**Digitally Empowering Young People: The Podcast S1 E2 –
Survivor insights with the Marie Collins Foundation**
*The Head of Advocacy Rhiannon-Faye McDonald and Megan Hinton a Victim and
Survivor Advocate from the Marie Collins Foundation will share insights from the
perspective of a victim and survivor.*

BR **Bibizadeh, Roxanne**
Welcome back to a new podcast series that aims to draw awareness to the social
and digital emergency of self-generated child sexual abuse imagery.
My name is Doctor Roxanne Bibizadeh and I'm a research fellow at the University of
Warwick and I'm joined here today with Rhiannon-Faye McDonald and Megan Hinton
from the Marie Collins Foundation.
Rhiannon is the head of advocacy and Megan a victim and survivor advocate.
We hope that this podcast series will be useful for parents and carers, educational
professionals, social workers, victims and survivors, law enforcement agencies and
policymakers.
We will also have a special episode that is aimed at young people at the end of this
series.
In our first episode a senior analyst from the Internet Watch Foundation, introduced
the issue of self-generated child sexual abuse and in this episode we thought it only
right to learn more about this from the perspective of victims and survivors.
So thank you so much for joining us today and welcome to the podcast.
Listeners should be aware that this episode of the podcast series is not suitable for
children or young people to hear. We will be covering serious and distressing
content which may be triggering, so if you have experiences relating to this topic,
you may wish to consider whether you want to listen to this episode.
The final episode in this series will be designed for children and feature contributions
from all of our special guests.
So thank you again for joining us.
Megan and Rhiannon.
And I'm gonna jump straight in to our first question.
I think a very useful place for us to start is to ask if you could tell us a little bit about
the Marie Collins Foundation and how you both came to work for the charity.

RM **Rhiannon-Faye McDonald**
Yeah.
Thank you.
So maybe if I start about the Marie Collins Foundation.
We are a UK based charity which is dedicated to supporting victims of technology,

assisted child sexual abuse and exploitation and to support in their recovery journey to go on to live safe and fulfilling lives.

And we do this directly by supporting individuals and their families and also indirectly through advocacy and education.

And it's our mission to ensure that the response to victims of technology assisted child sexual abuse does no further harm.

Because what we know is that the professional response to victims can and does sometimes cause that additional harm on top of what's already been done and caused by the abuse that's happened.

Just briefly as an overview, there's a few ways that we do this, and that includes influencing policy and decision makers at local, national and international levels and challenging current practices by elevating the voice of victims and survivors, developing skills and capabilities of those living and working with children and young people, and by recognizing and raising awareness of the impact of technology assisted CSA on the child and on their family.

And so we do lots of different things really.

How I came to be involved with MCF, it goes back quite a long time really, but I'll just quickly, I met Tink Palmer, the founder and our former CEO of MCF just after my case went to trial, which is 20 years ago now and she was involved in something called Jenny's story, which was a resource for schools and that was based on my experience.

So I was interviewed for that and I met Tink as part of that process.

After that was created it took me a really long time to get the right help and support and be far enough along my own recovery journey.

But eventually, in 2017, I reached out and met up with Tink to discuss my options because I was really, really strongly wanted to do something to help and to help other peoples that have been through what I've been through.

And so I started speaking about my experience at conferences and within MCF project work and I eventually joined the team full time in 2019 and really my job is all about ensuring that the voices of victims and survivors, not just my own, but other victims and survivors, making sure that those voices are heard and inform all the work done in this area.

And with that, I'll hand over to Megan.

Megan Hinton

I actually became involved with the Marie Collins Foundation five years ago this week and I first met our current CEO Vicki at a conference that I was presenting at where I was telling my story to police officers.

And she gave me the opportunity to present at their conference and impart some of my learning onto practitioners.

Since then, I've been on and off working with MCF, and two years ago I joined their lived experience group.

So we're working on, you know, putting the victim and survivor voice inside policy and practice and consulting on different legislations and bills.

And I was really, really lucky that earlier this year MCF secured some funding to expand the lived experience groups work.

And with that came a full time role.

