



## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

### What is Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse involving children and young people receiving something, such as accommodation, drugs, gifts or affection, as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It can occur without physical contact, when children are groomed to post sexual images of themselves on the internet.

CSE is a hidden issue taking place out of public view. Practitioners often do not identify it and young people themselves frequently do not recognise themselves as the abused. It can be difficult to get an accurate picture of the risk of sexual exploitation.

The link between children being sexually exploited and children going missing is very strong. Some 140,000 children go missing from home or care in the UK each year and it has been estimated that running away places around a quarter of these at risk of serious harm. Children and young people who run away may be 'pushed away' following abuse or other factors or 'pulled away' wanting to be near friends or because they are being exploited by adults.

### Key facts

It affects both girls and boys and can happen in all communities.

Sexual exploitation often starts around the age of 10 years old. Girls are usually targeted from age 10 and boys age 8.

Any person can be targeted but there are some particularly vulnerable groups: Looked After Children, Children Leaving Care and Children with Disabilities.

Victims of CSE may also be trafficked (locally, nationally and internationally).

Over 70% of adults involved in prostitution were sexually exploited as children or teenagers.

Sexual violence or abuse against children represents a major public health and social welfare problem within UK society, affecting 16% of children under 16. That is approximately 2 million children.

### Signs and symptoms

Grooming and sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour and/or development. However, parents, carers, school teachers and practitioners are advised to be alert to the following signs and symptoms:

- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- repeat sexually transmitted infections; in girls repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- going missing from home or care
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault

(Barnardo's, 2011; CEOP, 2011; Berelowitz et al, 2012).

For more information see our CSE Signs of risk and vulnerability fact sheet in the resource list below.

This is not an exhaustive list and indicators can change over time. For a full list and more information about what to do, visit the NSPCC website at [www.nspcc.org.uk/signs-symptoms-effects](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/signs-symptoms-effects) and [www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse)

## What to do if you suspect a child is at risk of CSE

If it is a child in school

- Report to a DSL – Donna Wealleans, Amanda Clifton, Deborah Howard, Helen Woolf, Tracy Buckley or Kieran Bentley
  - Remember to log your concerns on CPOMs

If this is a child outside of school

- If you believe a child is at risk of, or is, being sexually abused through exploitation, please refer via the Manchester MASH - 0161 234 5001
- The [Greater Manchester Phoenix CSE Measurement Tool and Guidance](#) is available from the GM procedures manual at [greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/cse\\_measurement\\_tool.pdf](http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/cse_measurement_tool.pdf) and [greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/](http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/)

## Further information

### NSPCC

The **NSPCC** CSE page contains key statistics, official guidance, and learning from practice.

The NSPCC has published a thematic briefing highlighting learning from Serious Case Reviews where CSE was a key factor. Find these resources on their website at [www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-sexual-exploitation/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-sexual-exploitation/) and [learning.nspcc.org.uk/learning-from-case-reviews/child-sexual-exploitation](http://learning.nspcc.org.uk/learning-from-case-reviews/child-sexual-exploitation)

The **NSPCC** has produced three short animations, available on YouTube, each of which deal with the subject of sexual exploitation in a different way. These animations attempt to clarify the complex issues involved and offer starting points for discussion with young people who might be experiencing similar problems. The animations can be found using the link below:

- [‘My story is real’](#) (2 minutes)
- [‘When someone cares’](#) (1 minute)
- [‘Jay’](#) (2 minutes)

### National Working Group (NWG)

The **NWG Network** and the Children’s Society have developed a range of resources to support local safeguarding children boards and practitioners to work with retail, transport, leisure and hospitality businesses to protect children in their communities from CSE. Visit their website at [www.nwgnetwork.org](http://www.nwgnetwork.org) for more information.

The resources include posters, leaflets and training materials for staff. These will help employees to look out for signs of exploitation, grooming and trafficking and provide information on what to do if they are concerned about a child. They will also assist employers to carry out risks assessments and vetting of staff.

Local versions of these resources can be found in our [licensing resource](#).

### Local Government Association (LGA)

The **LGA** resource aims to help councils raise awareness of CSE within their own organisation, with their local partners and in their communities. It brings together and shares a set of resources to provide ideas and materials that can be adapted to suit local needs; includes briefings, communications support, training materials and case studies. Find these resources on the LGA website at [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

### Parents against child exploitation (Pace)

**Pace** have developed an information and advice centre and information library for parents whose children are at risk of, or are being, sexually exploited. This is available on their website at [paceuk.info/for-parents/advice-centre/](http://paceuk.info/for-parents/advice-centre/)

The Pace relational safeguarding model demonstrates best practice in working with families affected by CSE and can be downloaded from the website at [www.paceuk.info](http://www.paceuk.info) (PDF)

Practitioners can also use the ‘trauma model’ to understand the impact of sexual exploitation on children. Information about this can be downloaded from the websites [www.barnardos.org.uk/impacts\\_of\\_cse](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/impacts_of_cse) (PDF) and [www.nscb.org.uk/Trauma\\_Model](http://www.nscb.org.uk/Trauma_Model) (PDF).

A guide to therapeutic assistance for children and young people recovering from sexual abuse can be found on the NSPCC library website at [www.nspcc.org.uk/therapeutic-services](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/therapeutic-services) (PDF).