



Hate and Mate Crime Workshops

**Delivered by:
Jane Hughes**

Safeguarding Consultant

Today

The Isle of Wight Safeguarding Adults Board in partnership with Inclusion Outright CIC are running a series of FREE workshops on mate crime, aimed at those working in organisations on the Island who come into contact with people with learning disabilities..

The workshops will cover:

- What is mate crime?
- Who could be more vulnerable to mate crime?
- What makes it different to other types of abuse and hate crime?
- Identifying mate crime
- Reporting
- What can we do about it?

Disability hate crime

- ACPO describe a Disability Hate Crime as: “Any criminal offence which is perceived to be motivated because of a person’s disability or perceived disability, by the victim or any other person.”
- A Disability Hate Incident is: “Any incident which is perceived to be motivated because of a person’s disability or perceived disability, by the victim or any other person”.
- “Any crime in which disability is a factor, including the impact on the victim and where the perpetrator’s perception that the victim was disabled was a determining factor in his or her decision to offend against the specific victim.” CPS.

Attitude of society

Historical social attitudes towards disability have left people feeling worthless, despised and without human rights.

This has two effects:

- i) it makes it easier for perpetrators to justify what they do, to themselves and others, as their victim doesn't really matter.
- ii) the legacy of the historical attitude has left a subconscious attitude with carers that such treatment of disabled people is inevitable, perhaps even deserved. This often means that no action is taken or the victim themselves blamed.
- (Typical phrases are 'Just ignore it.' or 'Don't go into that shop then.')

Underpinned by disabilism

- Disability hate crime and other crimes against disabled people may be underpinned by disablism or prejudice against disabled people
- The stereotype based belief that disabled people as a group are somehow inherently vulnerable, weak and easy targets is an attitude that motivates some crimes against disabled people
- The prejudice, discrimination and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairments or medical conditions, but rather stems from specific barriers they experience on a daily basis: this is known as the social model of disability.

What is 'mate crime'?

- Mate Crime happens when a person with a learning disability is 'befriended' by someone who goes on to abuse or exploit that relationship. This has led to people with learning disabilities being ripped off, sexually abused, groomed for criminal offences, even murdered.
- When we look at the high profile cases [of disability hate crime], there is an element of befriending or knowing the offenders who abuse the friendship, which is an extra dimension which doesn't often occur with other types of hate crime.”

Background



In 2006 Steven Hoskin was abused, tortured and finally killed by people who he thought were his friends.

‘The term ‘disability hate crime’ fails to recognise the duration of Steven’s contact with his persecutors; the counterfeit friendship’.

Steven Hoskin Serious Care Review (2007)

Background



Steven wanted friends.

He did not see that the friendship he had so prized was starkly exploitative, devoid of reciprocity and instrumental in obstructing his relationships with those who would have safeguarded him.'

Steven Hoskin Serious Care Review (2007)

Who may be a target?

- Someone with no close family or friends
- Someone with a physical or learning disability
- Someone experiencing mental health issues
- Someone who misuses drugs and/or alcohol
- Someone who is isolated from the community
- Someone with low self worth.

What sort of abuse does 'mate crime' involve?



- Mate crime does not usually start with abuse or bullying, it starts with someone 'making friends' with a person with a learning disability.
- However, it can go on to include most of the categories of abuse detailed in the Care Act 2014.

Types of crimes and abuse

- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Psychological/emotional
- Neglect
- Abuse of trust/professional abuse.

