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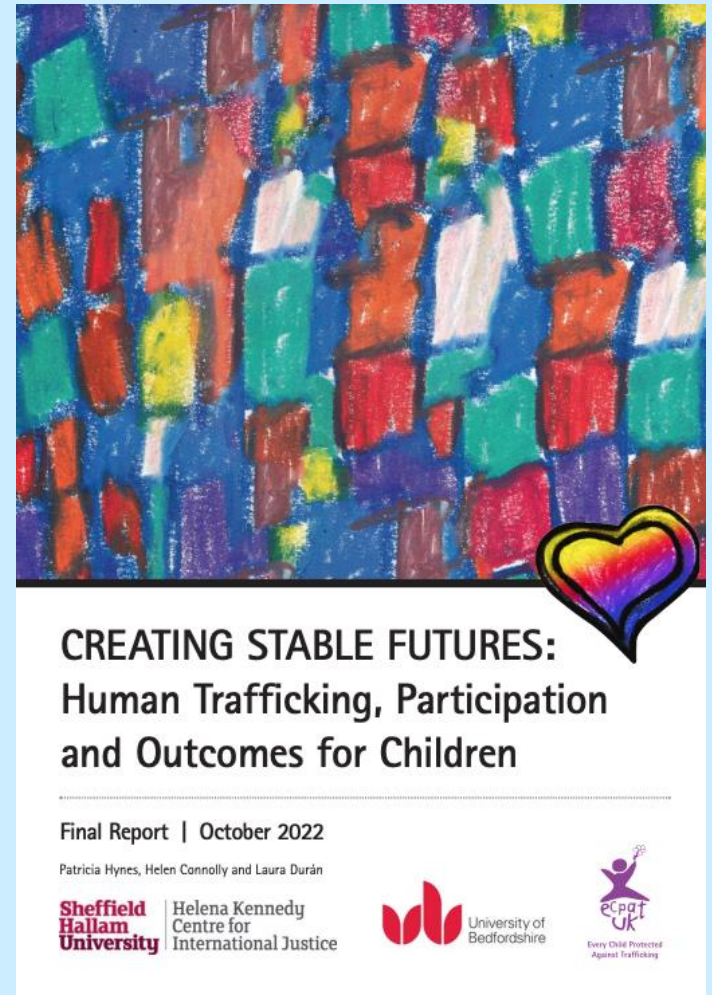
Creating Stable Futures: Human Trafficking, Participation and Outcomes for Children

Participatory Research

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Creating Stable Futures: Human Trafficking, Participation and Outcomes for Children

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Introduction – child rights focused research

- The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Four General Principles offer anchors for understanding the rights of the child:
 - non-discrimination (Article 2)
 - best interests (Article 3)
 - the right to life, survival and development (Article 6)
 - the right to participation (Article 12)

Introduction - UK

- While it is recognized in the UK that trafficking and exploitation is child abuse, interventions and practice sometimes fail to engage with this premise (Pearce *et al.*, 2009, 2013)
- Current legal, policy and practice frameworks about trafficking of children have been built up around multiple, and at times, competing discourses
 - These are not neutral constructs and discourses are often political (O'Connell-Davidson, 2011)
 - Children's experiences of care, support and protection are often shaped by political discourses rather than needs or realities of their experiences
- It can feel as though operating in a different legislative, policy and practice universe to UK-born young people

Introduction - UK

‘When I look at positive outcomes, it’s where a young person has got to a place where they genuinely believe that what they have to say matters, that they have the right to speak up, that what happened to them was abusive, it was wrong. ... It’s where their self-worth has grown ... [they do not] blame themselves for abuse, with huge levels of shame ... and can instead recognize their own strengths and actually have aspirations.’ (Interview 138, key informant, UK, May 2018)

- The voices of children and young people who have experienced human trafficking, ‘modern slavery; or exploitation are missing from debates in the UK (Bovarnick, 2010; Gearon, 2019)
- A focus on ‘outcomes’ for children and young people affected by human trafficking, ‘modern slavery’ or exploitation is absent from literature and debate in the UK

Project Summary

- Partnership between Sheffield Hallam University, University of Bedfordshire and ECPAT UK
- 14 months: 1 September 2021 – 31 October 2022
- Funded by the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (MSPEC) and Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
- At the heart of proposal:
 - Need to transform systems and outcomes of care and protection for children and young people who have experienced human trafficking, ‘modern slavery’ and/or exploitation
- **Overarching aim** was to understand what positive outcomes might look like from the perspectives of young people subjected to human trafficking and/or exploitation and what pathways towards these positive outcomes might look like in practice
- Ambitious project proposal – plus, **shifting context** during project

