CONFERENCE ON ADULTIFICATION OF THE GIRL-CHILD

EXPLORING POLICY AND PRACTICE RESPONSES TO ISSUES AFFECTING YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS ACROSS MANCHESTER

27 APRIL 2023
IRISH WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE MANCHESTER M8 0AE
THANK YOU FOR REGISTERING TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE ON ADULTIFICATION OF THE GIRL-CHILD

About AFRUCA

AFRUCA Safeguarding Children is a national charity based in London and Manchester. We work in UK Black and Ethnic communities to protect and safeguard children from abuse, modern slavery and exploitation. We tackle cultural and religious practices that harm children. The key focus of our work is child abuse prevention and early intervention. To achieve this, we work in five key areas: community awareness raising; training, education and research; policy and advocacy; community programmes and development; and direct service provisions for children, young people and families. You can read more about our work on our website at www.afruca.org

Why a Conference on Adultification?

Girl child adultification bias has become more pronounced in education, family, community, faith, cultural, child protection, youth justice and other settings across the UK in recent years. This relates to the manner in which underaged Black, Asian and other ethnic girls are regarded as more mature, deserving of harsher treatments than peers from other races. Young women and girls’ experiences of discrimination, abuse, exploitation and repression are based on their race and gender, with age often discounted as a protective factor. The story of Child Q who was a 15 year old black girl from Hackney, is the most recognised example of girl-child adultification.

The event will examine different ways adultification occurs in different settings and the ramifications for the child’s protection and well-being, in the short and long term. The conference will also explore how statutory agencies, youth groups, communities and faith organisations can work together to enhance protection for the girl-children across the City, in line with Manchester City Council’s Children and Young People’s Plan 2020-2024 on prevention and early intervention through a multi-agency approach as well as its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in policy and service provision.
Basic Logistics

Conference Venue and Address

Irish World Heritage Centre
Cheetham Hill
Manchester
M8 0AE

Contact: 0161 697 4105

Transport and Parking

Conference Venue is easily accessible by road and public transport. Free parking is available onsite, however limited spaces are available.
Accommodation and Contacts

Local/Nearest Hotel and Accommodation

**The Niu Loom**: 2 Irish Town Way, Cheetham Hill, Manchester M8 0RB
Contact: 0161 518 0888

AFRUCA Contact Persons

If you have any questions or inquires on the day please contact our staff:

**Lauretta King - Webb**: 07506419259
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Conference Programme

8:30 – Registration and Coffee

09:30 - Welcome and Conference Introduction – AFRUCA CEO: Debbie Ariyo OBE

09:45 – Opening Speech by Survivor – Salimah Khan

10:00 – Welcome Speech – Paul Marshall: Director of Children’s Services, Manchester City Council

10:20 – Keynote Presentation - Jahnine Davis – Co-Founder, Listen UP: Exploring The Adultification of Black Girls in the UK
10:50 – Q and A Session

11:00 – Presentation - Pav Kaur - Faith Lead, National Working Group: Adultification, Culture and Religion: Creating Safer Communities

11:20 - Q&A Session

11:30 – Networking Tea and Coffee Break

12:00 – Young Women Panel Discussion – How Adultification in Statutory Service Provision Impacts The Well-Being of Young Women and Girls (Tia Spencer, Katrina Alley-Adiat, Salimah Khan and, Desriee Asomuyide). **Moderator:** Debbie Ariyo OBE, CEO AFRUCA

12:45 – Q and A Session
13:00 – Lunch

14:00 – Poetry - Juliet Oduro Mylov3

14:15 Keynote Presentation - Prof Claudia Bernard: Goldsmith University, London: Intersectionality and Adultification in Child Protection

14:45 – Presentation - Alimatu Dimonekene MBE: Campaigner, Violence Against Women and Girls: Adultification in Female Genital Mutilation

15:05 – Q and A Session
15:10 – Presentation - Katrina Alley-Adiat: AFRUCA’s Work on Adultification and Young Women and Girls in Exploitation

15:25 – Summary, Conclusions and Next Steps - Susan Butlin, Assistant Director, Complex Safeguarding and Julie Heslop, Assistant Director, Early Intervention and Prevention, Manchester City Council

