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| Policy Title: | Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation | | |
| Policy Code: | ICP 12.4 | | |
| Cross Referencing: | QS 12 Children’s Act 1989 Vol. 4 Working together to safeguard children National Working Group County Lines | | |
| Authorised by: | Mark Parker | | |
| Date: | Feb 2021 | Review Date: | Feb 2022 |

1.0 Legislative Framework:

1.1 This guidance outlines the principles which underpin best practice interventions to safeguard children and young people from sexual exploitation. Taking into account the necessary legislative framework.

2.0 Definitions:

2.1 Child Sexual Exploitation:

“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 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”.

2.2 Definitions can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

3.0 Principles:

3.1 The sexual exploitation of children and young people has been identified throughout the UK, in both rural and urban areas. It robs children of their childhood and has a serious long-term impact on every aspect of their lives, emotional and physical health and education.

- 3.2 Children who are sexually exploited are the victims of sexual abuse and should be safeguarded from further harm. Sexually exploited children should not be regarded as criminals or consenting to their own abuse and the primary law enforcement response must be directed at perpetrators who groom children for sexual exploitation.
- 3.3 Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of their family background or other circumstances. This includes boys and young men as well as girls and young women. However, some groups are particularly vulnerable:
- Children and young people who have a history of running away or of going missing from home.
 - Children and young people with special needs.
 - Children and young people in and leaving residential and foster care.
 - Migrant children.
 - Unaccompanied asylum seeking children.
 - Children who have disengaged from education.
 - Children who are abusing drugs and alcohol,
 - Children and young people who have been exploited or abused previously,
 - Children and young people involved in gangs.¹
- 3.4 Child sexual exploitation takes different forms:
- **Inappropriate Relationships:**
 - These usually involve one offender who has inappropriate power or control over a young person (physical, emotional or financial). One indicator may be a significant age gap. The young person may believe they are in a loving relationship.
 - **Peer on Peer Exploitation:**
 - This refers to situations where young people are forced or coerced into sexual activity by peers or associates. Sometimes this can be associated with gang activity but not always.
 - **Gang Associated CSE:**
 - A child or young person can be sexually exploited by a gang, but this is not necessarily the reason why gangs are formed. Types of exploitation may include using sex as a weapon between rival gangs, as a form of punishment to fellow gang members and/or a means of gaining status within the hierarchy of the gang. See also County Lines Policy.

¹ (p 17). Safeguarding Children and Young people from Sexual Exploitation, 2009

- **Boyfriend/Pimp Model:**

- Here the offender befriends and grooms a young person into a 'relationship' and then coerces or forces them to have sex with friends or associates. The boyfriend may be significantly older than the victim, but not always

- **Organised Sexual Exploitation or Trafficking:**

- Young people (often connected) are passed through networks, possibly over geographical distances, between towns and cities where they may be forced/coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Often this occurs at 'parties', and young people who are involved may recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised 'buying and selling' of young people by offenders. Organised exploitation varies from spontaneous networking between groups of offenders, to more serious organised crime where young people are effectively 'sold'.

- **Online:**

- the production, possession and distribution of child sexual abuse material online;
- the grooming of potential child victims online with the intention of sexual exploitation;
- the live streaming of child sexual exploitation and abuse.

3.5 **The key factor is that a perpetrator always has power over the victim.**

3.6 The method the power is achieved can be through a variety of methods:

- Money.
- Gifts.
- Drugs.
- Fear.
- Intimidation.
- The perception of a "loving" relationship.
- Age.
- Social Stature.
- The young person's vulnerabilities.
- A home.
- Food.
- Threats to family.
- This is not an exhaustive list.

4.0 Indicators of Possible Child Sexual Exploitation:

4.1 Employees working directly or indirectly within Impact for Change should be vigilant to the key indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation:

- **Health:**
 - Physical symptoms (bruising suggestive of either physical or sexual assault);
 - Chronic fatigue;
 - Recurring or multiple sexually transmitted infections;
 - Pregnancy and/or seeking an abortion;
 - Evidence of drug, alcohol or other substance misuse;
 - Sexually risky behaviour.

- **Education:**
 - Truancy/disengagement with education.
 - Considerable change in performance at school.

- **Emotional and Behavioural Issues:**
 - Volatile behaviour exhibiting extreme array of mood swings or use of abusive language;
 - Involvement in petty crime such as shoplifting, stealing;
 - Secretive behaviour;
 - Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults;
 - Reports of being seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation, including public toilets known for cottaging or adult venues (pubs and clubs).