Specific objectives were to:

- Develop a young person led outcomes framework for what positive outcomes might look like in a UK context based on the knowledge and lived experience of young people
- Frame these under the rights enshrined in the four General Principles of the UNCRC
- Bring young people's views, knowledge and experiences into the center of policy making





Methodology

The study followed a participatory approach and brought together three key methods, allowing for triangulation of sources:

- Arts-based participatory research workshops across three locations in the UK with young people between 15- and 25-years-old to reflect care leaver entitlements up to age 21 or 25 if in higher education
- A scoping review of UK and international academic evidence
- A global call for practice evidence through ECPAT UK's international network.



LOVE IN ACTION

Young people with experience of child trafficking and exploitation
Tuesday, October 18, 2022

We are young people who have been trafficked and exploited. Since we were trafficked we have had contact with many systems including the immigration and social services, lawyers and healthcare workers.



'The Voice of the World' by 'TB', Education member

We want lawyers to know that...

We are new to the legal and immigration systems in the UK, and we are not trained professionals. We rely on them entirely to guide us through a complicated and confusing process that will determine how we live the rest of our lives. This is why we so desperately need them to provide good quality support at all times.

We want foster carers to know that...

When young people turn 18, they don't become a different person – an adult who doesn't need any support at all. For many of us, age categories determine the kind of care we receive. Some of us have been treated like strangers by our foster carers as soon as we turn 18. New rules for interaction are introduced, and we are no longer included as part of the family.

We need foster carers to remember that 18 is merely a number, and it comes to describe us in the space of a single day. Care for

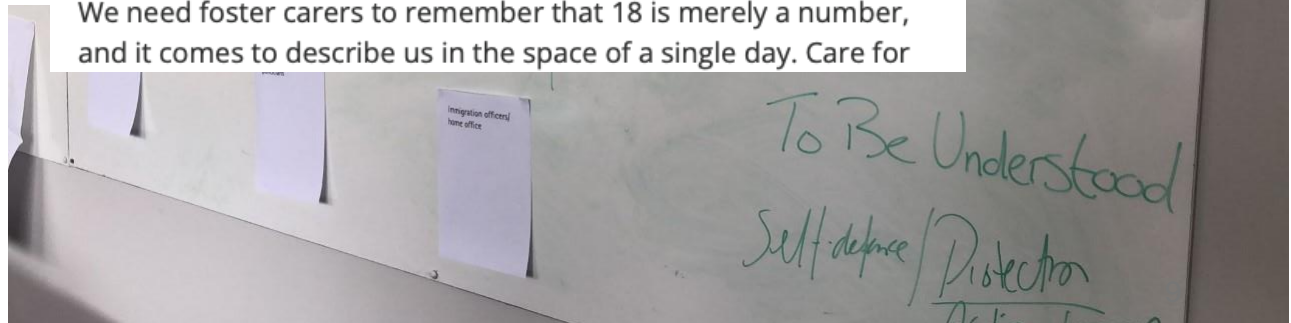
Each person who works to help unaccompanied young people can make a difference to how those young people feel by demonstrating love. We wanted to share with professionals the fundamental importance of love to all of us, and our understanding that love is a doing word that we can all show in our actions.

We want social workers and personal advisers to know that...

Unaccompanied young people already have too much to think about. We're worried about finding a home and the prospect of

Plus:

- Drawings
- Collage
- Podcast recording
- Article writing



Outcomes in Literature (Systematic Reviews only): Trafficking-related, mainly for Sexual Exploitation

