

Would you recognise if your child was being sexually exploited?

What is child sexual exploitation?

- Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse.
- Victims are manipulated or forced into taking part in a sexual act, either as part of a seemingly consensual relationship, or in return for attention, gifts, money, alcohol, drugs or somewhere to stay.
- The young person may think that the abuser is their friend, or even their boyfriend or girlfriend.
- But they will put them into dangerous situations, making or forcing them to do things that they don't want to do or can't say no to.
- The abuser will create some form of dependency between the young person and them and may physically or verbally threaten the young person or be violent towards them.
- They will try and isolate them from friends and family so that they can control and manipulate them.

Who does it affect?

- This type of abuse could happen to any child or young person up to the age of 18 from any background. It happens to boys and young men as well as girls and young women.
- The victims of abuse are not at fault. Abusers are very clever in the way they manipulate and take advantage of the young people they abuse.
- Often young people don't recognise what is happening to them as abusive because they have been manipulated so much.
- There may be many reasons for changes in a young person's behaviour but if you notice a combination of worrying signs it may be time to seek help or advice.

What can you do?

- Discuss with your children the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships to help highlight potential risks to them.
- Be aware of the tell-tale signs.
- Exercise caution around older friends your child may have, or relationships with other young people where there appears to be a power imbalance.
- Understand the risks associated with your child being online and using social networking sites and put measures in place to minimise these risks.
- Stay alert to changes in behaviour.
- Talk about it. Talk it through with someone else you know and can trust such as a teacher, school nurse or another service your child may be involved with. You can also talk to a social worker or the police.

Who to contact for advice and support or to report a concern:

Children's Social Care

Leicester City Council • 0116 454 1004 • das.team@leicester.gov.uk

Leicestershire County Council • 0116 305 0005 • childrensduty@leics.gov.uk

Rutland County Council • 01572 758407 • childrensduty@rutland.gcsx.gov.uk

Police

For non-emergencies you should call 101.

If you are concerned that a child is in immediate danger you should call 999.

Safeguarding Children Boards

More information is also available on both the Leicester City and Leicestershire and Rutland Local Safeguarding Children Boards' websites:

www.lcitylscb.org • www.lrsb.org/cse

CEOP

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) works across the UK tackling child sex abuse and exploitation.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

Pace

A support and information agency for parents about child sexual exploitation.

www.paceuk.info

Crimestoppers

If you wish to remain anonymous, contact Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 or report online

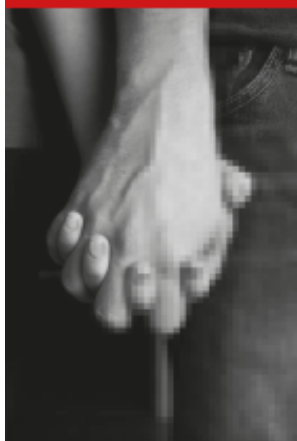
www.crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/

give-information-online

What are the signs?

Often the victims of sexual exploitation are not aware they are being exploited.

Signs of sexual exploitation range significantly but there are a number of tell tale signs you should look out for in your child and their friends, including:



- Having mood swings or being emotionally upset.
- Changes in physical appearance.
- Changes in eating patterns.
- Misusing alcohol or drugs.
- Chatting online to people you have never met.
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Being in a relationship with or associating with an older person.
- Increased or secretive mobile phone and computer use or in possession of multiple phones.
- Showing inappropriate sexualised behaviour.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections.
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Regularly missing school or not taking part in education.
- Regularly going missing for periods of time or returning home late.