

FURTHER HELP AND SUPPORT

Pace: Parents against child sexual exploitation helps parents across the UK understand what is happening to their child and how they can leave exploitative relationships. www.paceuk.info

Parents Protect: helps parents and carers protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation by providing child safety resources. www.parentsprotect.co.uk Tel: 0808 1000 900

The Children's Society: Provides useful information and resources in relation to CSE. www.childrenssociety.org.uk

CEOP: Provides information, advice and resources for supporting your child with their online safety www.ceop.police.uk

Brook: Provides useful guides to sexual health and wellbeing www.brook.org.uk

BISH: Provides useful guides to talking about sex, relationships and pornography with your teenager www.bishuk.com/parents

NSPCC: provides a wide range of services including information for parents on their website and a helpline number. www.nspcc.org.uk parent helpline: 0808 800 5000

**YMCA
DOWNSLINK GROUP**



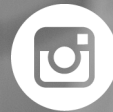
YMCA WISE PROJECT

Supporting children and young people to stay safe

FOR MORE
INFORMATION PLEASE
SEE OUR WEBSITE:
www.ymcadlg.org/wise



THE WISE PROJECT



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**YMCA WISE PARENT
AND CARER'S GUIDE
TO CHILD SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION**

What is Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)?

“Someone taking advantage of you sexually, for their own benefit. Through threats, bribes, violence, humiliation or by telling you that they love you, they will have the power to get you to do sexual things for their own or other people’s enjoyment.”
[the nia project]

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, in which a young person is manipulated, or forced into taking part in a sexual act. This could be as part of a seemingly consensual relationship, or in return for attention, affection, money, drugs, alcohol or somewhere to stay. The young person may think that their abuser is their friend, or even a boyfriend or girlfriend. But they will put them into dangerous situations, forcing the young person to do things they don’t want to do. The abuser may physically or verbally threaten the young person or be violent towards them. They will control and manipulate them, and try to isolate them from friends and family.

It can happen to any child or young person under the age of 18, from any background. It happens to boys and young men as well as girls and young women. Sexual exploitation affects thousands of children and young people every year. Many young people who are being abused don’t view themselves as victims and won’t ask for help. 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.

What are the signs?

While there is no stereotypical victim of exploitation, there are warning signs in children’s behaviour that may indicate something is wrong – and if you know what to look for, you can take steps to help.

- Being very secretive, including about what they are doing online
- Disengaging with family, friends or other support networks
- Going to unusual places to meet friends
- Receiving calls or messages from outside their normal circle of friends
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having access to drugs and alcohol or drug and alcohol misuse
- Going missing or regularly returning home late
- Regularly not being where they should be, like school
- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- Being seen in different cars, possibly with older people
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections
- Mood swings or changes in behaviour
- Marks on their body which they try to hide
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour

What can I do as a parent?

Knowing the signs provides an opportunity to prevent and protect. Acting on signs early can prevent abuse happening or escalating.

- Stay alert to changes in behaviour or any physical signs of abuse such as bruising.
- Be aware of new, unexplained gifts or possessions and carefully monitor any episodes of staying out late or not returning home.
- Exercise caution around older friends your child may have, or relationships with other young people where there appears to be a power imbalance.
- Get to know their friends, where they hang out and what they do.
- Talk to your children about healthy relationships and consent. Useful websites are www.brook.org.uk and www.bishuk.com
- Be interested in your child’s online world. Talk to them about the social media apps they use.
- Learn about the risks your child may face online and take practical steps to minimise these. See www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents or www.internetmatters.org
- Talk to your child about the risks of sexting
- If your child is going out make sure they have a plan to help them stay safe. Make sure their phone is fully charged and has credit to call/message and they know how they are going to get home.
- Talk to your child about what exploitation is and reassure them that any exploitation they may have experienced is not their fault.
- Keep a record of unexplained phone calls, missing episodes, descriptions of associates, car registrations etc.
- Trust your gut instincts.

Where can I get help?

If you know or suspect a child or young person is in immediate danger, you should dial 999

If you suspect a child or young person may be at risk, or have any information relating to child sexual exploitation please call 101 or visit a local police station.

To report online concerns go to: www.ceop.police.uk

The Stop it Now! Helpline provides confidential advice on 0808 1000 900.