- Adverse physical and mental health sequelae, depression, anxiety, PTSD (**Albright *et al.*, 2019**; **Cannon *et al.*, 2019**; Dell *et al.*, 2019; **Ibrahim *et al.*, 2018**; Moynihan *et al.*, 2018a,b; Simkhada *et al.*, 2018; Such *et al.*, 2020; Tsai, 2019)
- Adverse sexual and reproductive health outcomes (Graham *et al.*, 2019; Simkhada *et al.*, 2018)
- Injuries (work related) (**Batomen Kuimi *et al.*, 2018**)
- Nutritional outcomes (anaemia, wasting, stunting, malnutrition, etc.) (**Ibrahim *et al.*, 2018**; **Batomen Kuimi *et al.*, 2018**)
- Conditions due to workplace toxic exposures (includes exposure to loud noises, extreme cold or heat, chemicals, etc.) (**Batomen Kuimi *et al.*, 2018**)
- Substance use (Graham *et al.*, 2019; Laird *et al.*, 2020; Moynihan *et al.*, 2018b)
- Behavioural and emotional disorders (**Ibrahim *et al.*, 2018**; Moynihan *et al.*, 2018a)
- Extreme physical and sexual violence (Laird *et al.*, 2020)
- Child marriage: hazards of marriage, high rates of pregnancies, child and adult mortality or morbidity, IPV during adolescence (**Malhorta & Elnakib, 2021**)
 - Extrinsic and intrinsic barriers to healthcare (Garg *et al.*, 2020)
 - Disclosure (Hemmings *et al.*, 2016)
 - High exposure to violence (Such *et al.*, 2020)
 - Shame (Dell *et al.*, 2019)
 - Immigration (Dell *et al.*, 2019)
 - Education and employment (Dell *et al.*, 2019)
 - Resilience (Knight *et al.*, 2021)
 - **Lots of definitional variance** (Cannon *et al.*, 2016; Moynihan *et al.*, 2018a)
 - **Measurement issues** (Bryant & Joudo, 2015)
 - **Few broken down into pre, during and post trafficking** (exception of Graham *et al.*, 2019)
 - **Views of children – not always clear if included or not**



Research Findings

Findings: Overall (1)

Originally set out to look at what short, medium and long-term positive outcomes might look like in the UK context

- Workshop facilitators found that:
- **Outcomes discussed by young people were rarely linear or confined within short, medium or long-term framings**
- Young people discussed how outcomes across these different periods were interrelated and difficult to disaggregate
- These temporal framings were largely artificial in the lives of young people
- Outcomes changed over time, alongside needs, and in response to their experiences of the systems, people and services they encounter
- For example, safety – need is a constant but the form changes over time and is contextual

Findings: Overall (2)

“If you don’t trust, you don’t ask for protection.”

(young person, May 2022)

We also found that **good practice exists** to ensure young people affected by human trafficking can experience relational protection through trusting relationships that are safe and offer some stability

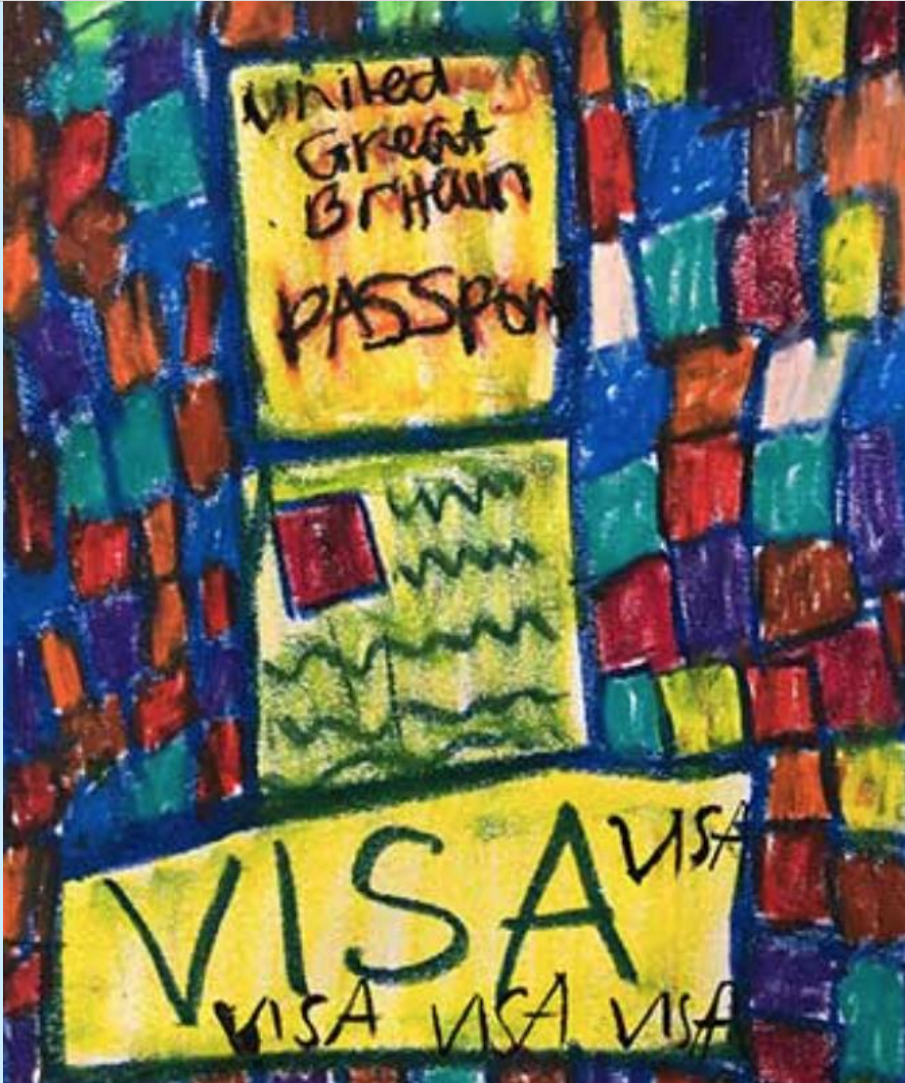
- These **examples of good practice could/should be replicated** beyond the excellent work of a few outstanding organisations
- Young people themselves understood what the language, grammar and expression of good systems and practices does or should look like
- Children’s voices are possible, and vital, in efforts to achieve positive outcomes

