

## Chapter Five: NCC Early Help and Prevention and Safeguarding and Children's Services

The teams covered in this section are: Child in Need (CiN), Looked After Children (LAC), Early Help Prevention (EHP), Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), Leaving Care, Foster Care, and Residential Care

Before accessing this Chapter please read Chapters One and Two to familiarise yourself with both the CSE risk factors and the appropriate response.

Within social work practice, a number of groups of young people are particularly vulnerable to CSE.

These include children and young people:

- Who have a history of running away or of going missing from home,
- those with special educational needs,
- Those in and leaving residential and foster care,
- Migrant children,
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children,
- Children who have disengaged or are missing from education
- Children who are abusing drugs and alcohol, and those involved in gangs.

***Workers within all teams must consider CSE risk factors within all their assessments and ongoing work.***

Often a young person will come onto a caseload where there are family based vulnerabilities and the emphasis of the work from the child in need or child protection plan may be centred on building the parenting capacity. However, as the assessment develops, some CSE risk factors may start to emerge, and it is at this point consultation with your manager and the RISE team should take place.

Early recognition of CSE and early intervention from RISE will lead to better outcomes for a young person.

Complete the CSE assessment form (see Chapter 2). If the assessment highlights the young person is at risk of CSE, discuss with your line manager before making a referral to RISE (as per the referral route on Page 42).

Children and young people who are being sexually exploited are the victims of abuse, and will be especially vulnerable. This may manifest itself in a number of ways:

- they may be defensive and reluctant to engage with professionals
- they may be dependent on drugs or alcohol, which may affect their view of the situation.
- Workers should recognise that many children and young people might not think that they want or need protection from sexual exploitation, and might be resistant to what they perceive as interference from authorities.
- Perpetrators groom their victims so that they are compliant to being sexually exploited and are frightened to report their abuse. In some instances, they may be fearful of being involved with the police or other teams in children's social care.

Therefore the social worker must be alert to CSE presenting features and be ready to encourage engagement into work around raising awareness for the young person and their family.

Gaining the child or young person's trust and confidence is important if he or she is to be safeguarded from harm and enabled to escape from sexual exploitation. Often the process of engaging with children or young people who are being sexually exploited can be difficult and lengthy. It can take time for professionals to build up trust and overcome their resistance to being helped, and supported to exit the abusive situation.

As with any referral, the wishes and feelings of a child or young person, and their parents/carers concerns, should be obtained when deciding how to proceed. He or she may be at a particularly important turning point in their life and will need to be enabled to express their wishes and feelings, make sense of their circumstances and contribute to decisions that affect them. However, when assessing the views of these children, you need to be aware that perpetrators may have 'groomed' them and conditioned their responses, and that they may be denying what has happened to them. They may initially reject offers of help or support.

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**Please feel free to access other chapters in the toolkit. The following chapters we think would be of most use to you:**

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- Chapter One: what is CSE and what you need to know
  - Chapter Two: CSE and the local response
  - Chapter Eight: CSE Information for Parents
- Chapter Nine: CSE Information for Children and Young People