be a contributing factor to his disappearances. 13 missing incidents were recorded with the last incident on 04.05.23. Patterns reflected clear elements of peer influence/pressure whereby the child and peers often travelled out of area, predominantly using the London train lines, jumping trains from Wakefield Westgate. This child would go missing for over 24 hours, on occasions 48 hours until located by the Police. From intelligence it was known this group of young people engaged in criminal activity (theft of food, escalating to theft of motorbikes). There were concerns towards the latter stage of this child's missing incidents as; he would return home with bruising to his arms (possible punch marks) and on one occasion, significant bruising to his ear. The child initially asserted he 'fell over' however he has since reported the injuries were caused by someone.

This child's previous peer network created several vulnerabilities which repeatedly reduced his safety and resulted in him being coerced into criminal activity with a 'group think' mentality. His peers had significant number of missing incidents overnight, travelling out of area, entering unknown and unfamiliar neighbourhoods, engaging in criminality (there has been a clear escalation with robberies/knife point robberies), drug misuse, suggestion of weapons. There have been clear elements of peer-on-peer exploitation for this child. The hypothesis for his behaviours were linked with him attempting to seek a sense of belonging and identity in a friendship group, whereby he reported he was forced to engage in criminality. He was physically assaulted by his peers on more than one occasion and had items (e.g. phone, clothing etc.) taken from him.

### *Parent Impact*

- Parent experienced heightened anxiety which had a detrimental impact on her mental health.
- Symptom's escalated when her child exited the group. Mother and child were followed to Scarborough by associates involved on the OCG. This exasperated feelings unsafety for both parent and child.
- The dramatic change in her child's behaviours because of the exploitation and threat, resulted in a fractured relationship.
- Her child stopped attending school and the pressure and judgement including the wider family members was overwhelming for the parent.
- The parent's child began to refuse to enter Wakefield or surrounding areas where his previous peer network associated or leave the house unaccompanied without an adult present. Parent expressed her son had articulated worries surrounding his physical safety whereby he believed he would be at risk of harm for 'being a grass'. Parent was struggling with her child becoming socially withdrawn and reclusive. The strain on the child's relationship with his Mum at home all day, refusing to go out and Mum feeling she can't leave her son alone resulted in verbal disputes and incidents of trauma induced distress. This was evidenced when Mum had left the home to meet with friends, returning later than expected whereby her son had punched walls/'trashed' the house.

### *Pace intervention*

- Collaborative partnership working with the CVE specialist increased confidence for the parent to consent to a bespoke programme of support.
- Sessions to assist the parent with her understanding of grooming and exploitation provided an empathic response to her son's trauma. Feelings of frustration reduced, as the awareness and knowledge strengthened their relationship. Parent was able to have conversations with her child with a replaced understanding and patience.
- With the parent's child refusing to attend school through fear, the PLO successfully applied for financial assistance which funded direct taxis to and from school. In addition, booster online learning sessions for her child were awarded as part of the funding sought by the PLO from an external agency.
- This approach to support, seeking solutions for parent's main concerns (transport getting her son back into education) relieved her sense of powerlessness to protect her child.
- In addition to the support provided by the PLO, the parent was supported to attend Pace's therapeutic residential weekend.
- Expert workshops included strategies in managing trauma, sharing circles, and lived experience speakers. The PLO remained with the parent throughout every session to provide reassurance and confidence.
- Parent reported; "I felt shame and guilt and questioned why this had happened to my son? The Pace Parent Event helped me to see, I wasn't a bad parent. I have a new confidence in myself and our future together."
- Pace has attended all meetings relating to the parent's child, supported partners with sharing information and collaborative working to achieve an improved outcome for this family.

The family remain open to Pace currently. However, closure is now being explored due to there being no risk of exploitation present. As part of the exit strategy, parent has agreed to engage with Pace's in house therapist and will receive 6 sessions.