Findings: Non-Discrimination (Article 2)

- **Barriers to positive outcomes were identified by young people as structural, systemic and discriminatory**, such as their experiences of immigration and asylum systems, the criminal justice system and support in care
- They outlined ways in which structural inequality can shape professional practice and attitudes towards them:

“I used to go every single day to the social work office and talking to ... the manager of the social workers. That’s what he told me, ‘why don’t you go back to your country?’. That’s what he say.”

Findings: Non-Discrimination (Article 2)



“I don’t have paper.
Not free. Still in
prison.”

**Importance of
Legal Status**

Findings: Best Interests (Article 3)

Best Interests – Principle that all actions concerning children ... shall have the best interests of the child as the primary consideration

“I had to keep telling my story over and over again.”

“And we always have to start at the beginning. And after we tell the stories it brings back the memories and leaves us feeling bad again.”

Young people with independent guardians felt listened to and heard, facilitating better child protection

Findings: Right to Life, Survival and Development (Article 6)

The **predominant focus on negatives outcomes** in the literature lay **in stark contrast** to how young people within this study **envisaged their futures**

- Young people drew on their personal histories and original motivations for migration to find strength
- Young people discussed their active search for safety and protection
- Young people drew on and spoke about their strengths and capabilities
- They also drew on their endurance of complex and often protracted social care, immigration and criminal justice processes in the UK

*“And these young people, they’re **going to be someone** in the future and they’re going to give back all that help that they got from this government and it’s very important for young people and support workers to know all of this.”*

“I might have got support at the beginning, but I want to give back that to the country.”

Findings: Right to Life, Survival and Development (Article 6)

There is a lack of evidence on how experiences of trafficking, affect physical, emotional and social development for this population of children and young people

Young people talked about:

- Factors that promote healthy development related to trusting relationships with sensitive and caring adults
- Feeling safe, valued and loved, within nurturing environments,
- And a sense of belonging and community

Young people talked about what Positive Outcomes could be, such as:

- I am safe
- I have a stable life
- I can achieve and have dreams
- And how the sometimes default responses of disbelief, distrust and victim-blaming can have long term impacts

Findings: Right to Life, Survival and Development (Article 6)

- Young people directly highlighted safety – being safe and feeling safe – as a key outcome
 - Recognising the importance of safety as a contingent foundation for the realisation of other outcomes
 - Physical safety was expressed through having a safe home and place to live (key to feeling safe)
 - Relational safety related to having trust in professionals and systems
 - A default response appeared to be disbelief in responses from professionals, making young people feel frightened and unsafe

*“... when you are at home you feel safety you know?
Because we have been living in, living in many different
places.”*

Findings: Participation and the Right to be Heard (Article 12)

Children and young people have rights – to be heard, participate, have their views given due weight in matters affecting them and be able to develop their lives and contribute to society

- This can be achieved in part by their participation in research
- The views of children affected by human trafficking are rarely sought and included in literature about them, even those pertaining to children's rights
- A specific focus on outcomes for children and young people affected by human trafficking is absent from literature in the UK