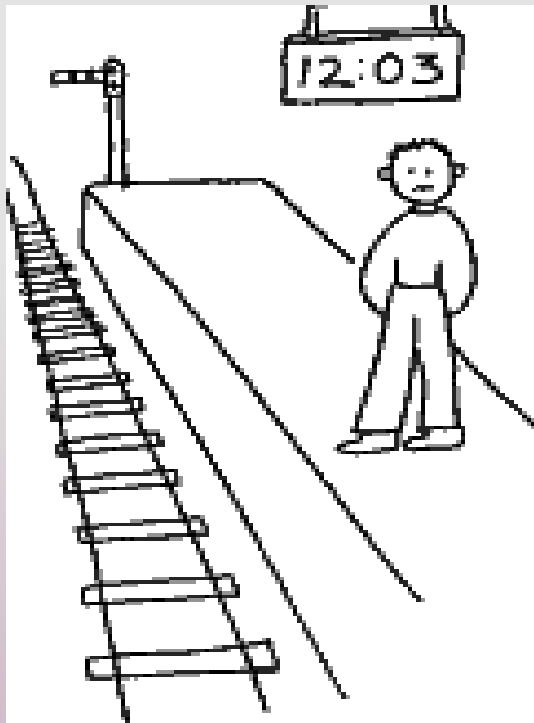
Examples of indicators

- Deference or submission to a suspected abuser
- The perpetrator might demand or ask to be lent money and then not pay it back
- The perpetrator might misuse or borrow and not return the property of a person
- When the victim has received their benefits and been shopping the perpetrator may visit and clear the cupboards of food and alcohol.
- The victim may have unexplained injuries
- The victim may be involved in sexual acts to which they cannot consent
- The victim may show signs of weight loss
- The victim may be unable to pay their bills
- The victim may be socially isolated from usual network of friends/family/community
- The victim may have an accumulation of goods/services bought from sales' staff, including telesales.

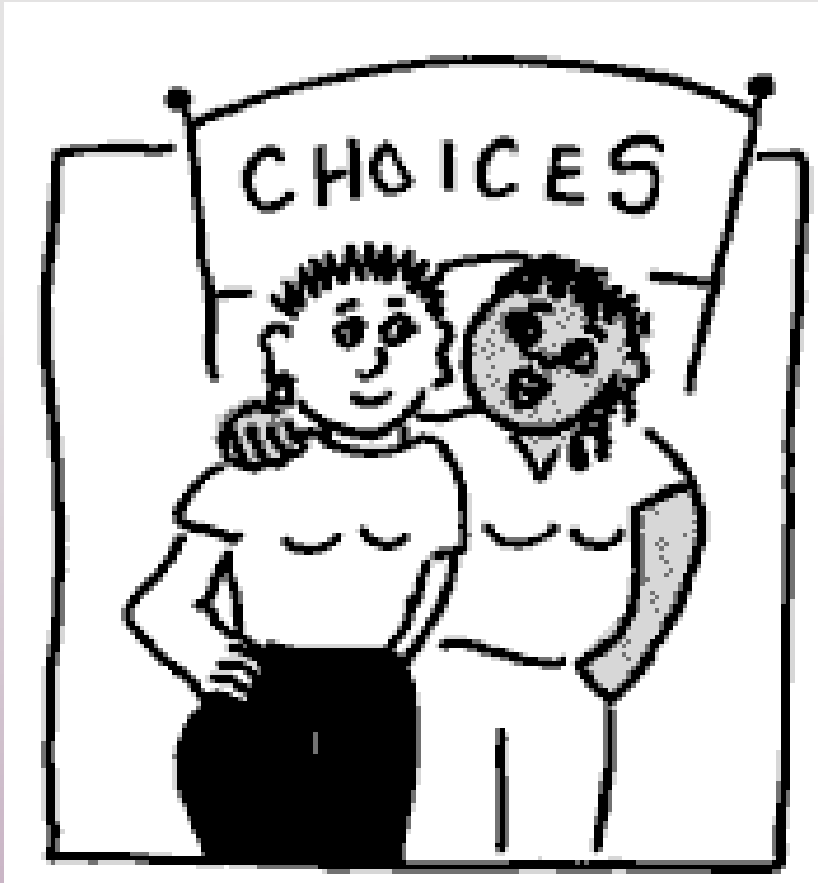
What makes mate crime different?

Duration of contact

- Most hate crimes are thought of as being perpetrated by strangers on a one-off basis, often in a public situation (for example, name calling or throwing objects on a train or bus).
- Mate crimes take place within established relationships. Steven Hoskin had known his murderers for 18 months prior to his murder.