I'm now in my 8th week and my role very much is assisting Rhiannon and working with the lived experience group to try and get them involved in absolutely every single project that comes through MCF and to amplify and champion their voice, wherever we go, whether that's presenting at conferences, speaking to the media or otherwise.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne

Well, thank you both.

I think that the contribution you're making to the charity is phenomenal.

You both have had such an instrumental role in the charity. I wanted to ask if you could elaborate a bit of on the importance of and turning now to sort of self-generated content and trying to understand why this term, what this term means because we've talked in our previous episode about it being an inadequate and potentially a misleading term which places the blame with the victim themselves.

I wondered if you could expand on why there is a need to better understand and prevent self-generated content.

Rhiannon-Faye McDonald

Yes.

So I'm gonna start with the terminology of it, because we've been having this discussion for a few years now about why it's so problematic.

So essentially when we talk about self-generated imagery, there is two types and there is fully consented images that all created.

So for example, you would be thinking about two 15 year olds who are in a consensual happy relationship and they are taking images and sharing images between themselves as part of their normal sexual development and discovery and exploration and things like that, and those are created consensually, and shared consensually between themselves.

So that's the first type and that's not to say those images can be can be created

consensually, and then they could later be shared, non-consensually, which is when that becomes abusive.

And those images are then child sexual abuse material because they've been shared without consent and the other type is images that are created, obtained or shared as a result of coercion, blackmail, grooming, where there is somebody on the other side where the child thinks that they might think they're doing this consensually without realizing that they have been groomed and manipulated and tricked on the other side, or they may be aware of that grooming and blackmail, but they feel like they have no other choice, which was my experience.

I was groomed by a by a man and I was tricked into sending one image and then that image was used to blackmail me to send more images.

The difficulty is if you're not there in the room when that image was created, you have no idea what the context is around that image.

So my images look like I have created them with consent and particularly because the perpetrator told me to look like I was happy and look like I was enjoying that. Not that I would want anybody to see them, but anybody that has seen them or could look at them would easily think that I have created that on my own with no coercion, no grooming, no blackmail.

And that's what they would consider to be a self-generated image, and in fact it's not.

It's the same type of content as if the perpetrator were there in the room with me. It was just that he was on the other side of the screen, so it's really tricky because we're talking about different types of content under the same umbrella and we've been having this conversation for a few years trying to find a better way of explaining what this content is.

And it's so far been impossible for us to find a term that everybody agrees on that isn't victim blaming that we can use going forward.

So we're kind of stuck with it, but we tend to all have this explanation that we use when we first start talking about it.

So we're setting our store out that we don't like this term.

We do think it's victim blaming, but we don't know what else to call it at this point.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne

So one of the key points I'd like to draw out here is the complexity of the term itself and the importance of being aware of the context with which this imagery is being created and this difficulty in the perceived choice of sending this self-generated material, which is what is resulting in the victim blaming mentality.

I wondered if you could expand on a little bit more on why this mentality is so problematic.

Megan Hinton

So I think a lot of the time when we're talking about self-generated indecent images it automatically places blame on the victim because your speaking about the victims actions and focusing on what the victim has or has not done in comparison to what the perpetrator has done and how they have used sophisticated tactics of grooming, humiliation, blackmail, sextortion, whatever the context may be to obtain these images.

And we already know that child sexual abuse and technology assisted child sexual abuse is incredibly difficult for children to disclose.

So when we're talking and using victim blaming language from the offset when talking about self-generated imagery, it makes that even more difficult for children and young people to come forward because they perceive that they are gonna get shame and blame from the people that they disclose to because they see themselves as having an active part in that abuse.

And I think also just the action of sharing those images, sometimes children think they are complicit, or that they have done wrong.

And I think that is where the issue stems from and why it is so problematic that if we're not using the correct wording around this, it just silences children further.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne

And that's inherent in the term itself.

The fact that there's that self, the use of the word self-generated, I think it's there from the exact wording of it as you rightly point out, is extremely problematic and we know that there is a tendency within online safety education to focus on the illegality of creating the image in the first instance and sending those images rather than necessarily the resharing without consent.

So the conversation often begins, typically historically within online safety education placing the blame on the individual for actually creating it in the first place, and again not necessarily recognizing the importance of the context with which that image may have been created, and the fact that actually this is then been shared without consent.