15:30 – Conference Closes
Speakers and Panellists

**Debbie Ariyo OBE**  
CEO & Founder of AFRUCA Safeguarding Children

Debbie Ariyo is Chief Executive of AFRUCA, a UK charity she founded in 2001 to address child safeguarding and child trafficking issues in African diaspora communities and provide services to help support children and families and rehabilitate victims. A noted expert in Safeguarding Children, Debbie has specialist expertise in addressing socio-cultural factors affecting the protection and safeguarding of children of Black and African origins in the UK and Europe. She has designed, developed and implemented many programmes and services at AFRUCA to meet the safeguarding and protection needs of children, young people and their families. She sits on a number of advisory groups and committees including Manchester Children Board which leads on children’s policy and strategy across Manchester.

**Salimah Khan**  
Survivor of human trafficking and CSE, Lived Experienced Speaker

Salimah Khan is survivor of human trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation. Further to this Salimah is a survivor of extensive Domestic Abuse from early adulthood up until 5 years ago. Sailmah has lived and recent professional experience with this arena. Sailmah is extremely passionate about the rights and justices for women (particularly from BAME backgrounds) alongside proactively pursuing to understand and collaboratively promote wider spread knowledge of how women and young girls alike are treated and affected.
Speakers and Panellists

Paul Marshall
Strategic Director of Children's and Education Services at Manchester City Council

Paul is a qualified and registered social worker with over 25 years’ experience in the public sector; working with partner agencies to improve the experiences and outcomes of less well served children and their families. Paul qualified as a Social Worker in 1994 working within a generic Children's Social Work Team. He secured his first Team Manager post in 1999 and since then has held a leadership role within statutory Children's Social Work services; transforming and delivering sustainable improvements. Paul secured his first Service Manager role in a large county council in 2002 and has experience of working in small and medium size unitary Local Authorities. Since securing his first senior role in 2004 Paul has experience of leading Children's Services in large County and City Councils. Appointed as Manchester City Council's Strategic Director of Children's and Education Services in March 2016 Paul holds the statutory duties of the Director of Children Services. He has recently integrated the children's and education services directorate (previously separate service areas) and holds overall strategic responsibility for children and education services across the city; including the Youth Justice Service. This includes chairing Manchester’s Youth Justice Management Board. In addition, as part of Paul’s wider responsibilities he is an active member of the Association of Director Children Services working with Government Departments and leads the Greater Manchester Youth Justice Transformation Board. Prior to becoming Manchester City Council’s Strategic Director of Children's and Education Services, Paul held 2 Asst. Director for Children’s Social Care in Rochdale Borough Council and before that Birmingham City Council. Paul is committed to challenging inequality and in doing so working with others to protect and support for children and young people to create the opportunities and experiences that enable them to go on and have safe, healthy, happy and successful lives.

Jahnine Davis
Co-Founder and Director of Listen Up

Jahnine Davis is the UK’s foremost researcher and thought leader in adultification bias in child protection and safeguarding. A specialist in the safeguarding of Black children, Jahnine’s PhD research explores safeguarding responses to Black children when harm is outside of the home. Jahnine is a care-experienced professional with over 25 years practice experience working in both charity and statutory safeguarding arenas. This includes her appointment on the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. Jahnine is Director of Listen Up, an organisation established to amplify lesser heard children in child protection research, policy and practice.
Speakers and Panellists

Pav Kaur
Faith Lead at NWG Network

Pav is a qualified social worker with a wide range of front-line experience gained through working with survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, exploitation, honour-based violence and forced marriages. Pav has also worked on both national and international operations on cases relating to child abuse and ensuring we are always keeping children at the centre of those cases. Pav has led projects within the communities around exploitation and abuse which have allowed her to build relationships within faith community groups. Prior to joining the NWG, Pav has worked within the voluntary, health, statutory and law enforcement sectors, specialising in safeguarding and child protection.

