

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

## Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) Briefing



### Background

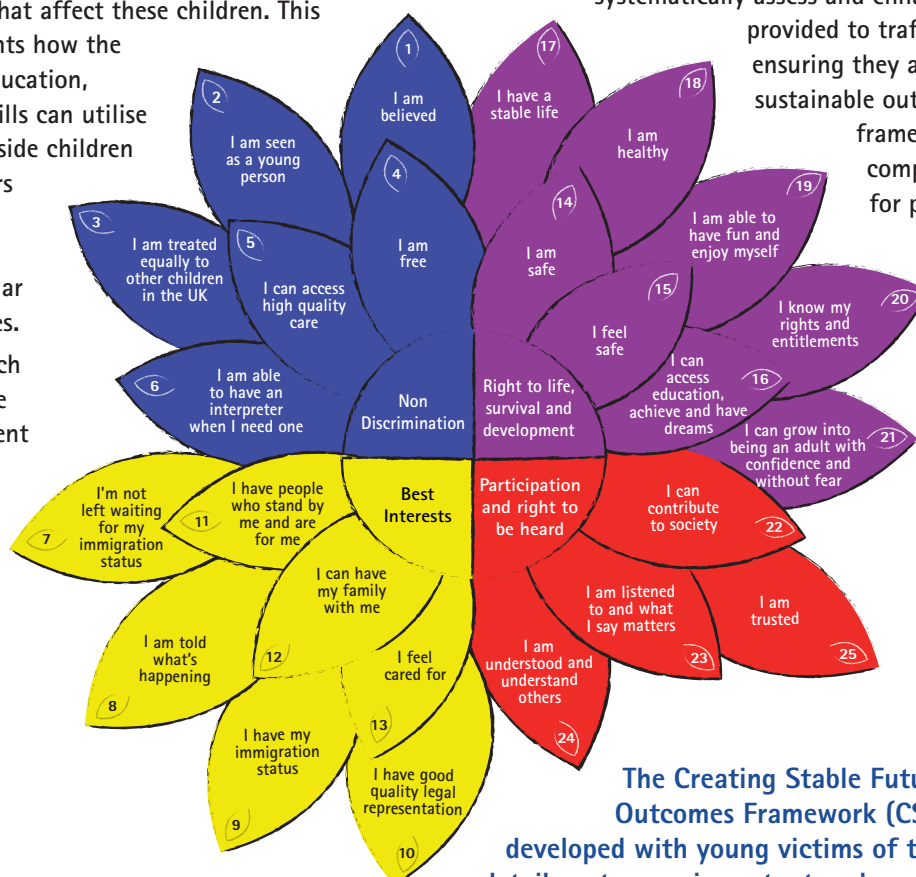
Child trafficking is child abuse and a severe violation of human rights affecting many countries worldwide, including the United Kingdom. Children who fall victim to trafficking are subjected to various forms of exploitation including criminal, labour, sexual, and domestic servitude. These children often experience severe trauma, both physical and psychological, which can have long-lasting effects on their development and well-being.

The report **Creating Stable Futures: Human Trafficking, Participation and Outcomes for Children** details the experiences and outcomes for child victims of human trafficking in the UK. A significant portion of the report focuses on the role of children's social care and the various issues within its policies that affect these children. This detailed summary highlights how the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills can utilise the tools developed alongside children and young people survivors of human trafficking in their inspections of local authorities with a particular focus on positive outcomes. The findings of the research and views of young people allowed for the development of a Positive Outcomes Framework for supporting children and young people that protects and promotes their rights.

### The Creating Stable Futures Positive Outcomes Framework (CSF-POF)

is a practical and strategic tool designed with young people across three locations in England and Scotland to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of services provided to trafficked children. It is the first time we know directly what young people consider necessary for meaningful change to happen in their own, and others, lives both now and in the future. Its implementation focuses on ensuring that these children achieve positive, sustainable outcomes in various aspects of their lives, including safety, health, education, and emotional wellbeing. It is practical, child and young person-centred, and has wide applicability for OFSTED inspections.