And I wondered if you'd like to add anything further on the impact of such messaging within that education on victims?

Megan Hinton

I think the impact on victims of focusing on the illegality of it is that it silences them from the offset because they think they have done something wrong. It kind of goes back to the point that we just made about shame and blame, and it internalizes that, and it can stay with victims and survivors for the rest of their life.

It makes them feel very dirty and their self-worth can be crippled by it.

If we're focusing on the illegality of it, it puts another barrier in-between that child disclosing to a person they trust and means that they can be more vulnerable to other abusive situations and be trapped in a cycle, particularly by perpetrators, who want to exploit them for more images or other different things, whether that be trafficking, etcetera.

And I think it also takes the blame away from the perpetrators who are doing this and subjecting the child to this because if the child is seen as a complicit in their abuse or having done something wrong, then it's almost 5050 split between them and the perpetrator, which should never be the case.

The only person at fault is the perpetrator that this sex abuser who is doing this to the child.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne

And I think that nicely leads us on to the question of whether you would be able to describe the impact of image based abuse on victims, because I think this is a particular type of abuse and you've touched already on the importance of being aware of the impact of it happening online and how that is akin to the abuser being in the room with you.

So I wondered if you might be able to expand a bit more on the impact of this particular type of abuse on victims.

Rhiannon-Faye McDonald

It's really difficult to put into words and it's a lifelong impact.

So when I talk about this, I talk about the fact that and there was contact abuse in my case, and there was also the images and that contact abuse, while it had significant impacts on me and it had an end date that stopped at one point.

But the images are permanent.

I I can't uncreate them.

I can't take them back.

From wherever they are in the world, and I can't control who has seen them or who will see them in the future, and that's a very common fear and an impact for most of us who have who have been the victim of image based abuse, the permanency, and lack of control, is just this huge thing that lasts for the rest of our lifetime.

So there's a difficulty amongst the general population, but also amongst professionals and practitioners in this area that they might think it's just an image. It's not a big deal.

But it's not just a photo.

That's an image of a child being sexually abused, and the only way I can try and make people to understand that is to say, you know, think about the worst, most horrendous moment of your life.

And then imagine sharing that with the whole, you know with everybody at your work or everybody in your family and them knowing about it is so shameful and because you don't want anybody to see it and it impacts to the point where even now, 20 years on, I still have to wonder who's seen it.

I walked down the street and I look at people's faces and have to think.

Have you seen images of me being sexually abused?

Because I don't know because it could be anybody and imagine having to go through life thinking that every hour of every day, whenever you meet a new person and whenever you start a new job, you go to a new social club.

It's always in the back of your mind and especially doing this kind of work when you meet professionals you speak to police officers or you speak to somebody at the Internet Watch Foundation and you think oh my God there is a possibility that you actually have seen and how do you face people.

How do you how can you face people knowing that?

So it's really hard.

It has completely ruined my view of myself and my self-esteem, my trust, and because the way that it makes you think about yourself.

The things that you blame yourself for that you think other people are blaming you for that you think other people are thinking about you and the views that they have about you and what has been done to you?

It's incredibly difficult, so it leads to all sorts of things, mental health problems and personally, anxiety, depression, self-harm, substance issues.

At some points, suicide attempts at some points lack of trust, lack of self-esteem.

It's not just an image, it really, really does leave a mark on us and it's hard to recover with all of these things in the background.

Megan Hinton

I think to add on Rhiannon's point as victims and survivors. So, as a survivor myself, I still live in the village where my abuse was taking place, so I can't go to my local shop without the immense fear and the very real fear that I'm gonna bump into someone who has seen that image and often in abuse cases that aren't carried out

correctly, parents or family members might see those images, and that the corrosion of your relationship with your family and friends because of that can be absolutely massive because it's the like, Rhiannon said, the worst moment of your life. Absolutely horrific.

And it's been, you know, displayed for everybody to see.

And there's always that in the back of your head when you see media and reports of abusers who have been found to have thousands and thousands of different abuse images on their computer.

You always have that thought at the back of your mind is mine on there and how many times are people gonna see that?

