

What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse which can happen to any child.

CSE can happen both on and offline and is often combined with other forms of abuse including threats, physical violence, and psychological manipulation. It may have occurred even if the sexual activity appears to take place with consent.

Anyone can be a perpetrator of child sexual exploitation regardless of their age, gender, class, or ethnicity.



CSE Warning Signs

* Not engaging with usual friends or hobbies.

* Associating with older people or being in a relationship with someone older.



* Missing classes or not attending school.

* Leaving home/sneaking out late or all night and being defensive about location and activities.



* Odd or excessive phone calls and text messages.



* New belongings which would normally be unaffordable such as mobile phones, clothes, or jewellery.

* Mood swings or personality changes.



* Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or burns.



* Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

* Not sleeping, eating, or taking care of personal hygiene.

* Engaging in a form of self-harm.

It should be noted that child sexual exploitation can take place **without** any of these behavioural signs being present.



REMEMBER:

If a child discloses sexual exploitation to you, it is important to **listen carefully**, **reassure** them that they've **done the right thing**, & remind them that **it is not their fault**.



Report this disclosure to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible. **Do not confront the abuser** as this could cause further harm.

After this, continue to provide **direct support** for the child or young person who discloses abuse. They may **feel guilty or ashamed** of what has happened.

By showing them you are there for them, you will help build their **resilience, confidence, and self-esteem**.

Top Tips For Protecting the Child in Your Care



* Be aware of the behavioural signs to look out for.

* Talk to the children in your care about the importance of healthy relationships. You can use tools like 'Talk PANTS'.



* Reach to the children in your care how to **stay safe both offline and online** when interacting with others.



* Create a stable and nurturing environment where children feel safe to talk or make a disclosure to you.

* Use our **Trusted Adult** resources to ensure children know who they can talk to about their worries.

* Access support services such as Barnardo's, PACE, or Childline.