

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. In Dorset, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted:

“Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when 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 (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology”.

Victims are often coerced into sexual relationships which they confuse with love and attention. They risk damage to their physical, emotional and psychological health.

- Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse in which a young person is manipulated or forced into taking part in a sexual act often in return for attention, affection, money, drugs, alcohol or accommodation.
- The child might think that their abuser is their friend or boyfriend but the abuser might physically or verbally threaten them and be violent towards them. They will control and manipulate them and try to isolate them from friends and family.
- In organised sexual exploitation young people are passed through networks where they are forced into sexual activity with a number of men. This often takes place at ‘sex parties’ and the young people may be used to recruit others into the network.

Warning Signs of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):

There is no stereotypical victim of exploitation, but the below warning signs are an indication that a child may be exploited:

- Regularly missing from home or school and staying out all night
- Change in behaviour – becoming aggressive and disruptive or quiet and withdrawn
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions such as clothes, jewellery, mobile phones or money that can't be accounted for
- Increase in mobile phone use or secretive use
- A significantly older 'boyfriend' or 'friend' or lots of new friends
- Spending excessive amounts of time online or on their mobile and becoming increasingly secretive about this activity
- Sudden involvement in criminal behaviour or increased offending
- Sexual health problems
- Change in physical appearance

Reporting Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):

If you have concerns that a child you know may be a victim of Child Sexual Exploitation report it to your local police on 101

Alternatively you can report it to Crimestoppers anonymously by calling 0800 555 111 or visit www.crimestoppers-uk.org/cse

In an emergency, or if a crime is ongoing, always dial 999.