

Child Sexual Exploitation

Definition

“Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person (or third person/s) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/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 images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.”

Association of Chief Police Officers, February 2014.

Or as a young person might find easier to understand...

“Some one taking advantage of you sexually, for their own benefit. Through threats, bribes, violence, humiliation, or by telling you that they love you, they will have the power to get you to do sexual things for their own, or other people’s benefit or enjoyment (including: touching or kissing private parts, sex, taking sexual photos)”

Young Women’s Group, New Horizons, 2008 (the nia project & The Children Society)

Impact of C.S.E

The background of the slide features a soft-focus sunset with a bright sun low on the horizon. In the foreground, the dark silhouettes of a man and a woman are shown in a close embrace, their forms slightly blurred. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

C.S.E is a form of sexual abuse and can have a serious impact on the lives of children and young people including:

- Difficulties in forming relationships with others
- Lack of confidence or self-esteem
- Affect their mental and physical health
- Feelings of worthlessness, leading to acts of self-harm, including cutting, overdosing and eating disorders
- Increase risks of sexually transmitted infections
- Increase risks of pregnancy and abortions
- Impact on future parenting capacity
- Isolation from community, separation from family and support networks

Myths surrounding C.S.E



- Myth 1:** There are very few models of C.S.E.
- Myth 2:** It only happens in certain ethnic/cultural communities
- Myth 3:** It only happens to children in care
- Myth 4:** It only happens to girls and young women
- Myth 5:** It is only perpetrated by men
- Myth 6:** It only happens to young teenagers by men
- Myth 7:** This only happens in large towns and cities
- Myth 8:** People wouldn't abuse or exploit children with disabilities
- Myth 9:** Parents should know what is happening and should be able to stop it
- Myth 10:** Children and young people can consent to their own exploitation

Myth vs. Reality (Local Government Association, 2013 – with a couple of add ons from DCI Ralph!)

Models of C.S.E.

- **Inappropriate relationships - Usually involving one perpetrator who has inappropriate power or control over a young person (physical, emotional or financial). Indicators may include significant age gap. The young person may believe they are in a loving relationship.**
- **Boyfriend model of exploitation and peer exploitation - The perpetrator befriends and grooms a young person into a 'relationship' and then coerces or forces them to have sex with friends or associates.**
- **Organised/networked 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 'sex parties', and young people who are involved may be used as agents to recruit others into the network.**
- **Operation Yew Tree – we know CSE can happen to disabled children**
- *Puppet On A String Barnardos (2011)*

The internet and C.S.E

- Bypasses parents/carers
- Smartphones
- Allows instant exchange of sexual messages, images and videos
- Provides abusers with a way of closely monitoring a child
- Contact can be round the clock
- Use of false identities
- Does not require face to face contact
- Lack of parental/carer understanding of internet use and risks
- Potential high risk for isolated children

Vulnerability To C.S.E: Push Factors

(Reasons that could lead to a young person becoming distant from the people who would usually protect them)

- Living with domestic abuse
- Being thrown out of home
- Being in a residential or foster placement suffering abuse of any kind
- Alcohol or substance misuse within the home
- Parents with mental health problems
- Having problems at, or not being in school
- Being bullied or threatened
- Having siblings with difficulties
- Being in trouble
- Bereavement or significant loss



Vulnerability To C.S.E: Push Factors

A silhouette of a person sitting in a wheelchair, positioned on the right side of the slide. The person is facing left. The background is a light orange gradient. The wheelchair is a standard manual wheelchair with large rear wheels and smaller front wheels.

(Reasons that could lead to a disabled child or young person being especially vulnerable to CSE)

- Disabled C&YP may have fewer outside contacts than other C&YP
- Disabled C&YP may receive intimate care from a number of carers
- They may have little capacity to resist or avoid abuse/exploitation
- They may have communication difficulties
- They may worry about complaining and losing services

Vulnerability To C.S.E: Pull Factors

Pull Factors: *(The grooming techniques used to gain the young person's attention, admiration and affection often that often tap into their insecurities or desire for acceptance and status)*

- Receiving alcohol, drugs, money or gifts
- Getting a buzz and the excitement of doing something risky or forbidden
- Feeling accepted
- Being offered somewhere to stay where there are no rules
- Being given lifts, taken to new places and having adventures with a casual acquaintance
- Being part of an alternative scene, e.g. criminal gang or music scene
- Meeting somebody who thinks they are special on the internet

Bwise 2 Sexual Exploitation (Barnardo's, 2007)

Indicators of C.S.E

- Going missing from home or school
- Unexplained gifts, money, tobacco and substances
- Self harming or suicide attempts
- Older boyfriend/girlfriend
- Repeated sexually transmitted infections, pregnancies or miscarriages
- Substance/alcohol use
- Unexplained injuries suggestive of physical or sexual abuse
- Secretive use of mobile phone or internet
- Changes to physical appearance
- Involvement in crime

Indicators continued...

- Changes to self esteem
- Changes in behaviour such as, mood swings, acting out or becoming withdrawn
- Overtly sexualised behaviour or presentation
- Association with other young people known to be at risk of CSE
- Association with peers or adults known to pose a risk of CSE
- Frequenting known CSE hotspots
- Being taken to hotels
- Being picked up in cars by unknown adults
- Being involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership

What to do if you are worried

- It is every professional's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of sexual abuse
- If you are concerned that a young person within Devon is at immediate risk of Child Sexual Exploitation please contact the police (999 or 101). Alternatively, please contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (M.A.S.H) on **0345 155 1071** where you can speak to social worker for a consultation. Further information about the M.A.S.H can be found on Devon County Council's website