

Safeguarding Bulletin – Exploitation



18th March was National Child Exploitation Awareness day. The event is to raise awareness of all forms of exploitation, including modern slavery, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and trafficking. Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership have focussed their local effort around child sexual exploitation (CSE) recognising the need for everyone to have greater awareness around the indicators of CSE and to know how to report this. The day is to encourage everyone to **think, spot and speak out against abuse** and adopt a zero tolerance to adults developing inappropriate relationships with children or children exploiting and abusing their peers.

Exploitation can happen at any time, and here is some information to help support us all.

CSE – Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Sexual exploitation can involve young people being exploited in 'exchange' for drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and other presents. Or it may be having sex for money with several adults. Young people may feel they must have sex because an adult gives them something, or because they feel threatened or frightened.

Some young people may want to have sex because they think the adult is their boyfriend or girlfriend. In reality they are being used for sex, and the 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend' may pass them on to other people too. (Remember – sexual abusers can be women, as well as men.)

Sexual exploitation can also occur without any physical contact with children being groomed to post sexual images of themselves online or take part in sexual activities via webcam or smart-phone. Abusers and groomers are very manipulative and often a young person will not recognise that they are being sexually exploited. Sexual exploitation can happen to boys and young men as well as girls and young women. It can happen to a person of any background, race, ability, sexuality, and age. In Hillingdon Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is taken very seriously and there is a zero tolerance to this form of sexual abuse. Missing children/young people are a priority due to the strong links associated with CSE.

Signs of exploitation

These are some signs that children may show if they are being exploited:

EXPLOITATION SPOT THE SIGNS

MISSING DAY OR NIGHT
Missing from home or education. Not knowing where they are or who they are with.

NEW PLACES
Discovering they have been going to new places where they have no obvious connections.

ONLINE USE
Spending more time online. Secretive activity, refusal to come offline. Have they distanced themselves from family, friends and usual activities?

CHANGE IN APPEARANCE
Clothing, personal hygiene, talking differently, tired.

INJURIES
Unexplained bruises, cuts, burns, marks. Reluctance to seek medical attention.

CHANGE IN BEHAVIOUR
Have they become unusually secretive, fearful or withdrawn, aggressive, distanced themselves from family and friends, involved in anti-social behaviour.

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COPING MECHANISMS
Alcohol/drug use/self-harm – what they may be doing or using in order to cope.

CHANGE IN FRIENDS
Sudden changes in who they are 'hanging out' with including meeting new people from social media.

POSSESSIONS
Unexplained items e.g. New clothing, money, phone, drugs.

HELP US STOP EXPLOITATION

SAY SOMETHING, IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS. CONTACT:
Crimestoppers **OR** Police **OR**
0800 555 111 **101**
WWW.STOP-CSE.ORG

Contact: []

SAY SOMETHING IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS

STOPCSE

Types of Child Sexual Exploitation

CSE can happen in person or online. An abuser will gain a child's trust or control them through violence or blackmail before moving onto sexually abusing them. This can happen in a short period of time.

When a child is sexually exploited online they might be persuaded or forced to:

- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- film or stream sexual activities
- have sexual conversations.

Once an abuser has images, video or copies of conversations, they might use threats and blackmail to force a young person to take part in other sexual activity. They may also share the images and videos with others or circulate them online.

Gangs use sexual exploitation:

- to exert power and control
- for initiation
- to use sexual violence as a weapon.

If a child reveals abuse

If a child talks to you about sexual exploitation it's important to:

- listen carefully to what they're saying
- let them know they've done the right thing by telling you
- tell them it's not their fault
- say you'll take them seriously
- don't confront the alleged abuser
- explain what you'll do next
- report what the child has told you as soon as possible.

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**HE'S NAIVE,
WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?**

HELP US STOP SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse that involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18 into sexual activity, sometimes in exchange for things such as money, gifts, accommodation, affection or status.

nwg **GIVE CHILDREN A VOICE DONATE**
ONLINE AT STOP-CSE.ORG/DONATE

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**SHE DIDN'T FEEL SHE
HAD A CHOICE, YOU DO**

HELP US STOP SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

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CCE - Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) takes a variety of forms but ultimately it is the grooming and exploitation of children into **criminal activity**. Across each form that CCE takes, the current reality is that children who are coerced into criminal activity are often treated as criminals by statutory agencies rather than as victims of exploitation.

Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Many children and young people are trafficked into the UK from other countries like Vietnam, Albania and Romania. Children are also trafficked around the UK from one county to another.

County lines is a form of **criminal exploitation** where urban gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns (Home Office, 2018). It can happen in any part of the UK and is against the law and a form of child abuse. [What is County Lines? - Video link](#)

It can be difficult to know what you can do if you're worried about a child. There is information and advice to help you feel confident in taking the next steps to keep children and young people safe.

What is child trafficking?

Trafficking is where children and young people tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for:

- sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking and childcare
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs.



Trafficked children experience many types of abuse and neglect. Traffickers use physical, sexual and emotional abuse as a form of control. Children and young people are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected and may be sexually exploited.

Types of child trafficking

Traffickers often groom children, families and communities to gain their trust. They may also threaten families with violence or threats. Traffickers often promise children and families that they'll have a better future elsewhere.

Trafficking is also an economic crime. Traffickers may ask families for money for providing documents or transport and they'll make a profit from money a child "earns" through exploitation, forced labour or crime. They'll often be told this money is to pay off a debt they or their family "owe" to the traffickers.

Traffickers may:

- work alone or in small groups, recruiting a small number of children, often from areas they know and live in
- be medium-sized groups who recruit, move and exploit children and young people on a small scale
- be large criminal networks that operate internationally with high-level corruption, money laundering and a large numbers of victims.

Signs of child trafficking

Knowing the signs of trafficking can help give a voice to children. Sometimes children won't understand that what's happening to them is wrong. Or they might be scared to speak out.

It may not be obvious that a child has been trafficked but you might notice unusual or unexpected things. They might:

- spend a lot of time doing household chores
- rarely leave their house or have no time for playing

- be orphaned or living apart from their family
- live in low-standard accommodation
- be unsure which country, city or town they're in
- can't or are reluctant to share personal information or where they live
- not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- have no access to their parents or guardians
- be seen in inappropriate places like brothels or factories
- have money or things you wouldn't expect them to
- have injuries from workplace accidents
- give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children.

Report child trafficking

Children who are trafficked are intentionally hidden and isolated from the services and communities who can identify and protect them. If you're worried about a child, you can take steps to keep them safe.

- If you think a child or young person is in danger, contact the police on 999.
- Contact your local child protection services. You can find their contact details on the website for the local authority the child lives in.
- Contact the Modern Slavery Helpline to get help, report a suspicion or seek advice. Call 0800 012 1700 or fill in their online form.

National support and helplines

- Parents Against Child Exploitation: www.paceuk.info
- NSPCC: Helpline 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk
- The Children's Society 'Look Closer' campaign
- Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org 0800 555 111
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111
- CEOP (On-line abuse or exploitation): www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre 0370 496 762
- Anti-Terrorism Hotline: 0800 789 321
- Fearless: www.fearless.org SPACE (Criminal Exploitation): www.bespaceaware.co.uk
- Catch22 poster hub: www.catch-22.org.uk/spot-the-signs-poster-hub



Useful places to go for information for your son/daughter:

- Samaritans: 116 123
- Childline 0800 1111 specifically online safety 0808 800 5002
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>
- <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- <https://youngminds.org.uk/> 0808 802 5544
- <https://www.kooth.com/>