Findings: Participation and the Right to be Heard (Article 12)

*“Yes, so **it’s comfortable for me to say, it’s, say my, say out loud my experience.** And **you are listening to me** and that made me feel ... It’s like I feel nice because **when I say something, someone listen. Not like I talk to the wall.**” (young person, location 2, session 5, May 2022)*

During the study it became clear that:

- Pathways to positive outcomes are contingent on ensuring work with children and young people is participatory, child-centred, and has a rights and entitlements approach that is underpinned by relational approaches built on trust
- The quality and timing of support are key factors influencing such pathways



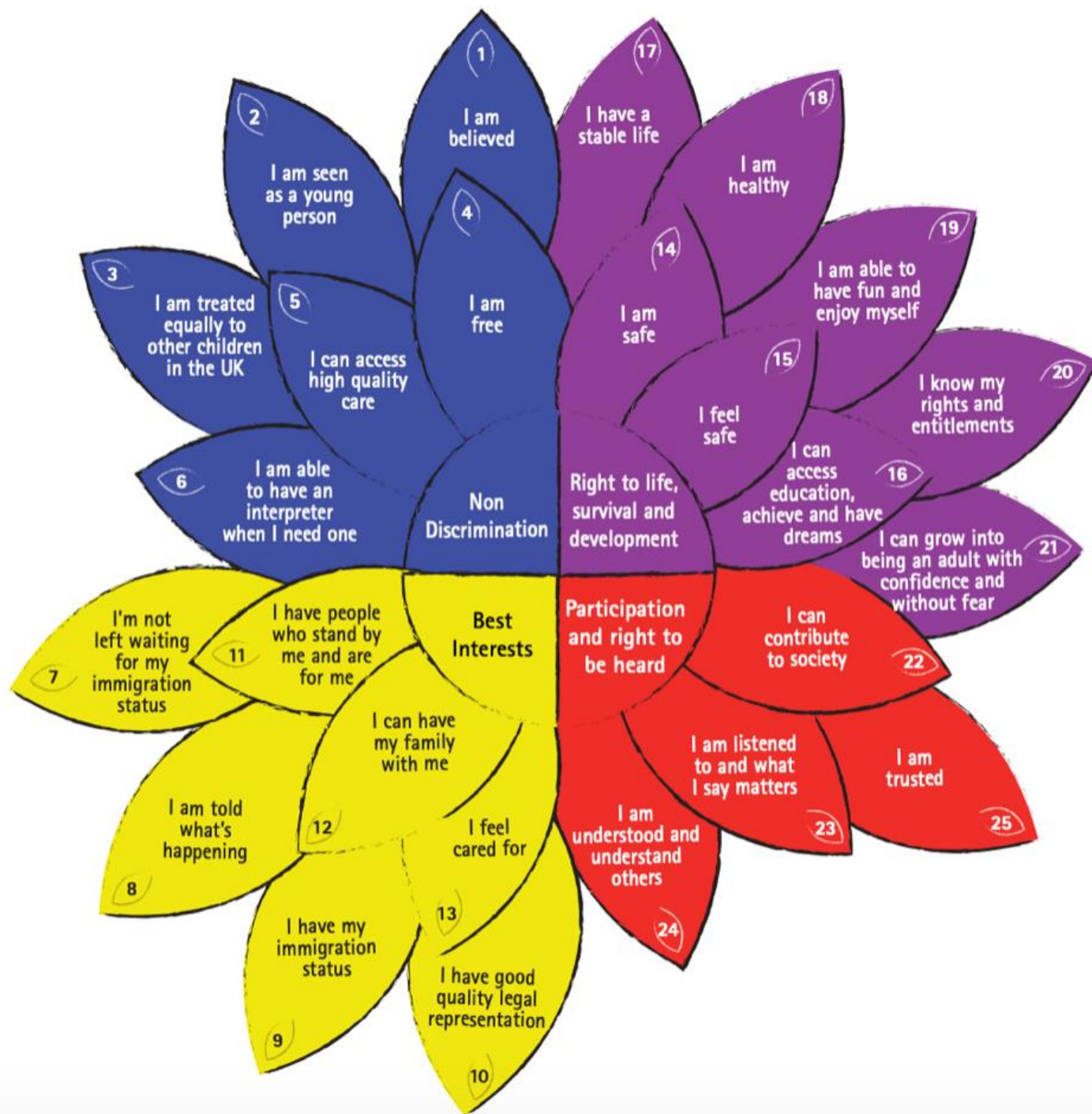
Positive Outcomes Framework



A Positive Outcomes Framework



- **25 Outcomes and 86 Indicators**
- **Across the four General Principles of the UNCRC**
 - Non-Discrimination (6 outcomes, 19 indicators)
 - Best Interests (7 outcomes, 16 indicators)
 - Right to Life, Survival and Development (8 outcomes, 37 indicators)
 - Participation (4 outcomes, 14 indicators)
- Based on what young people said in workshops
- **First time we know what young people identify as outcomes that are important – and meaningful – to them**
- **What young people identify they would need to see for positive – and meaningful – changes to happen in their lives and the lives of others, now and in the future**