And you know, you see awful things happening about them being placed online.

If I just Google searched my name one day, could that pop up in relation to that it's a constant worry, you know, if I have kids one day they might see it.

I have absolutely no control of when and where that resurfaces.

And it's like this dark cloud that follows you around.

And like Rihanna says, it has huge, lifelong consequences, not just on me, but also your community, your family, your friends who were also impacted and secondary victims of abuse.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne

What is so moving and so powerful about the work that you do is that your voice has such an impact on being able to draw awareness and through being able to speak your own truth you gain, I hope some element of control back. I hope you might now feel that it's never your fault and that sense of shame and blame that you talk about and how pertinent, that can still be, and that having a lifelong impact upon a victim and survivor is something that I really want to understand if there is anything we could do to reduce that specific feeling that comes with this abuse.

Megan Hinton

I think for me it would be at the first point of discovery or disclosure no matter who the professional, who the trusted adult is for the message to come across that it is not your fault and you did not deserve what happened to you.

I think if I was told that at the first point that I disclosed and that was a repeated message that I had throughout all my involvement with police, social workers, teachers, etcetera, etcetera, I would have grown up with a very different view of myself.

And like I said, the referring back to the earlier questions that the self-generated the language that's used around it all it does is internalized shame and blame and that

builds up in almost sort of layers and they're cemented further and further the more you have interactions with people and they don't say it's not your fault and they just instead ask questions, why did you do it?

Often, victims and survivors don't know why they've done it because the perpetrators have used very, very sophisticated tactics to get these images from them, and they don't recognize it at the time.

And I think of someone had told me it's not your fault you don't deserve this and actually explained how grooming, manipulation blackmail works and the normal natural trauma responses to that I might have been able to start on my recovery journey a lot earlier than I actually did.

Rhiannon-Faye McDonald

And just to add to that it's about societal responses.

Like it's really hard because even now, 20 years on, I've been working in this field for like five or six years now.

And I know full well what happened to me was not my fault, like in my head and every now and then, even still internally it creeps in and you can't help but have those. Oh, God, what if I didn't say this, or if I didn't do that?

Or what if I'd have done this instead and you still have that creep in and I have to like, I literally have to say to myself, like stop it.

You know this like you know it.

And I can only assume that if I'm dealing with that in my position that many, many other victims and survivors are as well and I did get told at various parts it's not your fault and I never believe them because like Megan said, those messages need to be reinforced and reinforced.

And so when I'm thinking about societal responses, if all the professionals in a case and your parents and your family and friends are all saying it's not your fault, that's great.

But what happens when we grow up and we see the media victim blaming?

What happens when we see on social media, you know, a victims just reported such and such a person for this or and then all the comments underneath it are well, why did she never say anything sooner or, you know, why did she do this?

Or that couldn't have happened because he said such and such.

And it's all so victim blaming, and that really does have an impact and I don't think people think about those societal responses that continue to try and reinforce these messages of shame and blame that really need to change.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne

I think you both make extremely important points about how these are natural normal responses that a victim and survivor will have, and that it's so integral that the responses from the professionals, the family members, the friends around are reinforcing the point that it's not your fault and you didn't deserve this.

And then thinking about understanding the role of the abuser in this, because the focus needs to always be not on the victim and what the victim did or how the victim chose to handle that situation.

It must always be on the different techniques used to manipulate, coerce, deceive to obtain, the imagery that they were requesting.

And I wanted to ask if you could expand on in your professional experiences, how we can apply the knowledge that you have on how the abuser is utilizing different techniques and how we can utilize that knowledge to in any way help prevent the creation and distribution of this material.

RM **Rhiannon-Faye McDonald**

It's really important that we're learning from this and the biggest thing about manipulation and coercion and deception and blackmail is that the child that this is being done to is often completely unaware that it's happening at the time the offender is making them feel like it is a mutual relationship that the child is complicit in what is happening which then leads to silencing because of the feelings of blame and shame. You know everything that we've already said and I actually think that prevention of creation and prevention of distribution, are two slightly different things, so preventing the creation of this type of material, I think has to start with conversations around things like that, everybody online isn't who they might seem to be and I hesitate because I think there's some nuance in things like that, you know, we as adults get tricked, we as adults get, you know, manipulated and scammed online as well.

