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## Sanctuary for abused children saves taxpayer

ECONOMISTS have calculated the cost of ignoring victims of child sexual exploitation to both society and the taxpayer for the first time.

A new report for Barnardo's by Pro Bono Economics reveals the effectiveness of specialist interventions and the estimated potential saving during a child victim's lifetime of £12 for every £1 spent.

Chief executive Anne Marie Carrie said: "The moral argument for helping girls and boys who are exploited for sex is plain – now we have tangible, economic evidence of the necessity for specialist help too.

"These figures are especially poignant in the light of increased pressure on public finances and voluntary sector funding.

"The case has never been clearer – politicians must move quickly to give these vulnerable children the sanctuary they need."

Volunteers from the Bank of England analysed data from 539 Barnardo's service users to determine the impact of the interventions on children's lives.

The study found that not only does the children's charity reduce the risk of sexual exploitation and four other highly correlated harmful factors - going missing, substance abuse, disengagement from education and unsuitable accommodation - but without appropriate intervention risks could rise further.

The potential average cost if a child doesn't receive help is £63, 508 compared with £28,148 for a young person who has been supported.

Pro Bono Economics founder and trustee Martin Brookes said: "Understanding the cost implications goes a long way to pushing the cause for investing in specialist services for sexually exploited children, giving Barnardo's campaign a financial value to boost the incalculable ethical case."

Barnardo's wants to see improved statutory responses and provision of services, co-ordinated action from central and local government, early intervention and awareness-raising of sexual exploitation.

For more information about Barnardo's child sexual exploitation campaign go to [www.barnardos.org.uk/cutthemfree](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/cutthemfree).

Ends

### **Notes to Editors**

This report applies to the UK.

To view the report briefing or the full report and interviews contact senior press officer Rebecca Goding on 020 8498 7555.

Barnardo's works with more than 1,000 young people affected by sexual exploitation across the UK each year.

All costs are presented as 'lifetime' costs. This is because the impact of some risk factors will not be immediate, but will accrue over a longer period of time.

Barnardo's works with more than 100,000 children, young people and their families in 415 specialised projects in communities across the UK.

We believe in the potential of every child and young person, no matter who they are, what they have done or what they have been through. We will support them, stand up for them and bring out the best in each and every child.

Every year we help thousands of children turn their lives around. But we cannot do it without you. Visit [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk) to find out how you can get involved and show you believe in children.

[Pro Bono Economics](#) was founded in 2009 to broker economists to work pro bono in the charitable sector. PBE economists help on short and medium term-assignments, typically addressing questions around measurement, results and impact. The aim is to benefit individual charities, help the sector develop best practise and to create a culture of pro bono work in the economics profession.