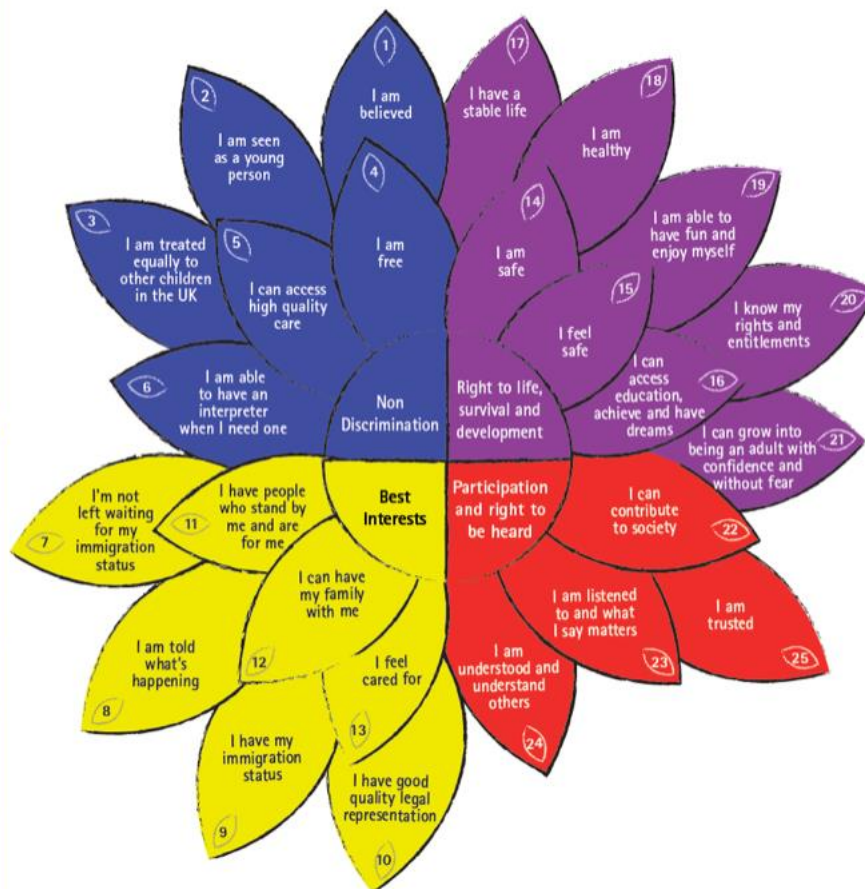
7.3 Creating Stable Futures: Positive Outcomes Framework

Non-Discrimination

- 1 a. Children report their age is accepted unless there is a significant reason not to
b. Children report their account of exploitation is believed
- 2 a. Children say they are not expected to fend for themselves
b. Children report they are given appropriate independence but also support
c. Children say they are treated as children first
- 3 a. Children say their treatment from professionals such as police and social workers is equal
b. Children report not being blamed for decisions made by adults
- 4 a. Children report they are not afraid of being exploited again
b. Children report they can enjoy their rights without fear
- 5 a. People working for the services around children are well trained
b. People working for the services around children understand where they are coming from
c. People working with children are friendly and respectful
d. Children say professionals work together
e. Children report their privacy is respected
f. Children know how they can complain if there is a problem
- 6 a. Children say interpreters speak their language and dialect
b. Interpreters are well trained
c. Interpreters are child-friendly
d. Children are asked if they are comfortable with the interpreter