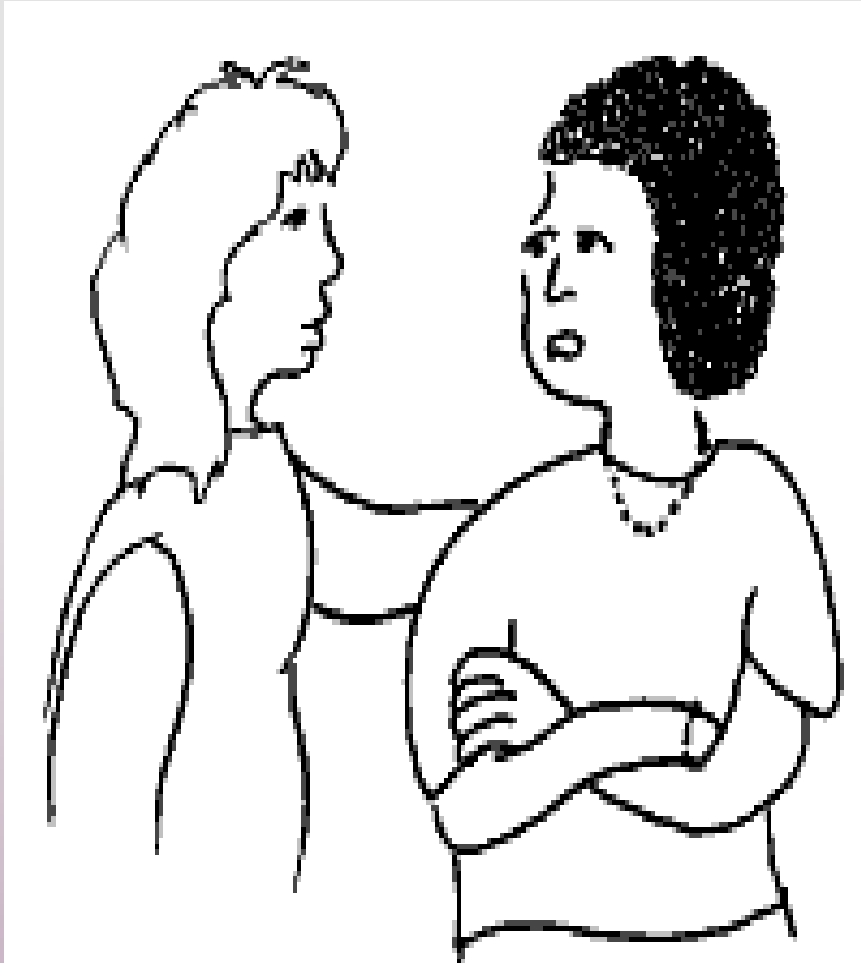
What makes mate crime different?



It may appear consensual

- The relationship, and even the abuse, might have been invited by the person with a learning disability, raising issues of mental capacity, consent, coercion, control and (informed) choice.

What makes mate crime different?



It is often not recognised by victim

- People may well not realise that they are being abused or exploited, and even if they do the relationship may be more important to them than any abuse that takes place within it. The abuser may be the victim's only 'friend'.

What makes mate crime different?



May not be illegal

- We have many examples of people with learning disabilities regularly meeting a group of friends for a few beers. This sounds fine, but it's always at the expense of the person with a learning disability - always their flat, their beer, their food, etc.. This is clearly abusive, but not always illegal.

What makes mate crime different?



It largely affects people not in the system

- It is worth remembering that 9 out of 10 people with a learning disability do not receive services from the state.
- They are often living in vulnerable situations with little or no support.
- They are the people who are most likely to be targeted for mate crime.

Need for friendships

- Everyone needs friends and to find a place in a community or communities. People with learning disabilities, for a variety of reasons, often struggle to make friendships, and to be accepted in their communities
- This makes it more likely that any offer of 'friendship' will be accepted, and that people will be far less likely to end a friendship, even when it seems as though it has become dysfunctional. Any friend is better than no friend at all.

How can you tell when a mate crime is happening?

- It is important to identify when it is happening early, as if not stopped the abuse is likely to be repeated and to become more serious. As we have seen, this can even lead to murder if the warning signs are not reported, shared and acted upon
- There will often be the same indicators as for other kinds of abuse.

