



Student Wellbeing Resource

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation

Overview

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA), which is characterised by the young person, or the abuser receiving some form of payment or gain for sexual activity with someone under 18. Some high profile cases have been reported in recent years, but CSE is not a new phenomenon and is not concentrated in certain communities or areas. All young people by the nature of adolescence are vulnerable to CSE but some are more vulnerable than others. Like CSA, CSE can involve contact and non-contact abuse, it is never the young person's fault and early detection and intervention is key.

Key Facts

Like all forms of child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex.
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual.
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both.
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example).
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults.
- can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse.
- whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.

Definition (DoE Guidance 2017)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of **child sexual abuse**. It occurs where an individual or group **takes advantage** of an **imbalance of power** to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of **18** into **sexual activity** (a) in **exchange** for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial **advantage** or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.

Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

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Context

- CSE is a complex form of abuse and can be difficult to identify.
- Relies on “professional curiosity” to identify.
- Can be mistaken for normal adolescent behaviours.
- Even when a young person can legally consent to sexual activity, consent is only valid when they have a choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice.
- If a child feels that they have no other meaningful choice, are under the influence of harmful substances or fearful of what might happen if they don't comply consent cannot legally be given no matter what the age of the child.
- CSE is part of a wider continuum of exploitation, violence and abuse.
- Child sexual exploitation is not a catch all category for all forms of sexual harm in adolescence.
- Should be viewed within the wider continuum of sexual abuse and issues such as trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse and other gendered violence and going missing.
- The necessary focus of child sexual exploitation should not overshadow a focus on other manifestations of abuse.

Good Practice

If you are concerned about a child or young person you work with, call the Safeguarding Hub on 0114 273 4855 for assessment and referral onto support services. If the young person is at risk of immediate harm call 999.

Vulnerabilities

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical or sexual abuse.
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (e.g. domestic violence, parental substance misuse, mental health issues, family criminality).
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Social isolation or social difficulties.
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality.
- Economic vulnerability.
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status.
- Connections with other sexually exploited people.
- Family members or other connections involved in sex work.
- Having a physical or learning disability.
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories).
- Sexual Identity.

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! Indicators

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phone etc. without plausible explanation.
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/ social networks.
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work.
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or retuning late.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls.
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/ sexually transmitted infections.
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault.
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).
- Frequenting areas known for sex work.
- Concerning use of internet or other social media.
- Increased secretiveness around behaviours.
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

📖 Resources

Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board procedures
http://sheffieldscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_sex_exp.html?zoom_highlight=sexual+abuse

NSPCC 'Preventing child sexual abuse' guidelines
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-abuse/preventing-child-sexual-abuse/>

NHS guidelines
<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/abuse/Pages/child-sexual-exploitation-signs.aspx>

National Working Group for CSE
www.nwg.org

Consent video for young children
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3nhM9Uljc>

"I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world":
Interim report
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/I-thought-I-was-the-only-one-in-the-world.pdf>

Barnardos info on the subject
http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/csehome?gclid=CjwKEAiAirXFBRCQyvL279Tnx1ESJAB-G-Qvz2qcLeQDNZb2kt1h55NZr-0pvsxHLWtwH0SrOWRHLhoC9Zvw_wcB

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Local Offers and Providers

Provider	What they offer	Cost	Contact details
Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service	<p>Our service supports young people who are at risk of, or have been, sexually exploited. Young people receive one-to-one support from either our service, or from specially trained staff within the three community youth teams. Support workers focus on raising young people's awareness of risky situations, whilst bolstering their self-esteem to support them to make informed choices about their lives. We offer professionals support and training in partnership with the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board. Single or multi-agency training sessions are available on request.</p> <p>The service also offers education and awareness raising sessions via schools and other settings to groups of young people to try and prevent them from becoming involved in sexual exploitation.</p>	Free	<p>0114 201 8645</p> <p>www.sheffieldfutures.org.uk</p>
Golddigger Trust	<p>Golddigger Trust is a Sheffield based Charity, offering a variety of wellbeing projects, both within the school environment, and extra-curricular activities within the community, for young people aged 11-19.</p> <p>Services include:</p> <p>'Choose Your Own Adventure' – an interactive 1hr lesson for Y9-13 (up to 30 students per lesson), addressing topics of CSE, E-safety, Domestic Abuse and risky relationships. Students journey through a life-sized board game, exploring risks and choices.</p> <p>'I'm The Girl I Want To Be' and 'Made Of More' Self-esteem and healthy relationships courses (single gender groups of 8-12 students). Creative course exploring issues of esteem, identity, healthy sex and relationships and aspirations for the future, over 8 weeks (1.45-2hr session per week).</p> <p>1:1 Mentoring – Bespoke, flexible programmes of mentoring for students addressing specific needs identified. Minimum 6 sessions (usual course approx. 8-14 sessions).</p> <p>Students accessing Golddigger Trust services via school can also access additional free services outside of school hours, including drop in youth clubs, sexual health clinic, sports and music sessions and online support.</p>	<p>Cost varies based on service and available charitable funding, contact for most up to date costings.</p> <p>Community based services are free, accessed by community referral (MAST, CAMHS, Self-referral etc). There is no charge to young people.</p>	<p>0114 327 1191</p> <p>Golddigger Trust Centre For Young People, 10 Psalter Lane, Sheffield, S11 8YN</p> <p>info@golddiggertrust.co.uk</p> <p>www.golddiggertrust.co.uk</p>

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Local Offers and Providers (cont)

Provider	What they offer	Cost	Contact details
YWHP Sexual Abuse Support Service (Young Women's Housing Project)	<p>Our "Protect Yourself" initiative includes group-work programmes and/or one to one sessions for girls and young women. Mixed gender sessions available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Escape the Trap" Teenage Relationship Abuse Programme. 8 sessions (ASDAN accredited)• "Friend or Foe" Relationships & Risk (CSE). 6 sessions• ISVA: Independent Sexual Violence Advisor awareness raising workshop	FREE Donation welcome	0114 268 0580 ywhp@ywhp.org.uk