Best Interests

- 7 a. Children are given clear information about the immigration process in child-friendly ways
b. Children report receiving timely decisions
- 8 a. Children report knowing where to find information and who to contact for help
b. Children report they received sufficient communication from officials regarding the status of their application
c. Children are appointed an independent legal guardian
- 9 a. Children receive a decision which is based on their best interests as the primary consideration
- 10 a. Children receive advice from a solicitor who can represent them appropriately in complex legal situations
b. Children can access solicitors who understand trauma
- 11 a. Children have foster carers and support workers who understand their needs
b. Children say they have someone who takes responsibility for checking in and making sure they are OK
c. Children say they have access to independent advocates or guardians
- 12 a. Children report feeling able to create a family in the future
b. Children state they feel protected from their family if there is a risk of harm
c. Children can access procedures for family reunion without undue burdens
- 13 a. Children report feeling cared for
b. Children report not feeling alone



Right to life, survival and development

- 14 a. Children report not being sought by the people who trafficked them
b. Children report not being afraid about debts
c. Children and young people report feeling safe from future exploitation
d. Children and their families are protected from harm
e. Children say they live in safe communities
f. Children say they have trusting relationships that protect them
g. Children say professionals understand the risks they have or are facing
- 15 a. Children report being able to sleep safely in their accommodation
b. Children say their accommodation is appropriate to their age
c. Children report knowing where to go when they don't feel safe and who to turn to
d. Children receive quality care
e. Children say they are informed about the communities they live in
- 16 a. Children can attend school promptly
b. Children report having access to additional educational support if needed
c. Children say their talents are known and supported to grow
d. Young people can attend college or university
e. Young people can undertake vocational training and ESOL simultaneously
f. Young people can undertake apprenticeships or other employment opportunities
g. Young people report being able to concentrate on their studies
h. Young people say they can move on from their experiences in positive ways
i. Children report they have confidence in their future
- 17 a. Children report they can begin to recover from their experiences
b. Children say they can plan for their future and make decisions
c. Children say they feel at peace
- 18 a. Children are promptly registered with a GP
b. Children have access to appropriate mental health services
c. Children can access specialist medical advice
d. Young people report they can access the food they enjoy
- 19 a. Children report they can play and participate in sports
b. Children have access to leisure and entertainment activities
c. Children and young people report they are able to form healthy friendship
- 20 a. Children report they have support to learn about their rights and entitlements
b. Children say their rights are upheld and they can access their entitlements
- 21 a. Children report they are not afraid of approaching age 18 and have been supported for this
b. Children say they feel confident they will be supported when they turn 18
c. Children report they are able to do stage-appropriate activities
d. Children report they are able to take on stage-appropriate responsibilities

Participation and right to be heard

- 22 a. Young people report feeling they are able to 'give' to society
- 23 a. Children report feeling they are being listened to and respected
b. Children can access help to communicate if they need it
c. Children report being asked what they think, feel and want
d. Children are included in research about them
e. Children report being asked their thoughts and listened to in the development of policy that affects them
- 24 a. Children can access appropriate materials in their own language and dialect
b. Children can get a trained interpreter when they need one
c. Children report their cultural and religious needs are provided for and respected
d. Professionals working with children understand the impact immigration procedures have on their well-being
e. Children say they are asked if they understand the processes they are involved in
f. Children say they are asked if they understand the decisions that are made about their lives
- 25 a. Children report feeling trusted
b. Children report they can trust professionals

Right to life, survival and development

14. I am safe

- a. Children report not being sought by the people who trafficked them
- b. Children report not being afraid about debts
- c. Children and young people report feeling safe from future exploitation
- d. Children and their families are protected from harm
- e. Children say they live in safe communities
- f. Children say they have trusting relationships that protect them
- g. Children say professionals understand the risks they have or are facing

15. I feel safe

- a. Children report being able to sleep safely in their accommodation
- b. Children say their accommodation is appropriate to their age
- c. Children report knowing where to go when they don't feel safe and who to turn to
- d. Children receive quality care
- e. Children say they are informed about the communities they live in

16. I can achieve and have dreams

- a. Children can attend school promptly
- b. Children report having access to additional educational support if needed
- c. Children say their talents are known and supported to grow
- d. Young people can attend college or university
- e. Young people can undertake vocational training and ESOL simultaneously
- f. Young people can uptake apprenticeships or other employment opportunities
- g. Young people report being able to concentrate on their studies
- h. Young people say they can move on from their experiences in positive ways
- i. Children report they have confidence in their future

17. I have a stable life

- a. Children report they can begin to recover from my experiences
- b. Children say they can plan for their future and make decisions

Relevance to UK-born Children and Young People affected by Exploitation?