- **Identity:**
 - Low self-image.
 - low self-esteem
 - self-harming behaviour, e.g. cutting, overdosing,
 - eating disorder,
 - drugs/alcohol abuse.
 - promiscuity.

- **Relationships:**
 - Hostility in relationships with staff, family members as appropriate and significant others;
 - Physical aggression;
 - Placement breakdown;
 - Reports from reliable sources (e.g. family, friends or other professionals) suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation;
 - Detachment from age-appropriate activities;
 - Associating with other young people who are known to be sexually exploited;
 - Known to be sexually active;
 - Sexual relationship with a significantly older person, or younger person who is suspected of being abusive;
 - Unexplained relationships with older adults;
 - Possible inappropriate use of the Internet and forming relationships, particularly with adults, via the Internet;
 - Phone calls, text messages or letters from unknown adults;
 - Adults or older youths loitering outside the home;
 - Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation;

- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for in spite of having no known home base;
- Missing for long periods, with no known home base;
- Going missing and being found in areas where they have no known links.
- **Social Presentation:**
 - Change in appearance;
 - Leaving the care setting in clothing unusual for them (inappropriate for age, borrowing clothing from older young people).
- **Family and Environmental Factors:**
 - History of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse; neglect; domestic violence; parental difficulties.
- **Housing:**
 - Pattern of previous street homelessness;
 - Having keys to premises other than those known about.
- **Income:**
 - Acquisition of expensive clothes, mobile phones or other possessions without plausible explanation;
 - Accounts of social activities with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding.
 - Possession of large amounts of money with no plausible explanation;
- **This list is not exhaustive.**

4.2 **Please note:** Whilst the focus is often on older men as perpetrators, younger men and women may also be involved and staff should be aware of this possibility.

| Risk Factors |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going missing – the most immediate indicator of vulnerability to sexual exploitation Disengagement from education |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug and/or alcohol dependency |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical symptoms e.g. sexually transmitted infections, miscarriage, abortion, bruising or marks indicating physical or sexual assault |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people who have not received appropriate levels of attention from concerned adults Associating with older men or other 'risky' adults |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounts of social activities with no plausible explanation of the source of the money to fund these activities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New possessions, acquisition of money, expensive clothes, drugs or other possessions without plausible explanation about their source |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being alienated from family or community |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being in care and having placement breakdown |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associating with other young people who are known to be victims of exploitation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some kinds of offending behaviour |

4.3 Staff should be aware that many children and young people who are sexually exploited do not see themselves as victims. In such situations, discussions with them about staff concerns should be handled with great sensitivity. Seeking prior advice from specialist agencies may be useful.

5.0 Consent:

5.1 In assessing whether a child or young person is a victim of sexual exploitation, or at risk, careful consideration should be given to the issue of consent. It is important to bear in mind that:

- A child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex (it is statutory rape) or any other type of sexual touching;
- Sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence;
- It is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17 year old if they hold a position of trust or authority in relation to them;
- Where sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old does not result in an offence being committed, it may still result in harm, or the likelihood of harm being suffered;
- Non-consensual sex is rape whatever the age of the victim; and
- If the victim is incapacitated through drink or drugs, or the victim or his or her family has been subject to violence or the threat of it, they cannot be considered to have given true consent; therefore offences may have been committed;
- Child sexual exploitation is therefore potentially a child protection issue for all children under the age of 18 years and not just those in a specific age group.

6.0 Grooming:

6.1 When working with children and young people at risk of being sexually exploited employees should be aware of the grooming cycle:

6.2 All employees should be aware of the grooming cycle and those people who come into contact with the young people in the care of Impact for Change.

