Radical Conversations: Narratives of Black Women tackling Child Sexual Exploitation

Dr Tania Rodrigues, Programme Lead & Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Dr Romana Farooq, Clinical Psychologist
Overview

• Setting the Scene
  – Who we are
  – Service & Local Level Context
• Social Biases & Child Sexual Exploitation
• Reflections from Black Women tackling CSE
• Leaders as Social Activists?
• Questions, comments & reflections
Who we are?

Dr Tania Rodrigues
- Black woman, ‘mixed’ heritage: African, Asian, European
- Born in Angola, experienced communist regime, civil war & political unrest
- 14 years in post-Apartheid South Africa, trained in post-Apartheid South Africa
- Clinical Psychologist
- Oppressed & Traumatised groups – Survivors of human rights violations, HIV/AIDS, victims/survivors of sexual crimes & Perpetrators of violence/sexual crimes
- Passionate about understanding social inequality and its impact on perpetrator, victim & victim/perpetrator dynamic
- Who am I? Who do you see? What is my role? What will you let me do?

Dr Romana Farooq
- Black woman, “South Asian”, Muslim, witnessed & experienced Social Deprivation & Political unrest
- Born in Bradford – Racial Segregation, Ghettoization & trained in Leeds, a predominantly White Institution
- Clinical Psychologist
- Marginalised & oppressed groups – Refugee & Asylum Seeking Communities, Trafficked women, survivors of human rights violations
- Passionate about Systems Change & Social Justice
- Can I? Do I have the power? Will you listen to me?
Service & Local Level Context

• Child Sexual Exploitation & the Media
• Alexis Jay Report (2014) made public the systemic failures to protect and safeguard YP in Rotherham
• Anxiety, Guilt and Blame is pervasive in systems

What are we doing?

• DfE funded: CSE Innovation Project – Across Rotherham, Doncaster, Barnsley & Sheffield
• Catch22: Taking Mental Health Services to Young People & Families
• Enabling Psychologically Informed conversations to take place in a Multi-Agency Setting
• Radically Transforming the way we work with “Hard to Reach” and “Hard to engage” Young People & Families
• Systems Change & Workforce Development
Social Biases & CSE

• Child Sexual Exploitation doesn’t happen where we live
• Victims come from a particular ethnic background
• Young people from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds are not abused
• Perpetrators come from a particular ethnic background
• Only girls and young women are affected
• CSE only happens to children who are in care, who come from a ‘bad’ family, or are of a particular race, religion or economic background
Reflections from Black Women

• Who are you? Where are you from?
• Insider or outsider? Or at the margins? (Chaudhry, 1997)
• Embraced and rejected subject positions/identities (Davis & Harre, 1990)
• Managing intense responses/emotions from staff teams, families, carers and systems – managing micro-aggression's (Sue et al, 2007)
• Openly challenging prejudicial views around race and gender (Adetimole, Afuape & Vara, 2005)
• Playing with Power
• Whose containing us? Whose holding hope for us?
• Talking about the uncomfortable in a comfortable way – Creating Safety in Unsafe contexts
Leaders as Social Activists?

- Socio-Political Issues at the core of what we do
- Dispersed Leadership in the Team
- Diversity in the Team
- Recognise, name, acknowledge and embrace difference
- Development of Authentic Leaders & Afrocentric Leadership for Black women (Green & King, 2001)
- Name the elephant in the room – “What is it like working with a Black woman?”
- “Fighting Words” (Collins, 1998)
- Honesty, Genuineness & Playful
Questions, Comments & Reflections

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