

Child Exploitation: Advice for Carers

"I didn't want to...but my boyfriend asked me to be nice to his friends..."



Exploitation

Exploitation occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive an individual into carrying out sexual (CSE) or criminal (CCE) acts for their benefit.

"I didn't know what to do...They told me they would hurt me and my family if I didn't do what they said. I can't believe I thought they were my mates."



Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

What to look out for: acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc. without plausible explanation; isolation from or a change in peers; unexplained absence from school or college; missing episodes; excessive receipt of calls or texts; inappropriate sexualized behaviour; STIs; evidence of physical or sexual assault; concerning use of internet or social media; secrecy; changes in emotional wellbeing.

"I remember at that time wanting someone to notice I'd changed...I would have told them everything."



Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

What to look out for: refusal to enter geographical locations; change in interests; decline in attendance or achievement at school or college; change in peer group; drug use; acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc. without plausible explanation; increase of aggressive behaviour; frequent travel; missing episodes; having more than one mobile phone; excessive receipt of calls or texts; criminal behaviours; secrecy; changes in emotional wellbeing.



What to do if you are worried

If you are worried a child in immediate danger call 999 or you can report concerns to the police by dialling 101. Share your concerns with the child's social worker as soon as possible. Encourage them to talk to you, remind them that you are there for them.

Getting help

If you are concerned that a child is being exploited, these are some organisations that might be able to help:



The term '**missing**' refers to children and young people up to the age of 18 who have **run away** from their home or care placement or whose **whereabouts are unknown**.

Children run away or go missing from home, school or care for a number of reasons, and **most of the time they do return home safely**.

WHAT TO DO?

If a child does not return home when you expect them to and you are worried, in the first instance you should:

- **Try and find out where they are e.g. phone their mobile etc.**
- **Contact relatives (if applicable) or friends** to see if they have seen them or know where they are.
 - **Search your property and local area (if possible)** to see if you can locate them.
- Notify the **allocated social worker**, if during work hours, or the **Emergency Duty Service (EDS)**, if out of hours (Tel: 0808 800 4005).



REPORTING:

- If the child's whereabouts cannot be ascertained then you **must contact the police to report them as missing**. (Dial **101** to report or **999** in an emergency).
- You should do this **within the hour** as the quicker the police are notified, the quicker they may be able to locate the child.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- If the child returns home, **you should notify EDS and the Police immediately**. The police will then conduct a Safe and Well Check with the child.
 - If you wish to, when you call EDS, you can ask to speak to Fostering Out of Hours Assistance and Support (FOOHAS).
 - The child's social worker will also conduct a Return Interview at the soonest opportunity to discuss the missing episode with the child.

- *For more information, guidance and advice please visit:*