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Welcome to our August 2024 Newsletter

In this newsletter we bring together information which we hope you will find useful and we highlight how the Partnership continues to communicate and keep in touch with all our agencies and provide guidance to support you in your role working with children and adults. In this edition, we bring you information about Child Sexual Exploitation. There is also information about Partnership work, safeguarding updates and new training dates.

Training dates are open for booking on Me Learning, including training on Child Exploitation delivered by Barnardo's. All dates for children and adult safeguarding training until December 2024 are listed in the courses section of your Me Learning account.

SUMMER

In the Spotlight..... Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type 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. Children and young people in sexually exploitative situations and relationships are persuaded or forced to perform sexual activities or have sexual activities performed on them in return for gifts, drugs, money or affection. CSE can take place in person, online, or using a combination of both.

Perpetrators of CSE use a power imbalance to exploit children and young people. This may arise from a range of factors including:

- age
- gender
- sexual identity
- cognitive ability
- physical strength
- status
- access to economic or other resources

Sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people have often been groomed into trusting their abuser and may not understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser and be too scared to tell anyone what's happening because they don't want to get them in trouble or risk losing them. They may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for sexual exploitation.

When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded or forced to:

- have sexual conversations by text or online
- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone

Abusers sometimes use the threat of sharing images, videos or copies of conversations to make young people do things they don't want to do. This might include forcing a young person to pay them money or take part in further sexual activity. This is sometimes referred to as sexually coerced extortion or 'sextortion'. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped. Whatever form child sexual exploitation takes, it can have a significant impact on children and young people. It's vital that everyone who works and volunteers with children can identify the signs of child sexual exploitation, and know how to act to keep children safe.

Reporting Child Sexual Exploitation:

If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999. If you're worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, you should share your concerns.

- Follow your organisational child protection procedures. Organisations that work with children and families must have safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- Contact Children's Social Care Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority where the child lives. In Darlington the contact number for the Children's Initial Advice Team is 01325 406222 and the website can be accessed here www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk

For further information about the signs and behavioural indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation visit the NSPCC website [here](#)

Contact the police Services will risk assess the situation and take action to protect the child as appropriate either through statutory involvement or other support. This may include making a referral to the local authority.

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership - CSE procedure and practice guidance

For Child Sexual Exploitation and safeguarding procedures in Darlington visit www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/professionals/working-with-children/keeping-children-safe-practice-guidance-and-resources/child-sexual-exploitation/

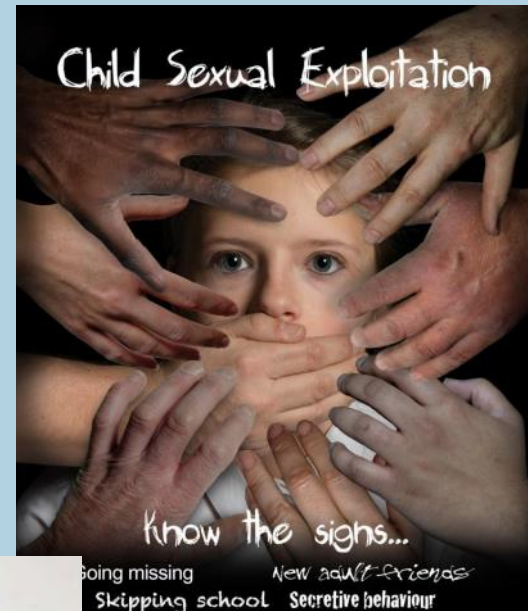
The practice guidance has been designed to assist practitioners in identifying Child Sexual Exploitation and outlines how they can support children and young people. [CSE procedure and practice guidance](#)

In order to identify children at risk of sexual exploitation or experiencing sexual exploitation, you should consider the risk factors outlined within the risk assessment form [Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Information form](#)

If you have a concern for child at risk of CSE then follow [DSP child Protection Procedures](#)

Information sharing form

It is important, if you have any information no matter how small in relation to: suspected offenders; suspected vehicles; or locations of interest you must provide details. You should record any detail on the [CSE intelligence/information sharing form](#) [pdf document] and submit to Durham Constabulary as a matter of urgency.



OUR PLEDGE

To be confident in having open and honest conversations with each other as multi-agency partners in order to do the very best we can for children, adults and their families in Darlington.

Multi-agency working is vital to maintain a focus on children and vulnerable adults while also keeping them at the heart of all decisions.

Our Pledge is an opportunity to:

- Seek out professional conversations with each other at the earliest opportunity
- Have a shared understanding of the strengths and risks within a family
- Actively listen to each other and share important information
- Respect each other's expertise
- Be open and empathetic to the professional views of others
- Be professionally curious and evidence what we say
- Use common language that everyone understands



Concerned about a child?

Contact the Children's Initial
Advice Team
Professionals on **01325 406252**
Public on **01325 406222**

Concerned about an adult?

Contact the Adult
Contact Team
on **01325 406111**



Statutory Safeguarding Partners

Ann Baxter, Independent Chair/Scrutineer

James Stroyan, Group Director of People

Dave Ashton, Detective Chief Superintendent

Chris Piercy, Director of Nursing and Quality