And I think we have to be quite open about that, that you know, it's not just children that these tactics are used against that we can be open, that this happens to us as well, but we need to empower children with that knowledge and how to respond if it does happen. And we need to be really non-judgmental with the child about why the images might be created, why they might have responded in particular ways to the perpetrator's actions. And because we need to be very careful that we're not blaming them, that we're not adding shame, that we're not judging them for what they have done, because often these are trauma responses where their body is reacting to a threat. And you know, we often we don't have much control over how we react in that situation.

It's what our brain decides to do to keep us safe in that moment.

So we do need to be very non-judgmental, but we have to have these conversations to help them to come forward and talk to us.

And in terms of preventing distribution, well, I think that's for the tech companies to be vigilant and to be searching their platforms, using the hash lists, using the keywords that they all have.

They all everybody knows about these things and to be able to block and remove content.

And when we're talking about blocking and removing content and hash lists, we're generally talking about known content here and I think, you know, there's arguments around how can we detect unknown or new content.

Often when we find known content, we also find unknown or new content in the same package, so obviously that helps.

But I think that the tech companies have a real responsibility to be developing the technological solutions to these issues and to be deploying them on their platforms without question.

It's a no brainer for me really, that the tech companies can and should be doing more. They have all the resources and finances at their fingertips. They have the smartest technological minds in the world working for them, and they need to do more. And another point about preventing distribution is that we need to create an environment where children and young people feel able to come forward and talk to us if something has happened, if there are images that have been created for whatever reason, if they've been distributed for whatever reason, we need children to tell us about it. So we can then use things such as the report remove tool by the Internet Watch Foundation and NSPCC to help that child to gain control over that image. So that it gets hashed, it gets added to these lists so that it will be getting reported and removed when it shows up online. If it shows up online and so there's a number of things that we that we learn from what we see and we all have a role to play in putting that knowledge into practice.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne

I wondered if there was anything more you could say about the importance of the relationships and having open conversations with children and young people, and how this might enable earlier intervention, if there were a stronger sense of and openness and ability to come forward when something does happen, or if these are conversations that are openly happening within a classroom or within the home, so there's not this sense of judgment or blame that might inherently creep in.

If a young person was to come forward, so there's that sense of trust, I suppose the importance of there being trust that enables a young person to feel they can come

forward, and how that if there's any other ways in which we can help enable earlier intervention.

Rhiannon-Faye McDonald

So like I'm really big on this particular topic like every time I go anywhere every time I speak to anybody I am the biggest advocate for having conversations. This wasn't spoken about when my abuse took place, like there was a little bit of stranger danger. Don't meet anybody in person that you only know online and the horror stories of turned out to be somebody different, but other than that, people didn't really talk about this and as a result, I very much felt that nobody in my life would understand it. I didn't think they would get why what had happened had happened and I thought that they would put all the blame on me, so I think it's so incredibly important to have these conversations and I know it's difficult and I, you know, I say that I'm not a parent, but I know how difficult it must be for parents to talk to their children and young people about this. And you know, there are guides out there to help with these. The Marie Collins Foundation has a guide for parents, and I know that the Internet Watch Foundation has a guide as well. And you know, there are lots and lots of things around to try and help these conversations, but it doesn't need to be this sit down let's have the awkward conversation, you know, like when you're trying to teach your kids about the birds and the bees, and it's like everybody's cringing because nobody wants to be there. I firmly believe that we need to change.

We need a societal change in that this type of sexual abuse can be spoken about anywhere.

So like I'm talking about, adults being able to talk to their co-workers about it and just strike up a conversation and nobody feels awkward or upset.

And I'm talking about parents sitting at the dinner table with the kids who may or may not be listening.

You know, I think some of it goes in subconsciously when this is happening, but like just having these conversations, not just with children, but around children, so that they can see that we that we get it, we understand the issue.

We're not frightened of it.

We know that children aren't to blame and we put the responsibility with perpetrators.

These are messages that they need to be hearing all around, so it's not just that we leave it to schools to have that conversation.