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## Appendix 1: further details on data collection and demographics

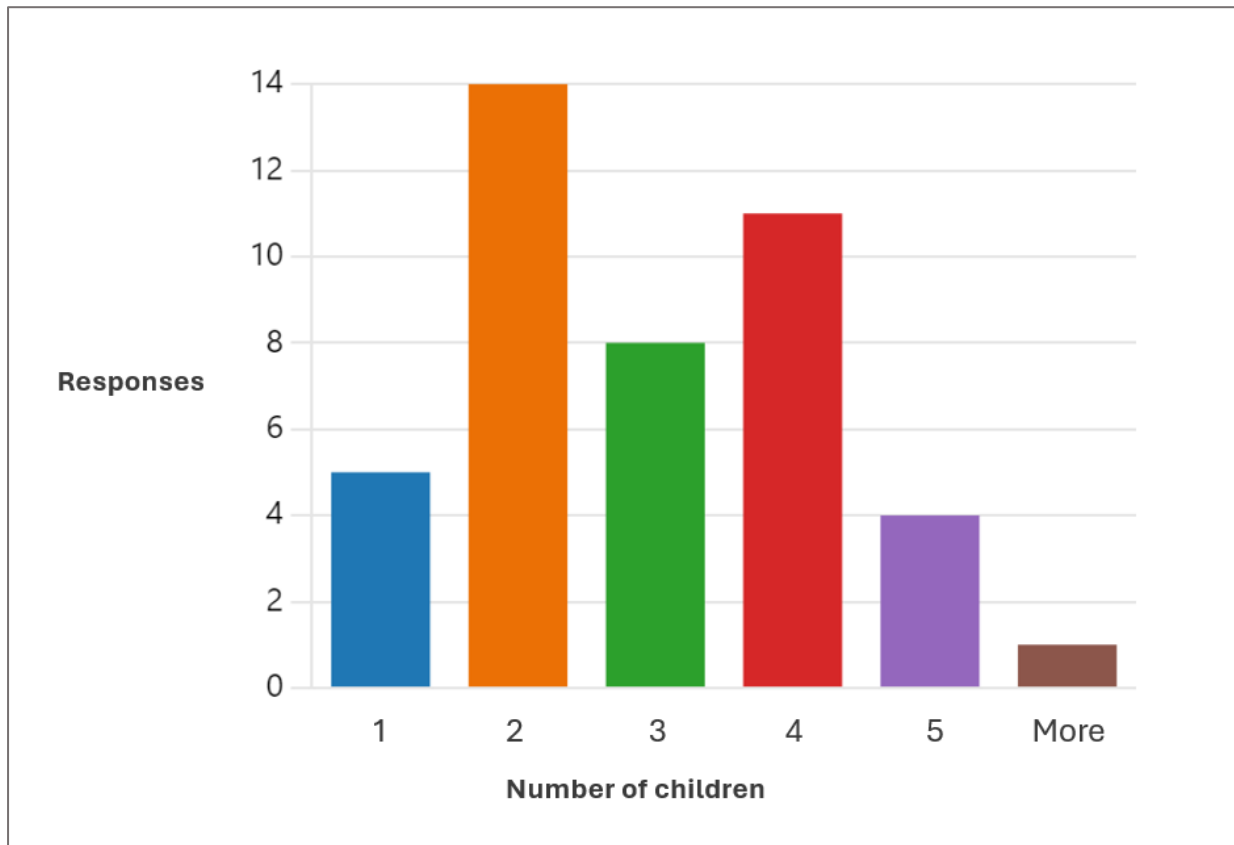
### Survey Data:

We conducted two mixed methods online surveys with tailored and standardised questions using Likert scales, sliding scales, multiple choice, and thematic qualitative questions. The first was with parents and carers that had worked or were still working with the Ivison Trust PLO programme; the second was with agencies that interface in some way with the Ivison Trust PLO programme.

**Parent/Carer survey:** There were 43 responses to the parent/carers survey. Most participants were over 35 years of age, Woman, heterosexual and White / British. Very few reported the presence of a physical disability or a neurodiverse condition. The relationship status of respondents was varied, as was the number of children they had. Detailed breakdowns of the responses include:

- Age - Most respondents (19) were in the 35-44 age bracket, followed by 11 being in the 45-54 age range. The remaining 13 individuals stated their age bracket being either 55 and over (8) or 25-34 (4). One person did not disclose their age.
- Gender Identity - Most respondents (35) stated their gender identity as 'Woman', with 6 stating 'Man', whilst 1 person stated that they were either 'non-binary' or 'preferred not to say' respectively.
- Sexual Orientation - 39 of the 43 respondents said that they had 'Heterosexual/straight' sexual orientation, whilst 1 person said they were 'Lesbian' and 3 individuals 'preferred not to say'.
- Ethnicity - 'White/ White British' was the predominant ethnic classification of respondents (27), whilst 'Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British' was the second most common ethnic group in our sample (7). Some individuals described themselves as 'Asian / Asian British' (4), or 'Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups' (2), or 'Other Ethnic Group' (2). One respondent preferred not to answer this question.
- Presence of Physical Disability - Almost all respondents said that they did not have a physical disability (40), whilst 2 participants said that they did. One person preferred not to answer this question.
- Presence of a Neurodiverse Condition (e.g., Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: ADHD) – Thirty-eight respondents stated that they did not have a neurodiverse condition, whilst 2 individuals answered in the affirmative. Three respondents preferred not to answer this question.
- Relationship Status – There was an approximately even split between those participants who described themselves as 'Single' (13) and those who described themselves as 'Married' (10). Similarly, 4 participants each said they were either in a 'Civil Partnership', 'Living with someone', 'Divorced' or 'Widowed', respectively. Three participants stated that they were 'Separated', and 1 individual preferred not to answer this question.
- Number of Children - The most common number of children for respondents to have was 2 (14 participants), followed by 4 (11 participants) and 3 (8 participants), then 1 (5 participants). Four respondents had 5 children, whilst another 1 respondent stated that they had more than 5 children. See figure 1 below.

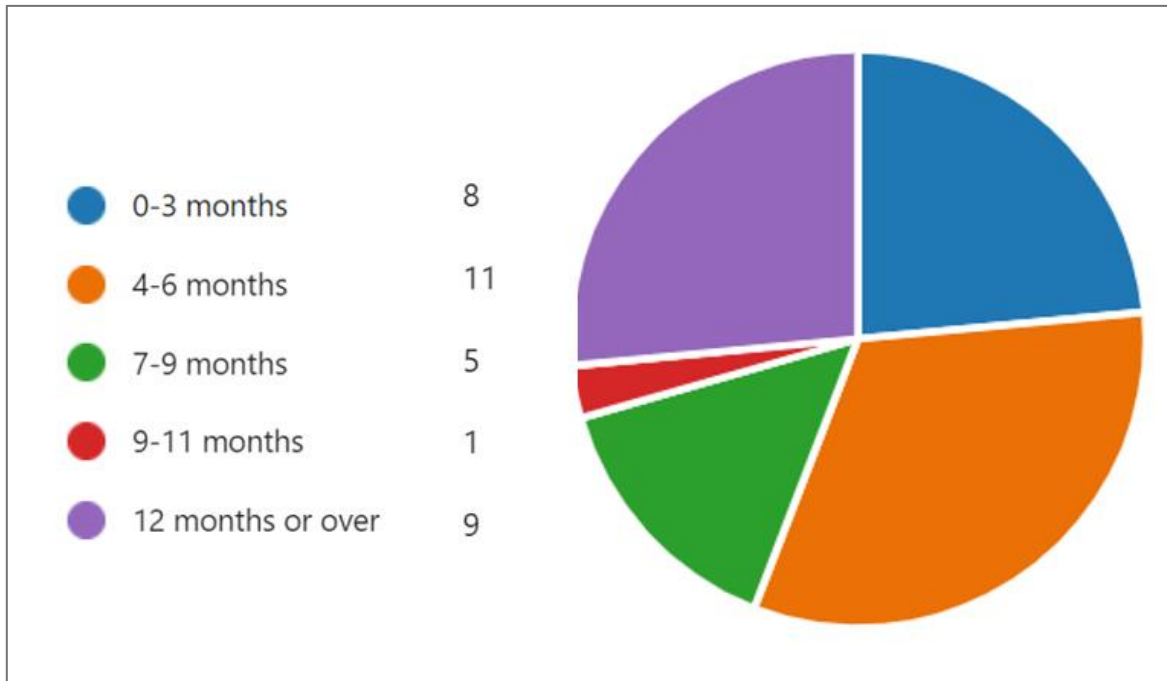
**Figure 1: The number of children for parents /carers**



Most parents /carers were currently engaged with Ivison Trust, and most had been working with the organisation for less than 6 months, although a significant minority had been with Ivison Trust for over 12 months. There was an approximately even split in locality, and in the number of parents /carers who said they had engaged with Ivison Trust independently of their Parent Liaison Officer. The ages of children involved with Ivison Trust varied, but most were 13 and 14 and similar numbers of male and female children were indicated.