Desriee Asomuyide
CEO and Founder of Little Omo

Desriee Asomuyide, a mother and entrepreneur, founded Little Omo, an award-winning brand that promotes inclusive education through play by offering learning materials and toys that teach children about diversity. She is driven by her passion for diversity and inclusion and is committed to inspiring the younger generation through her entrepreneurial journey. She also uses her platform to speak at various educational institutions from nurseries to universities, inspiring people who look like her that they too can pursue their dreams and be who they want to be. By sharing her journey and experiences, she encourages and empowers others to strive for success in their chosen field.
Speakers and Panellists

Katrina Alley-Adiat
Youth Violence Interventions Worker, Youth Violence Project at AFRUCA Safeguarding Children

Katrina believes in helping the younger generation make more positive choices for a better tomorrow and a better future. She believes representation matters and wants to be the role model that can prove that barriers can be broken and overcome, because she was once that young person with no hope too. Katrina hopes that her lived experiences and story can make an impact. Katrina works at AFRUCA Safeguarding Children as a Youth Violence Intervention Worker for the Youth Violence Project. This includes providing mentoring support to young people.

Tia Spencer
Student - Lived Care Experience

Tia is a 26 year old Care experienced person who regularly campaign for changes in the Care System. Tia is also a Law and Criminology Student with goals of helping young people who are involved in the Criminal Justice System.

Juliet Oduro Mylov3
Abstract Artist

Juliet Oduro, non binary abstract artist-poet-unboxed. Exploring the world of gaia in its many mediums.
Speakers and Panellists

**Professor Claudia Bernard**

Professor of Social Work/Head of Postgraduate Research Social, Therapeutic and Community Studies

Claudia Bernard is Professor of Social Work at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her research interests are in child abuse and neglect, gender-based violence, structural equalities and social justice. She has written widely on these topics, including an edited collection Safeguarding Black Children: Good Practice in Child Protection and Intersectionality for Social Workers: A Practical Introduction to Theory and Practice. She was featured in the 2020 Exhibition Phenomenal Women: Portraits of UK Black Female Professors.

**Alimatu Dimonekene MBE**

Women and Girls Rights Advocate and FGM Campaigner/Founder of A Girl at a Time

Alimatu Dimonekene is an Award winning leading Women and Girls Rights Advocate. She is a tireless activist who has dedicated her life’s purpose to enhancing the reproductive health rights of women and girls especially those affected by harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) with child and early force marriage and exploitation. Winner of several acclaimed awards such as the Rosie McGrath for Activism, True Hero from Iranian Kurdish in Womens Rights Organization (IKWRO) for campaigning against FGM/C and the Tropics Magazine Most Influential African in the Diaspora. Alimatu has also been recognised for her dedicated work by winning the African Achievers Award 2017 for her work in raising the voices of African women and girls through empowering the next generation. She also is the founder of A Girl At A Time (SL) a leading platforms using technology to engage, empower and educate young people around the issues of gender base violence and advocacy. As an Ambassador for the Better Lives Foundation as well as the UN Women U.K. Alimatu continues to lead her powerful voices to the advancement of women and girls through her advocacy and community engagement work.
Speakers and Panellists

Julie Heslop
Assistant Director, Early Help and Prevention at Manchester City Council

Julie is Assistant Director of Early Intervention and Prevention in Manchester and manages a portfolio of early years, early help, and youth justice services. Julie is a qualified social worker and has worked in the field of social care for the past 30 years. Julie has extensive experience in child protection, safeguarding, early help and prevention and public service reform. Julie is skilled in leading strategic partnerships and has established numerous partnership hubs including the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Manchester, the Complex Safeguarding hub and the neighbourhood based early help hubs. Ensuring the response to child sexual and criminal exploitation is effective and impactful has been a focus of Julie’s work and led to pioneering work in relation to contextual safeguarding and securing additional funding to support the hidden harm experienced by young women and girls. Julie utilises research and evidence based practice to develop new initiatives and partnerships such as the nationally recognised Thriving Babies, Confident Parents Programme, and the Best Start for Life/Family Hubs Programme. This ensures that equity and what matters to children and families continues to inform and drive Julie’s practice.

Susan Butlin
Assistant Director, Complex Safeguarding

Susan Butlin is one of Assistant Directors in Manchester’s Children and Education Diretorate. She has worked as a social worker in Manchester since qualifying as a social worker in 2003, and has during this time worked all over the city and with children and families in a range of circumstances. In her current role she has strategic responsibility for North Locality and Complex safeguarding. In a previous role Susan was part of the development of the Complex Safeguarding Hub. Susan is passionate about how we support great outcomes for children and is committed to ensuring agencies work collaboratively to achieve this.
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