We shouldn't even really just leave it to parents like, you know, I think I have a responsibility to wider family members, you know, to nieces and nephews to be

having these conversations around them in an appropriate way.

Because we need, we just need to make it clear that this can happen to anybody.

It's not specific people, it's not specific groups.

It's not just poor children or children from homes where their parents aren't together or, you know, it's not just children that have a social worker, none of these things apply. It's anybody that this can happen to and you know, and even when I was talking about different forms of self-generated images, even those teenagers that are in a relationship that create and share those images consensually, if they later, for whatever reason, get out and get circulated, it's still not their fault, like it is never the child's fault in this situation, we really need to cut out the victim blaming and to do that, I think having these open conversations is the key.

BR **Bibizadeh, Roxanne**

I think what really resonates with in this in this area in particular, is that there is a real there is still a real trend of victims continuing to suffer in silence, and we know from research there is very high numbers of delayed disclosure.

How do you think we can change the environmental conditions to create a more supportive and safer context for child sexual abuse victims and survivors to disclose? You've done a fantastic job of outlining the different mechanisms or ways in which we need to try to change these conversations, or at least start having more conversations, is there anything else you'd like to add on how we can address the stark, high numbers of victims that continue to sort of suffer in silence and delay their disclosure.

MH **Megan Hinton**

I think there's kind of two points to this, I think delayed disclosure partially happens because they don't feel like they have the safe supportive space to disclose, but I also think a lot of children's struggled to realize that what's happening to them is abuse until a lot later because it has become so normalized for them in their everyday existence, especially if it's being carried out by someone that is within the family home or within the family context, it could be so difficult to recognize that what's happening is abuse until you're much older. But that kind of feeds into the second part of it, about the safe place. So following on from what Rhiannon said, I think a lot of children only hear about child sexual abuse and technology assisted child sexual abuse in the once a year PSHE lessons, we can't rely on schools to be the only places these conversations are taking place because for all we know, the abuse could be happening at school and then that silences those victims.

We need to blow the lid off of child sexual abuse.

We need to get everybody talking about it.

You need to have it in religious settings having something in place and having conversations with their youth groups, we need to have it in football clubs.

We need to have it in scouts and guides.

We need to have it at swim clubs.

You know, music clubs.

It needs to be embedded in society that wherever the abuse is happening, whether that's in a family setting, whether it's peer on peer, whether it's at school, whether it's by a youth leader, wherever they have a safe place for them to disclose.

And I think at the moment we're failing children by placing responsibilities on schools.

And then secondly, parents to have these conversations, I think when it comes to technology, assisted child sexual abuse, people feel they're not equipped to deal with it because they might not know about the latest apps and things.

All you need to do is create the environment to let children know that if there's ever something that doesn't feel right or is worrying them that they can talk to you.

And if you've done that, then you've done your job right and then there will be other people that have more safeguarding knowledge that you can go to and raise that concern. And that child will hopefully be protected, I think people think it's this big scary, I don't wanna touch it just in case I get something wrong, but if we keep on doing this, then children are gonna continue to not disclose until well into adulthood and their recovery process. It's always a lifelong sentence for us, but the recovery process can happen a lot quicker and it doesn't have to be delayed and the mental health struggles and the physical health struggles and the vulnerability that they potentially might carry with them for years after this abuse could be minimized and they can go on to live the fulfilling, happy, safe lives a lot sooner if it is caught at that point.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne
And I think what also resonates with the very important points you're making is the need for a consistent approach across, all different, from the schools to families, but also extending that wider out into the community and thinking about what are the tools that we might apply to help support individuals who have experienced technology assisted child sexual abuse?

What do you think these tools should look like?

If you were able to create something that that everybody was utilizing.

What would it look like? An impossible question, I'm sure.

Rhiannon-Faye McDonald

It's really interesting and timely question because we couldn't agree more and we do need a consistent approach.

We need a skilled and capable and confident workforce that are responding to children who have who are victims of this, and that's why we're in the process of doing it at MCF.

So we've just been granted some funding from Help for Children.