6.3 All employees should be aware of the whistleblowing policy and procedures.

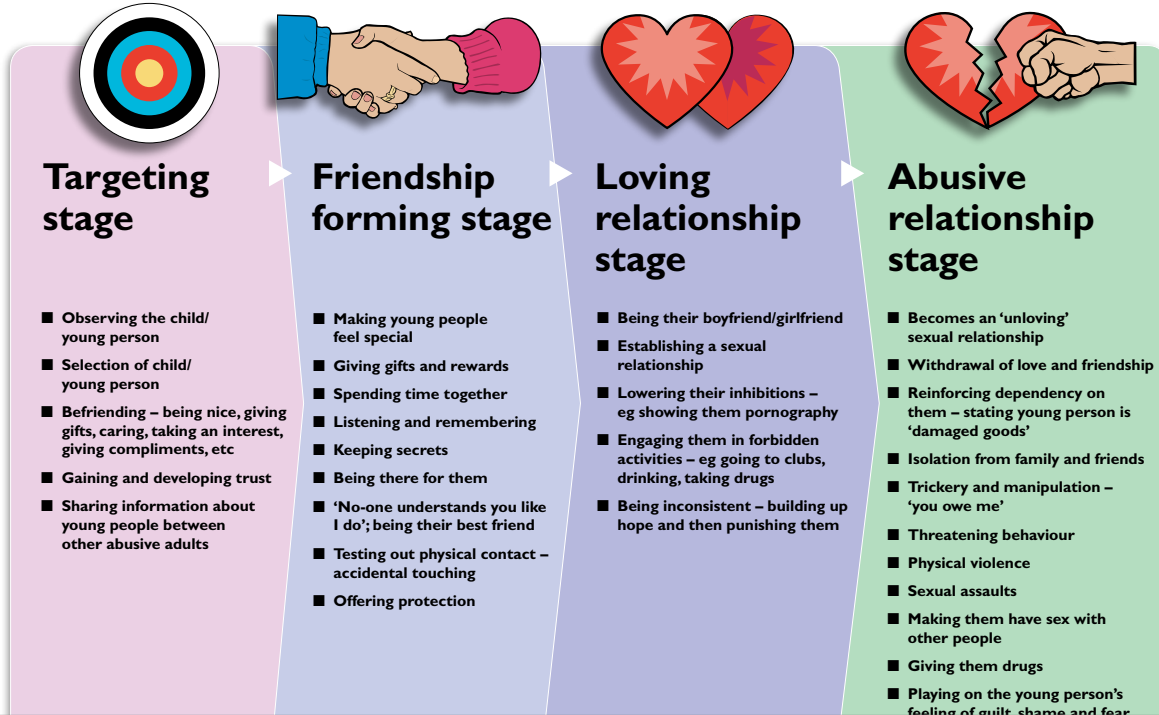
7.0 Risk factors: 'PUSH' and 'PULL'

7.1 All children regardless of background are vulnerable to grooming and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

7.2 It should also be noted there are clear risk factors and push and pull factors. Research (Barnardo's: Reducing The Risk, 2006) has found that the following factors make a young person vulnerable to sexual exploitation. These can be historical or current issues.

7.3 These are referred to as 'PUSH' factors.

The grooming line



Appendix 3 The grooming line

Push factors will include:

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|---|
| Children who have been the victim of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and emotional abuse |
| Children from households where domestic violence and abuse has been a feature |
| Children of parents with a high level of vulnerabilities (e.g. drug and/or alcohol abuse, mental illness, learning disability, their own history of an abusive childhood) |
| Family breakdown / disrupted family life / problematic parenting |
| Insecure immigration status |
| Children who have physical or learning impairments |

- 7.4 Abusive adults will look out for signs of these factors in selecting a child to target. There are immediate risk issues and indicators that should be considered:
- 7.5 The grooming techniques used to gain the child's attention, admiration and affection often taps into insecurities or a desire for acceptance and status by the young person.
- 7.6 These can be referred to as 'PULL' factors and include:

Pull Factors

Being liked by someone older;

Being liked/fancied enough that a stranger asks for their mobile number;

Meeting someone who thinks they are special on the internet;

Receiving alcohol, drugs, money or gifts;

Getting a buzz and the excitement of risk taking/forbidden behaviour;

Being offered somewhere to stay where there are no rules/boundaries;

Being taken along to adult entertainment venues, red light or gay cruising areas (public sex environments);

Being given lifts, taken to new places, and having adventures with a casual acquaintance.

7.7 Impact for Change and all employees are aware that they are neither definitive nor prescriptive, given that each child's exploitation may be unique and change over time.

8.0 Referring Cases of Concern:

8.1 If a member of staff is concerned that a child or young person is involved in, or at risk of, sexual exploitation, their concerns should be discussed with the Registered Manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead Mark Parker.

8.2 If it is decided that action needs to be taken to protect the child, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered. This will include making a referral to children's social care in which the home is located and the local police. This procedure will be led by the Registered Manager or designated Safeguarding Lead.

8.3 In the case of suspected child sexual exploitation Ofsted, the placing authority and police must be informed (see also On call Procedure).

8.4 If the child or young person is not deemed to be in need, the social worker should consider onward referral to relevant agencies. This should include liaison with the Registered Manager and the keyworker at the home.

9.0 Supporting Children and Young People out of Child Sexual Exploitation

9.1 Impact for Change, Statutory agencies, and voluntary sector organisations together with the child or young person, and his / her family as appropriate, should agree on the services which should be provided to them and how they will be coordinated.

9.2 The types of intervention offered should be appropriate to their needs and should take full account of identified risk factors and their individual circumstances. This may include, for

example, previous abuse, missing incidents, involvement in gangs and groups and/or child trafficking.

