

Child Sexual Exploitation

Introduction

A series of recent serious case reviews such as those in Rotherham and more locally in Oxfordshire have highlighted the fact that numerous vulnerable children are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation.

Everyone should have a concern that vulnerable young people are being abused in this way and everyone can play a part in helping to tackle this problem which is not only happening in other parts of the Country. Everyone needs to be aware that such exploitation can happen anywhere.

The purpose of this document is to raise awareness of this issue of child sexual exploitation, highlight some of the danger signs you should be aware of during the course of your work and highlight how you should report these concerns.

Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation can take various forms. Children and young people are vulnerable to exploitation due to;

- Being Missing or absent from home or care
- Sexual Exploitation within families
- Being subject to trafficking
- It can apply to males and females.

The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People developed the definition of child sexual exploitation which is now used by government and other organisations:

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's or young person's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation.

This lack of recognition by a child or young person is achieved through the grooming process perpetrated by the adult in a range of ways which then lead to inappropriate control over that child. Children do not make informed choices to enter or remain in sexual exploitative situations or relationships, but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or desperation. It should not be thought that such vulnerable young people are simply making 'bad lifestyle choices'.

Common Warning signs to look out for.

During the course of your working day you may encounter situations which give you cause for concern and raise some suspicions relating to child sexual exploitation.

There are various tell-tale signals to look for. One sign on its own does not necessarily mean someone is being sexually exploited or has been trafficked, but several signs together should give you cause for concern; perhaps the person shows signs of the following:

- Does not know their home or work address
- Allows others to speak for them when addressed directly
- Live or travel in a group, sometimes with other persons who do not speak the same language
- They are collected very early and/or returned late at night on a regular basis
- May have inappropriate clothing for the work they are performing, and/or lack of safety equipment
- Their physical appearance may show signs of injury, malnourishment, unkempt
- They may be isolated from the local community and/or appear to be under the control or influence of others
- Have no cash of their own
- Be known to work at a brothel and be frequently moved from one location to another
- The same young person in the company of several different men.

This list is not exhaustive, should you have any suspicion you should help protect vulnerable young people by reporting the matter.

Many Young people who become victims of Child Sexual Exploitation are often absent or missing from home or care. However not all abused children fall into this category.

You should be aware therefore of the need for vigilance when young people are seen sleeping rough in streets or other public places. If you have any concerns for their safety or welfare report the matter to the police.

Victims are frequently passed around groups of abusers so you may become aware of addresses or places where young people are often taken to. Should you have any suspicions that a location or address is being used for the purpose of child sexual exploitation you should report the matter to the police.

How to report your concerns

Should you have any concerns which you think should be reported you should contact the police on telephone number 101.

You can also e mail rise@northants.pnn.police.uk

You can also contact crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**