And we working with a range of partners, partner organizations, professionals and practitioners to develop an intervention that can be used by practitioners working with children and their families to appropriately respond to this, and it's gonna be a free tool that people can use. I think it's gonna be on available on our website, but we're not even close to it being ready at this point.

We're still at the very early stages and actually really important to include in this is that our lived experience group are involved in the creation of this, because how do we know what victims need if we don't speak to victims?

So we have our lived experience group feeding into this as well as.

So we've got lived experience expertise and professional expertise, both feeding into the same thing.

And we're hoping that we're gonna have really worthwhile products at the end of it.

It's going to get tested before it gets released and all those important things, but you know the important thing for us is that we know is that things like E safety messages don't work.

So you know, we see cases where the professional response to a victim who is, you know, who's been through this is to then send them to do some E safety learning around like, don't share images, don't share your personal details, don't meet anybody.

And it's like, whoa, you are silencing.

You are victim blaming.

You are like consolidated all of the blame, shame and fear and embarrassment that there are already feeling.

And like where does this child's recovery journey start?

So you know, we need to stop with the safety messaging and we need to figure out what actually works.

So we're in the process of putting together this intervention now.

We're really, really thrilled and excited about it and I think it's overdue and you know, I'm really looking forward to seeing that come together.

Megan Hinton

I think just to add to Rhiannon's point that we desperately need a consistent approach from all services that are involved with this.

But that consistent approach in the tool that we're creating is done in such a way that you can pick and choose what is applicable to that child and that case because each individual child in each individual case is going to be completely different, and they will require their own sets of different recovery and different interventions that they may need to get them happy and safe and healthy and living fulfilling lives.

So I think that whilst we need a consistent approach, we also need to put the message in that not one size fits all.

We need to respond to that individual child and their family and their needs at that time and work out what is best for them.

Bibizadeh, Roxanne

Well, I want to conclude by thanking you both so much for the contributions you've made to this podcast, but also the contribution you're making through your work, and to just really emphasize the powerful, pertinent nature of your voices within this, within this remit and the powerful nature of utilizing those lived experiences to really bring about change in the way that we approach children and young people that are victims and survivors. And actually how we try to bring about a bigger change to society, to the way in which these tech companies operate. And I wanted to ask if there is anything else you feel our listeners should know about self-generated child sexual abuse before we conclude this episode.

Rhiannon-Faye McDonald

There is something in the in the back of my mind that I want to add because I want to share it wider, actually. Megan and I were at some training recently and we saw somebody presenting and he said something that has stuck with me the whole time since and it is be the professional or be the advocate that you would have needed as a child.

And it's it keeps coming back to me and I keep thinking about it in in relation to my work and you know, what would I have needed?

And I think it's so important that we just, whatever child we are working with, living with, speaking with, we put them at the middle, we put them at the centre of what we're doing and we figure out what do they need, what can I do for them?

How can I make this better for them?

And like Megan just said, it will be different in every case.

We need to use our knowledge and expertise as professionals as parents to figure out what is right in each case and then we need to be confident enough to do it. Hold that child in the middle.

Make them the focus and everything should flow from there and that will mean that you are setting up their recovery journey in the best possible way to hopefully do no more further harm.

MH **Megan Hinton**

And I guess I'd just say, if there's professionals listening to this, don't be afraid to challenge or question your counterparts who might be talking about a self-generated case and they might be using victim blaming language or language that you don't quite agree with.

Be bold.

Be brave.

Challenge it.

Question it.

Let's think about how you can learn.

Talk to victims and survivors.

Try and get involved.

Get their opinions and stuff that we aren't, you know, our LEGs group are absolutely cracking our Lived Experience Group.

They are so brave and so outspoken, and they know exactly what they would have needed and what they need now.

As far down their recovery journey as they are, so be brave.

Be bold.

Try and speak to us, get our voices into everything that you're doing, and an advocate for the children that might be in your care or in your job roles.

BR **Bibizadeh, Roxanne**

Well, thank you so much.

We've got two key quotes I think.

Take away from this keeping the child at the centre, at the heart of your work when trying to help a victim and survivor, and the importance of being bold and brave and challenging inappropriate language two really important messages to take away from our discussion today.

And thank you to all of our listeners for engaging with this podcast.