

1 Background

Child Exploitation (CE) occurs when a child or young person is groomed or coerced into an exploitative situation through the use of exploitative relationships. These relationships are characterised by an imbalance of power and the use of controlling behaviours to keep the child or young person in a dependent position

2 What is CE?

There are 2 main forms of CE; child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE). Children and young people may not identify themselves as being 'exploited' but it is clearly to their detriment that they are involved in these activities.

3 How are C& YP exploited?

CSE: Children and young people (C&YP) are given things, such as gifts, drugs, money, status and affection in exchange for performing sexual activities. They are often tricked into believing that they are in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called grooming – they may trust their abuser and not understand that they are being abused. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' and coerce others to join groups

CCE: Gangs 'recruit' and exploit children and young people to deal drugs or hide weapons on their behalf. Children are seen as an easily controlled, 'cheap' resource that often fall into some form of debt bondage resulting in violence and assaults. Victims are often used to operate phone lines (County Lines) in connection with, and delivery of, controlled drugs.

7 Support and resources

[Child Exploitation Appropriate Language Guide 2022.pdf \(childrenssociety.org.uk\)](#)

[What We Do - St Giles \(stgilestrust.org.uk\)](#) [Child Sexual Exploitation & How to Keep Your Child Safe | NSPCC](#)

[Child Criminal Exploitation \(CCE\) | Crimestoppers \(crimestoppers-uk.org\)](#)

[Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Eliminating Child Sexual Abuse Online – Internet Watch Foundation \(iwf.org.uk\)](#)

[Welcome to the NWG Network](#)

[Resource Library \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](#)

[National Online Safety | Keeping Children Safe Online in Education](#)

[Child sexual exploitation \(CSE\) | Barnardo's \(barnardos.org.uk\)](#)

[Parents Against Child Exploitation \(Pace\) UK \(paceuk.info\)](#)

[Catch22 launches new free exploitation awareness schools resource for Child Exploitation Awareness Day - Catch22 \(catch-22.org.uk\)](#)



4 Example warning signs

- Absent from school/running away
- Familial abuse/problems at home
- Emotional and physical condition
- Gangs and involvement in crime
- Use of technology and sexual bullying
- Alcohol and drug misuse
- Receipt of unexplained gifts or money
- Distrust of authority figures
- Sexual health and behaviour

6 Points to note

- Always use appropriate language when talking about children and exploitation, language matters.
- DON'T use language implying that the child or young person is responsible in any way for abuse and crime that they are subjected to. A child cannot consent to their own exploitation.
- Victim-blaming language can reinforce the shame and guilt that perpetrators make their victims feel when trying to control them.
- If a child is branded a 'criminal', then a route of prosecution and criminalisation may follow. However if the same child is recognised as a victim, then a safeguarding response kicks into action.

5 How to report in Halton

Use the Halton [MultiAgencyToolkit.pdf \(haltonsafeguarding.co.uk\)](#) and complete the **Pan Cheshire Contextual Safeguarding Screening Tool** with your referral into iCART. (This is a shorter version of the Assessment Tool that is completed by the lead professional). Sometimes you may not have a child's details but you may have information that relates to person or location that is of concern in relation to Exploitation, if this is the case, then please submit the **Information Form**.