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The Achieve and Learn Trust believes that nothing is more important than safeguarding the young people in our schools.

In the last bulletin we looked at the indicators of child criminal exploitation and what it entailed. In this issue we will look at child sexual exploitation—what it is and how it can happen to any child in any family.

What is Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)?

CSE is a type of sexual abuse. It happens when a child or young person is coerced, manipulated or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for things that they may need or want like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection.

Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving relationship so the sexual activity may appear consensual. This is called grooming and is a type of abuse. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused. CSE does not always involve physical contact, and can also occur through the use of technology.



Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse or blackmail to control them.

Types of Child Sexual Exploitation



When a child is sexually exploited online they might be persuaded or forced to:

- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- film or stream sexual activities
- have sexual conversations.



Once an abuser has images, video or copies of conversations, they might use threats and blackmail to force a young person to take part in other sexual activity. They may also share the images and videos with others or circulate them online.

Gangs use sexual exploitation:

- to exert power and control
- for initiation
- to use sexual violence as a weapon.



Children or young people might be invited to parties or gatherings with others their own age or adults and given drugs and alcohol. They may be assaulted and sexually abused by one person or multiple perpetrators. The sexual assaults and abuse can be violent, humiliating and degrading.

Contact the Police
If you think a young person is in immediate danger, call the Emergency Services on 999.

Contact Pace
Parents can access support and advice from Pace about how to intervene early, liaise with local services and put measures in place to keep children safe from exploitation.
www.paceuk.info

Spot the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation

Children are often groomed into believing they are in a relationship with the exploiter. They can be manipulated into sexual acts through blackmail, threats and coercion. Children may be given items such as money, drugs and phones. The offenders can make the child feel protected, loved or dependent on them. Children can be exploited online without ever meeting the offender.

Some facts

- Children can be targeted from any location or background
- Offenders can be male, female, groups or individuals
- Victims of CSE rarely disclose their abuse

Signs

- ➔ Frequently going missing from home or school
- ➔ Being secretive
- ➔ Physical signs of abuse
- ➔ Changes in mood or behaviour
- ➔ Unexplained absences from home or school
- ➔ Anxiety/distress over mobile phone
- ➔ Unexplained money, mobile phones, clothes or electronics
- ➔ Increased alcohol or drug use
- ➔ New friends or associates who they are secretive about
- ➔ Unexplained injuries or marks

**Worried
about your
child?**