Action to take if mate crime is identified

- Listen to the adult
- What are their views and concerns?
- What outcomes would they like?
- Would they benefit from involvement of an advocate?
- Do they want to report to the Police, do they need help to do this?
- Explain limits to what you can and cannot do
- Consider what action should be taken in line with reporting crimes, child safeguarding responsibilities, section 42 Care Act duties.

What can be done to prevent Mate Crime?

- Become aware of your local community resources and networks
- Reduce isolation by enabling people to feel they are part of the community
- Consider use of advocacy and the MCA as a legal framework to support service users decision making
- Give posters/leaflets to those participating in the Safer Places Scheme, libraries, GP surgeries, hospitals, community centres etc.

Stopping mate crime - prevention

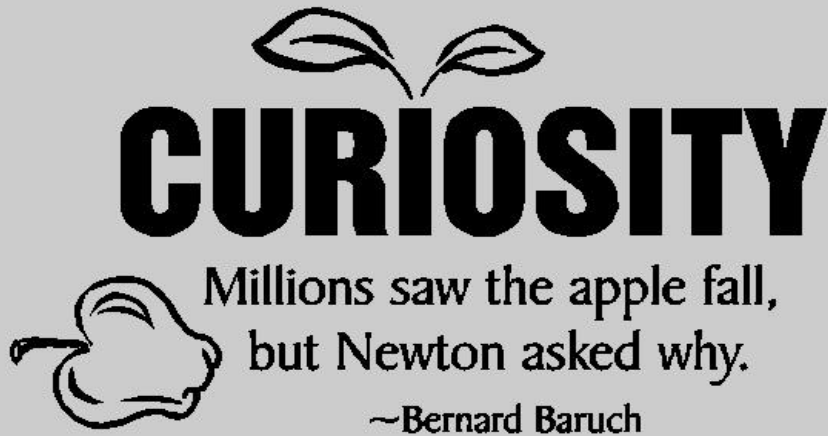
- ***Risk assessment.*** Failure to take steps to safeguard people from abuse or life-threatening events is in breach of the **European Convention on Human Rights**
- Safeguarding processes must be triggered when someone is believed to be at risk of harm and not only when evidence of harm has become obvious
- Agencies have to be proactive in undertaking risk assessments to ensure that preventive action is taken.

Stopping mate crime - prevention

Have professional curiosity

People with learning disabilities, at present, are very unlikely to disclose mate crime.

It is up to their peers, family, friends, neighbours, carers and the community to watch for it and to take action, or support the person to do so.