- 9.3 Health services provided may include sexual health services and mental health services. Advice should be sought from the nearest specialist service which works with children and young people involved in child sexual exploitation. A referral should be made as appropriate, if the child or young person is in agreement.
- 9.4 Issues raised and action planned should be incorporated into the child's Care Plan and Placement Plan, and reviewed as part of the Looked After Child Review.
- 9.5 The coordination and lead within Impact for Change will be the Registered Manager and the young person's key worker
- 9.6 Because the effects of child sexual exploitation can last well into adulthood, support may be required over a long period of time. In such circumstances, effective links should be made between children and adult services and statutory and voluntary organisations. This should be incorporated into the young person's Pathway Plan.
- 9.7 In consultation with the therapeutic team Impact for Change will provide the necessary training, development and resources to employees working with young people who have been or are at risk of child sexual exploitation.

10.0 Identifying and Prosecuting Perpetrators:

- 10.1 The police and criminal justice agencies lead on the identification and prosecution of perpetrators. All practitioners, however, have a role in gathering, recording and sharing information with the police and other agencies, as appropriate and in agreement with them.
- 10.2 The home's manager and senior staff should proactively liaise with local police regarding child sexual exploitation. This should include police giving advice to staff about what action they should take if they are concerned a child in their care is at risk of or is being sexually exploited. This may include gathering information to pass onto the police, such as vehicle registration numbers, names, physical descriptions etc. It may also include what action staff should take in the case of suspected sexual or physical abuse in order to protect potential evidence, which may be useful in the case of an alleged perpetrator being prosecuted.
- 10.3 Advice should be sought from local police regarding such matters.
- 10.4 Staff at Impact for Change should bear in mind that sexual exploitation often does not occur in isolation and has links to other crime types, including:
- Child trafficking (into, out of and within the UK);
 - Domestic violence;
 - Sexual violence in intimate relationships;
 - Grooming (both online and offline);
 - Abusive images of children and their distribution (organised abuse);

- Organised sexual abuse of children;
- Drugs-related offences (dealing, consuming and cultivating);
- Gang-related activity;
- Immigration-related offences;
- Domestic servitude.

11.0 Supporting Children and Young People through Related Legal Proceedings:

- 11.1 Where alleged perpetrators are arrested and charged with offences against children or young people in the home, staff should ensure they are supported throughout the prosecution process and beyond.
- 11.2 Specialist agencies should be involved in supporting the child or young person, as required. This may include using special measures to protect them when giving evidence in court for example. Independent Sexual Violence Advisers or specialist voluntary sector services, if available, may also have an important role to play.

12.0 Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme:

- 12.1 The Child Sex Offender Review (CSOR) Disclosure Scheme is designed to provide members of the public with a formal mechanism to ask for disclosure about people they are concerned about, who have unsupervised access to children and may therefore pose a risk. This scheme builds on existing, well established third-party disclosures that operate under the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).
- 12.2 Police will reveal details confidentially to the person most able to protect the child (usually parents, carers or guardians) if they think it is in the child's interests.
- 12.3 The scheme has been operating in all 43 police areas in England and Wales since 2010. The scheme is managed by the Police and information can only be accessed through direct application to them.
- 12.4 If a disclosure is made, the information must be kept confidential and only used to keep the child in question safe. Legal action may be taken if confidentiality is breached. A disclosure is delivered in person (as opposed to in writing) with the following warning:
- 'That the information must only be used for the purpose for which it has been shared i.e. in order to safeguard children;
 - The person to whom the disclosure is made will be asked to sign an undertaking that they agree that the information is confidential and they will not disclose this information further;
 - A warning should be given that legal proceedings could result if this confidentiality is breached. This should be explained to the person and they must sign the undertaking'

If the person is unwilling to sign the undertaking, the police must consider whether the disclosure should still take place.



13.0 Other Resources:

13.1 Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP)

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

13.2 <http://www.nwgnetwork.org/resources/discover-the-visible-signs-of-sexual-exploitation>

13.3 www.swcpp.org.uk

13.4 <http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

13.5 <http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/protocols-procedures-and-reviews/cse-protocols/>

13.6 <http://www.devonsafeguardingchildren.org/parents-carers/cse-advice-2/>

13.7 <http://www.devonsafeguardingchildren.org/cse/>

13.8 Barnardo's "BeWise"

13.9 http://webfronter.com/hounslow/learningtorespect/menu0/Child_protection/BWise2Sexual_Exploitation/images/Bwise2_Sexual_Exploitation.pdf

14.0 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>



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