# Mowbray Safeguarding Bulletin

March 2024 – Child Sexual Exploitation







## Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse. It happens when a young person is coerced, manipulated, or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for things that they may need or want such as gifts, drugs, money, or affection.

Children and young people can be tricked into believing that they are in loving relationships so the abuse may appear consensual. This is called grooming and the victim often trusts their abuser and does not believe that they are being abused.

CSE does not always involve physical contact but can often occur online and can also lead to trafficking within and out of the UK for further sexual exploitation.

It is important to recognise that although the age of consent is 16 years old, children and young people over 16 can be exploited.

#### **Upcoming Awareness Days**

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Self-Harm Awareness Day - 1st March

International Women's Day - 8th March

Neurodiversity Celebration Week -11-17<sup>th</sup> March

Red Nose Day - 15th March

Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day - 18<sup>th</sup>
March





#### Types of CSE

CSE can happen in person or online. An abuser will gain a child's trust or control them through threats and violence. This can escalate to sexual exploitation in a short space of time.

When a child is sexually exploited, they might be persuaded to:

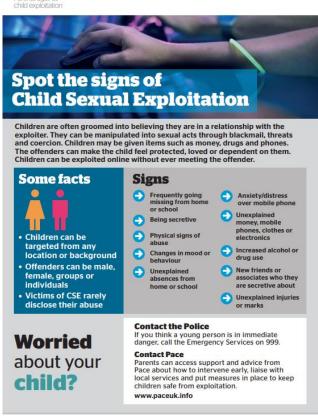
- Send or post explicit images of themselves
- Film or stream sexual activities
- Have sexual conversations
- Meet the abuser in person
- Engage in sexual activity

#### Signs of CSE

Sexual exploitation can be difficult to spot and can sometimes be mistaken for "normal" teenage behaviour. Some signs can include:

- Sexualized behaviour
- Being frightened of certain people or places
- · Being secretive
- Sharp changes in mood or behaviour
- Having money or things they can't or won't explain, such as gift cards, large amounts of money or hotel keys
- · Physical signs of abuse such as bruises
- Sudden change in physical appearance such as clothing
- · Alcohol or drug use
- Having an older person they see as their boyfriend or girlfriend
- Hanging around with older people





### Preventing CSE

Teaching children and young people about staying safe and healthy relationships can help prevent CSE. NSPCC's PANTS rules are a simple way to teach children how to stay safe from abuse. There are tips and advice on PANTS rule and how to have difficult conversations with your children on the NSPCC website. It's also important to make sure children know who their trusted adults are. These can be parents, teachers, or family members who they can go to for support.

Privates are private

Always remember your body belongs to you

No means no

Talk about secrets that upset you

Speak up, someone can help

#### Resources

Worried about a child? Call 999 if the child is at immediate risk or 101 if you think a crime has been committed.

Contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000

Childline 0800 1111

Children can contact any of the above as well as:

- "Fearless" to report a crime anonymously
- "Runaway" helpline for young people thinking about running away or have left home
- "Victim Support" if they've experienced crime
- "Report Remove" if you need to remove nude images online

#### If a child discloses CSE

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

- Listen carefully
- See what immediate help they need such as medical attention
- Let them know they've done the right thing by telling you
- Tell them it's not their fault
- Reassure them that you believe them
- Don't confront the alleged abuser
- Explain what you'll do next
- Report the disclosure as soon as possible

If you suspect CSE is happening, it's important to seek support. There are some things you can do to help your child, like gathering any information that may be useful such as names, places, ages, social media accounts or phone numbers.