The **Positive Outcomes Framework** is designed to systematically assess and enhance the support provided to trafficked children, ensuring they achieve positive, sustainable outcomes. This framework serves as a comprehensive guide for practitioners and policymakers, facilitating a coordinated response to the complex needs of these vulnerable children.



The Creating Stable Futures Positive Outcomes Framework (CSF-POF) was developed with young victims of trafficking and details outcomes important and meaningful to them for positive changes to happen in their lives.



## Core Elements of the Framework

### 1. Outcome-Focused Indicators

The framework establishes clear indicators to measure the progress and well-being of trafficked children across various domains, including safety, health, education, and social integration. These indicators help track the effectiveness of interventions and identify areas for improvement.

### 2. Data-Driven Decision Making

By promoting the collection and analysis of data related to the care and outcomes of trafficked children, the framework supports evidence-based decision-making. This data-driven approach informed directly by young people affected helps tailor services to meet the specific needs of each child, ensuring that resources are effectively utilised.

### 3. Multi-agency Coordination

Recognising the multi-faceted nature of child trafficking cases, the framework emphasises the importance of multi-agency collaboration. This includes cooperation between social care, health, law enforcement, and educational institutions. Such collaboration ensures that all aspects of a child's recovery and integration are addressed holistically.

### 4. Child-Centred Approach

Central to the framework is a child-centred approach, which prioritises the rights and well-being of children. This involves actively involving children in decisions that affect them, ensuring that their voices are heard and respected. The framework encourages the use of child-friendly methods to communicate complex information and support children's participation in their care plans.

### 5. Participation and the Right to be Heard

The report detailed how little participation young people had in informing policies and/or practices that directly affected their lives

## Implementation and Usage

### Guiding Service Delivery

Practitioners can use the framework to develop and implement services that are aligned with the best interests of trafficked children. This includes ensuring access to appropriate healthcare, education, legal aid, and psychological support.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The framework provides a structure for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of services, allowing for continuous improvement. By assessing outcomes against established indicators, agencies can refine their approaches to better meet the needs of trafficked children.

### Training and Capacity Building

It serves as a foundation for training programmes aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of professionals working with trafficked children. This includes training on trauma-informed care, cultural competence, and legal issues related to trafficking.

### Policy Development

Policymakers can use the framework to inform the development of laws, policies, and protocols that protect the

rights of trafficked children and promote their well-being. It helps ensure that legislative and policy initiatives are grounded in a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by these children.

### Participation

Young people involved in this participatory research wanted their views to be taken seriously. The study found few examples of young people's participation in informing practice or policies that directly affected their lives. The Positive Outcomes Framework was built on the participation of young people and represents what they wanted to see for meaningful change to happen in their lives, now and in the future. Investment in facilitating and providing further opportunities to enable their meaningful participation is needed to ensure policies and practice meets their needs. .

### Conclusion

The Creating Stable Futures Positive Outcomes Framework is a crucial tool for improving the quality of care and support provided to trafficked children. By focusing on measurable outcomes and promoting a coordinated, child-centred approach, the framework helps ensure that all trafficked children receive the comprehensive support they need to rebuild their lives and achieve positive futures.



## Recommendations

1. The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills should consider operationalising the Positive Outcomes Framework in a pilot study to measure the effectiveness of current policies in achieving positive outcomes for identified child victims within their inspection framework for local authorities' children's services.

ECPAT UK (Every Child Protected Against Trafficking) is a leading children's rights organisation working to protect children from trafficking and transnational exploitation. Our vision is that *children everywhere enjoy their rights to be protected and to lives free from trafficking and exploitation*. Our mission is to promote and uphold children's rights in the UK and outside of the UK by informing, educating and researching child trafficking and exploitation, increasing awareness of and campaigning to end child trafficking and exploitation, standing with children and young people affected by exploitation and working collaboratively for change. Our work is rights-based, child-centred and trauma-informed.

The Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice at Sheffield Hallam University is a leading centre for human rights and social justice. The Centre is home to a range of applied research, projects, education and scholarship including work around social justice, rights, law, policing, community justice, gender-based violence, refugee rights, human trafficking and modern slavery.

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