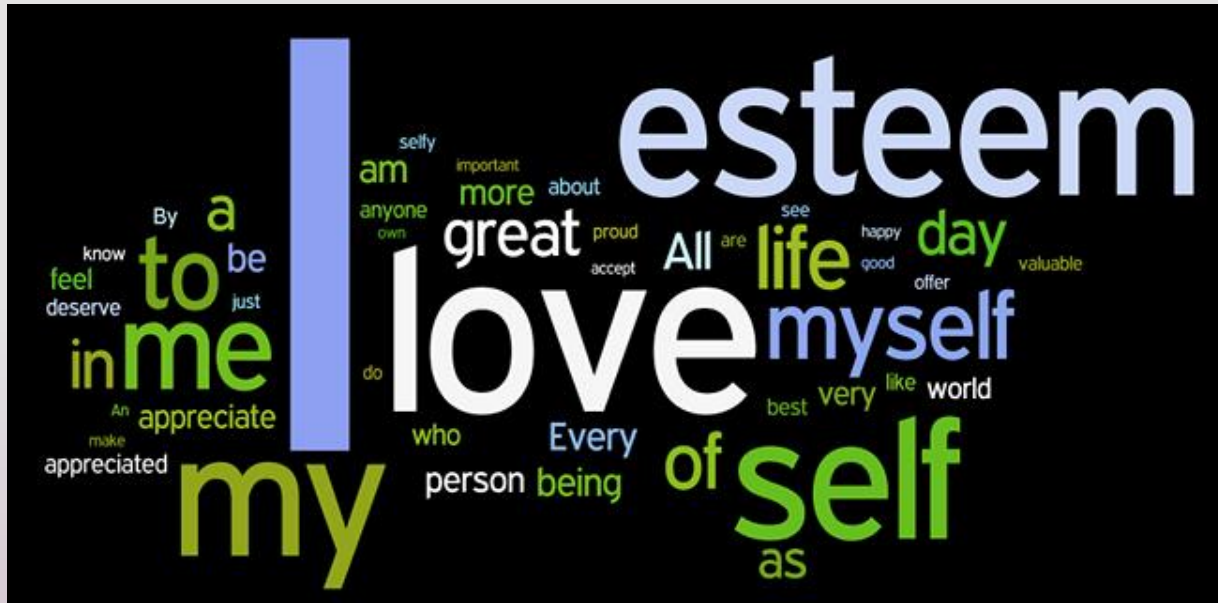
Stopping mate crime - prevention



Act on beliefs not evidence

Many reviews and inquiries concerning the abuse of people with learning disabilities have concluded that people strongly suspected that abuse was taking place, but were waiting for a last piece of undeniable evidence, that never comes.

Stopping mate crime - prevention



Enhanced self-esteem and relationship skills; creating and supporting social opportunities.

These are longer term issues, but the closer people really do get to an ordinary life the more abuse will diminish.

Stopping mate crime - prevention



Being part of the neighbourhood

- People need to reach out to, become a vital part of, and strengthen, their local communities.
- People who are valued in their communities are less likely to be abused, and abuse is less likely to take place in strong communities.
- Neighbourhood Management Programmes may be able to help.
- Are people in contact with their Neighbourhood
- PCSO's, Local Area Coordinators, voluntary sector organisations.
- Neighbourhood Safe Places Schemes.

Stopping mate crime - prevention



Tenancy Support Packages

If people are in housing provided by Registered Social Landlords can they get a Tenancy Support Package which sees them linking with the third sector, and getting access to outside agencies, support and activities.

Stopping mate crime - prevention

Campaigning

- It's a two way process with the Police. The Police do need to get better at working with people with learning disabilities. However, people with learning disabilities need to help them.
- People need to attend Police surgeries, influencing community safety priorities, and inviting neighbourhood officers into services.
- People should let the Police know, for example, that they cannot get on a particular bus without suffering verbal abuse.
- Social media campaigns.

Stopping mate crime



Awareness of the Mental Capacity Act 2005

- Everybody needs to be aware that mental capacity decisions are situation- specific and time-specific.
- Just because someone has capacity in some areas of their life, this does not mean they have capacity in all areas and at all times.

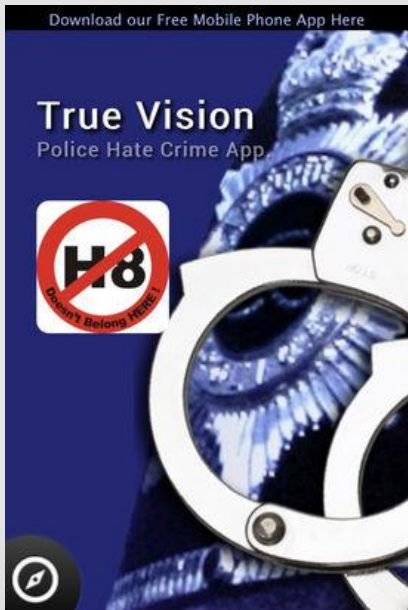
Stopping mate crime



Training

- People with learning disabilities need training in what makes a real friend, how to recognise when someone is taking advantage of them, and what to do about it.
- Training for organisations and agencies in our communities.

Stopping mate crime



Reporting

- We need to encourage reporting to ensure that it is given sufficient priority, as well as to ensure that people are protected.
- Tell the Police, tell the Safeguarding Team, Stop Hate if they work in your area, tell lots of people, or support the individual to do so.



You can call 101 at any time to report an incident, whether you were the victim or a witness. Always dial 999 if there is a crime in action or an immediate threat to life.

http://www.report-it.org.uk/report_a_hate_crime