

What is CSE and what you need to know.

Definition of CSE (Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board defines CSE as...)

"The sexual exploitation of children and young people is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situation, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receives "something" (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or others 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 sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability."

The Grooming/CSE process:

"Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed on line or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse." (NSPCC What is grooming 2014)

This involves recruiting, controlling and then exploiting the young person as follows:

- The vulnerable person is targeted
- There is a period of befriending and building trust
- The groomer makes the young person feels special and understood
- The groomer enters into a relationship with the exploited child
- The groomer then builds dependency while isolating the young person from their family/carers/school/peers
- The result is the groomer has gained control of the young person, by manipulation, coercion, threats and intimidation.

Signs and indicators (this is not an exhaustive list)

Physical: unexplained injuries; alcohol abuse; repeat pregnancy; rapid change in appearance; substance misuse, self-harm/attempted suicide; repeated STI's/testing.

Psychological: Sleep disorders/nightmares; self-harm/and or overdose; eating disorders; depression/anxiety; may trigger a psychotic episode; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; suicidal thoughts; disassociation.

Behavioural warning signs: No or low school attendance or exclusion due to behaviour; staying out overnight with no explanation; accepting money or gifts, including phone credit, drugs or alcohol, gang member or association, offering to have sex for money/goods then running before sex takes place; disclosure of physical sexual assault and then refusing to make or withdrawing a complaint; child under 16 meeting different adults and exchanging/selling sexual activity; being taken into clubs/pubs by adults and engaging in sexual activity; association with unknown adults or other sexually exploited young people; getting into cars with unknown adults or associating with known CSE perpetrators; reduced contact with family and friends/support networks; sexualised risk taking including on the internet; abduction or forced imprisonment; regularly coming home late or going missing; reports of being involved in CSE through being seen in hotspots; receiving money/goods as reward for recruiting peers into CSE; young people regularly going from town to town, being groomed on the internet; having a much older boy/girlfriend.

(NB: some of the above can be seen as normal teenage behaviour but if you have concerns, do not discount them, complete the CSE assessment toolkit.)

If you have any concerns over the change in behaviour of any child follow the safeguarding policy and speak to one of the following:

Zoe Richards (Lead)

Nicky Higgins, Phil Robinson & Aleshia Frost

Tom Hodson (Safeguarding Governor)