Positive Outcomes Framework (CSF-POF) resulted in 25 Outcomes

3 outcomes not applicable to UK-born C&YPs:

- Outcome 6: I am able to have an interpreter when I need one
- Outcomes 7 and 9: I am not left waiting for my immigration status / I have my immigration status

Creating Stable Futures Practice Tool (CSF-PT)

Creation of a prototype *Creating Stable Futures: Practice Tool* to be used during the RLEs

- Allows practitioners to hold conversations with young people and 'tune in' to their experiences and needs
- Discussing factors that promote healthy development, feeling safe, achieving and having dreams and aspirations



Creating Stable Futures Practice Tool (CSF-PT)

Open the Practice Tool and read the instructions.

How do you think it could be used with the young person in your case study?

Could you use it when:

- Undertaking an assessment/interview
- Doing a care plan or pathway plan
- Making referrals
- Doing other types of sessions?



Creating Stable Futures Practice Tool

How could using the tool impact on the type of information you would usually get in relation to:

- Trust and relationship building
- Creating space for voice, for reflection, for choice, for their knowledge and feelings to take centre stage
- Create space for difficult feelings, for disclosures, taking the gaze off the child
- Establishing what is already present and what the gaps are?

If working with speakers of other languages, try out using Google Translate over the wooden pieces or with the Translation Sheet (if needed).

Concluding Remarks

This project aimed to work within spaces of possibility:

- With young people having the time and freedom to be able to create, reflect, connect with others and the research team
- Focus on identifying positive outcomes with these young people a new approach
- Placing their voices, language and knowledge centre stage

Research as a process of possibility

- We have found that involving young people has resulted in finding a new perspective currently missing from literature focussed on:
 - Positive possibilities
 - Growth
 - What can be achieved if basic opportunities are available
- Found that good practice exists that could and should be replicated
- Children's voices are possible – and vital – to address the UNCRC rights to personal development currently lacking for these young people

Next Steps

- Operationalising the Creating Stable Futures Positive Outcomes Framework (CSF-POF)
 - We have, from young people, what they need to see for positive change to happen
 - Hoping to pilot this
 - Measuring this change would be difficult and complex with a need to consider what meaningful measurements might look like
 - Need to consider contextual relevance for a broader group of young people, possibly also British 'victims' of 'modern slavery'

Next Steps

The CSF-POF is intended to be a holistic tool and can be used in many ways:

- At an individual level, as an empowerment tool when working with young people who have been affected by exploitation and are wanting to move forward with their lives
- For frontline workers in social care, social justice and/or immigration to allow them to 'tune in' to the needs and experiences of young people during conversations

Next Steps

- As a harm prevention tool when discussing risks and future potential harms with children and young people
- When conducting assessments, recording the wishes of children and young people in care, pathway planning, advocacy and support work when discussing referrals into the NRM

Next Steps

- By local authority children's services in case audit reviews to determine if children are achieving positive outcomes post human trafficking
- At a policy level to determine the potential or impact of specific policy initiatives

Overall, use of the outcomes devised by children and young people could mean that the efforts of those working with them will be focussed on creating stable and positive futures.



**One next step...
Safeguarding for 18-25
year-olds**

MSCOS & CSF-POF

Link to original study final report, Positive Outcomes Framework, etc.: [Creating Stable Futures: Improving Outcomes for Children affected by Trafficking | Sheffield Hallam University \(shu.ac.uk\)](#)

Link to follow-on project: [Creating Stable Futures: Implementing a Positive Outcomes Framework | Sheffield Hallam University \(shu.ac.uk\)](#)

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Hynes, P., Connolly, H. and Duran, L. (2022) *Creating Stable Futures: Human Trafficking, Participation and Outcomes for Children*, Sheffield Hallam University, University of Bedfordshire and ECPAT UK: [Download.ashx \(ecpat.org.uk\)](#)

Hynes, P., Connolly, H. and Duran, L. (2022) *Creating Stable Futures: Positive Outcomes Framework*, Sheffield Hallam University, University of Bedfordshire and ECPAT UK: [Download.ashx \(ecpat.org.uk\)](#)

[Creating Stable Futures: Improving Outcomes for Children affected by Trafficking | Sheffield Hallam University \(shu.ac.uk\)](#)

Creating Stable Futures: Human Trafficking, Participation and Outcomes for Children

Thank you!

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