

# Child Exploitation Awareness Day

## 18th March 2025

**THINK** TWICE  
**THINK** ABUSE

National Child Exploitation Awareness Day is a time for organisations to raise awareness about all forms of exploitation. This includes modern slavery, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and trafficking. The aim is to highlight and share good safeguarding practice and key areas for practice development linked to exploitation.

### In this briefing:

The AXIS Service

What is Exploitation?

Focus on Child Sexual Exploitation

NWG's Campaign for Child Exploitation Awareness Day

Resources



### AXIS Service

AXIS is an early intervention service for children identified as at risk of Child Exploitation via triangulation of information sharing from a range of local partners. AXIS delivers and coordinates evidence-based interventions to children and young people who are at risk of offending and/or vulnerable to exploitation.

For further enquiries please email: [axis@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:axis@hillingdon.gov.uk) or call: 07706 673157

If you are worried about a child contact: [Stronger Families Hub](#)

If you are worried about an adult with care and support needs contact: [Social Care Direct](#)

## What is Child Exploitation?

Child exploitation is a type of child abuse that usually happens outside of the family home. It occurs when an individual or group (this may be adults or other children) takes advantage of a power imbalance to manipulate a child into criminal and/or sexual activity. This includes trafficking drugs, sometimes called county lines, violent behaviour including gang related activities, and sexual exploitation. It can happen in person or online.

A child that is being exploited may be given things such as drugs, money, gifts, accommodation, status and affection. They are often tricked into believing that they are friends or in a consensual relationship. They are unlikely to realise or understand that they are being abused.

**THINK  
THINK  
TWOICE  
ABUSE**

The National Working Group (NWG) Network's 'Think Twice, Think Abuse' initiative is aimed at encouraging members of the community to think about exploitation and say something if you see something.

Children can be exploited anywhere and the community can help to inform local councils, police and other agencies about what is happening in public spaces. It is everyone's responsibility to speak out if they are worried that a child or young person may be a victim of exploitation.

[Click here to access the materials](#) NWG has produced to raise awareness in your place of work and in the places community members may see it

[The NWG provide a range of low cost and free webinars](#)

**STOP CSE**  
AWARENESS DAY 18TH MARCH

## Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where 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

Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation, Department for Education, 2017

## Signs and Indicators

Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation

Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks

Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work

Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late

Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls

Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol

Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections

Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault;

Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups

Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)

Frequenting areas known for sex work

Concerning use of internet or other social media

Increasing secretiveness around behaviours

Self-harm or significant changes in emotional wellbeing.



THINK  
THINK  
TWICE  
ABUSE

They're just  
being a typical  
teenager

aren't  
they?

THINK THINK  
**TWICE**  
**ABUSE**

**EXPLOITATION CAN  
HAPPEN TO ANY  
CHILD, ANYWHERE.**

Question what you think you know.  
Question what you see and hear.

**TAKE ACTION NOW TO PREVENT CHILD EXPLOITATION**

**SAY SOMETHING**, IF YOU **SEE SOMETHING** SUSPICIOUS.

Police

**101**

Crimestoppers

**0800 555 111**

For more information about how you can prevent this from happening visit [stop-ce.org](http://stop-ce.org) or to help give children a voice donate online at [stop-ce.org/donate](http://stop-ce.org/donate)

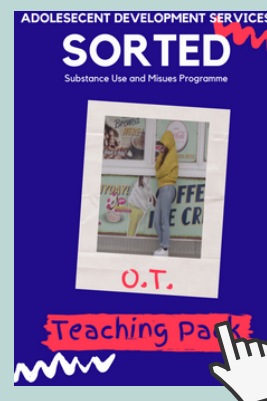


# Resources to support your safeguarding practice with children and young people at risk of exploitation



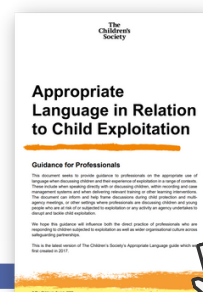
The Hillingdon Adolescent Development Service have produced this film called 'Out of Town' about Child Sexual Exploitation, county lines and grooming.

The film is accompanied by a resource pack that can be used directly with children and young people.



## Language

The language that we use is important to remind us that children are victims of exploitation. The Children's Society have created this useful guidance about appropriate language to use when speaking about, or engaging with, children who may be at risk or vulnerable to exploitation.



This organisation supports parents and carers whose children are being exploited by people outside of the family. They provide advice, support, training and they campaign to improve policy and practice to safeguarding children.



protecting children, supporting families



The NSPCC has published advice about how to spot the signs of criminal exploitation and involvement in gangs and what support is available for children and young people.

Find more resources on the Safeguarding Partnership website:

- [Contextual safeguarding](#)
- [Sexual Exploitation](#)
- [Serious Youth Violence](#)



Hillingdon  
**SCP**  
safeguarding children  
partnership