- Currently Working with Ivison Trust - Thirty-four respondents stated that they are currently working with Ivison Trust, whilst the remaining 9 said that they had previously worked with this organisation.
- Length of Time Working with Ivison Trust – Eleven respondents had been working with Ivison Trust for 4-6 months, whilst 9 and 8 respondents respectively stated that they had been working for Ivison Trust either for over 12 months, or for less than 3 months. Five individuals said that they had been involved with Ivison Trust for between 7 and 9 months, whilst 1 respondent stated that they had been working with this organisation for between 9 and 11 months. See Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: Parents /Carers length of time working with Ivison Trust**



- Locality of Work with Ivison Trust – There was a relatively even split in the four geographical areas where the Ivison Trust works. Thirteen individuals stated that their engagement was in Bradford, 12 stated that this was in Kirklees, 11 in Wakefield and 7 in Calderdale.
- Engagement with Ivison Trust Independently from the Parent Liaison Officer – Twenty-three participants had not engaged with Ivison Trust independently of their Parent Liaison Officer, whilst 19 said that they had. Of these respondents, most did not specify which services they used, but of those that did provide this information, the services utilised were the Parent Participation Programme (4 participants) the support line (4 participants), counselling (2 participants) and the Parent Network Event (2 participants). One parent / carer did not respond to this question.
- Age of Child at the Commencement of Engagement with Ivison Trust – The most frequently reported age of the child at the start of their engagement with Ivison Trust was 13 (11 respondents), followed by age 14 (9 respondents), then ages 12, 15 and 16 were reported by 5 respondents respectively. Relatively infrequent ages reported were 17 (4 respondents), 10 (3 respondents) and 11 (1 respondent).
- Gender of Child at the Commencement of Engagement with Ivison Trust – male was more frequently reported than female; 25 males and 19 females. One parent / carer had both a male and female child engaged in the programme, hence the total of responses here is 44, more than the total number of participants who completed the survey (43). No parent / carer stated that their child was non-binary.

**Referring partner surveys:** There were 17 responses to the Referring Partner Survey. Responses came from across the four areas in which Ivison Trust PLOs were active. The detailed breakdown of responses includes:

- 9 participants worked in Kirklees, 2 participants worked in Wakefield, 2 participants worked in Bradford, 4 participants worked in Calderdale.

- Respondents worked in a range of organisations: 3 respondents worked for the Kirklees Youth Engagement Team, 2 respondents worked for the police, 3 respondents worked in local government: 1 respondent worked for Kirklees Council, 1 respondent worked for Wakefield Council, 1 respondent worked for the local authority, 4 respondents worked in education (1 respondent stated education, 1 respondent worked for Kirklees College, 1 respondent worked for Kettelthorpe High School, 1 respondent worked for Holmfirth High School), 1 respondent worked for YES, 1 respondent worked for Calderdale children’s social care, 1 respondent worked for Bradford CE and missing club, 1 respondent worked for L&D, 1 respondent worked for Brambles.
- Respondents worked in a range of roles: 3 respondents were youth engagement officers, 2 respondents were commissioners, 2 respondents were social workers, 3 respondents were managers (1 respondent was a team manager, 1 respondent was a service manager, 1 respondent was a pastoral manager) 1 respondent’s role was pastoral, 1 respondent was a deputy DSL, 1 respondent was a safeguarding officer, 1 respondent was a detective sergeant in the child exploitation team, 1 respondent was a detective supervisor, 1 respondent was a senior STR worker – youth pathway, and 1 respondent was a learning mentor.
- Respondents had worked in their role from 3 months to 22 years. Three separate simple linear regressions showed that time in role did not predict the key indicators of ‘the PLO intervention is working for the family’, ‘I have confidence in PLO’ and ‘would recommend Ivison Trust to other referring agencies. This indicates that respondents were responding to the survey based on their perceptions of Ivison Trust rather than other role-related experiences.

### Additional and secondary data

In addition to the primary data, as part of the evaluation we requested and were provided a range of secondary data from the Ivison Trust team. This included:

- Financial data relating to service funding and costs.
- Participation data related to service use.
- Responses from parents as provided on Ivison Trust feedback forms.
- Case study examples from those engaging with the service.



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