

Parent/Carer Information

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Any child or Young Person may find themselves in a situation which puts them at risk of sexual exploitation. Boys as well as girls may be victims and abusers could be male or female from any background.

Sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse that can happen to anyone under the age of 18. The child or young person, or another person, receives something in return for sexual activities; this could include money, mobile phone & credit, a place to stay, drugs, alcohol or affection.

The child or young person may not even realise that they are a victim. This is known as 'Grooming'. An example of this is where a young person has been persuaded to 'post' or 'text' indecent photographs without receiving any immediate benefit themselves

In all cases of CSE, the abuser will have some power or influence over their victim. This could be due to age, gender, intelligence, position or physical strength.

As a parent/carers do you know what child sexual exploitation is and how to protect your child?

It is important to help your child understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. This is because your child may not realise that they are being exploited in some way. The young person may think that the abuser is their friend, boyfriend or girlfriend.

What to watch out for in your child's behaviour:

- **Frequently going missing from home or school**
- **Injuries such as bruises, scratches or burns**
- **Unexplained money or gifts such as mobile phones, jewellery, cigarettes or alcohol**
- **An unwillingness or objection to give up mobile phone(s)**
- **Older "boyfriends", "girlfriends" or "friends"**
- **Change of friendship groups**
- **A large number of "friends" on Facebook**
- **Involvement in criminal activity such as anti-social behaviour, shoplifting items such as alcohol and assault**
- **Sudden changes in behaviour, such as becoming unusually secretive**

Ask Yourself:

Does your child have a history of running away or going missing?
Do you know who your child has had contact with when missing?
Does your child go missing with the same people or children?
Do they take anything with them when they go missing such as money, clothes?

Do you know what social media sites your child has access to?
Do you know who they talk to on these social media sites?
Does your child take part in online gaming? Do you know who they are playing?
Do you know who has access to your child's mobile phone number?

If your child is going to a party:
Do you always know where the party is?
Do you know who will be there?
Do you know if any responsible adults will be supervising the party and have contact details for them?
Do you have contact details for your child in an emergency and are they able to contact you?

How you can help as a parent/carer:

- Know the signs and behaviours that your child could be showing
- Talk to your child or find an adult that they trust and will talk to. This could be a family friend, brother or sister.
- Alert the family and set clear family boundaries such as knowing where your child is going; who they are going to be with; how you can contact them, and how they can contact you in any emergency
- Get other safe adults involved such as friends and other family members – if you feel comfortable doing this
- Respond with care and urgency & believe what your child tells you
- Seek help and advice from the services below

What to do if you are worried?

Local Contacts:

If you are concerned that a child is at immediate risk you should contact the police or Children's Social Care.

Cheshire Police 24 hour

Telephone 999 (emergency)

Telephone 101(non-emergency)

Halton Children's Social Care Duty Officer

Telephone 0151 907 8305 (Mon – Thur

9am to 5pm and Fri 9am to 4:30pm)

Halton Emergency Duty Service (Out of Hours)

Telephone 0345 050 0148 (Mon – Thur 5pm to 9am
and Fri 4.30pm to 9am)

If your child goes missing always contact the police in the first instance on the above number.

National Contacts:

Barnardo's has launched a national campaign to stop children being sexually exploited. Halton Borough Council has pledged their support to the "Cut them free" campaign. Please use the link below to find useful resources to learn more about spotting the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation, and keeping children and young people safe from this form of abuse.

Link: http://www.barnardos.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/aboutcutthemfree

Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation (Pace) have designed a free e-learning course "**Keep them Safe**" to help parents protect their children from CSE.

Access the course at:

<https://keepthemsafe.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/>

You can always speak to a College safeguarding officer ring 0151 257 2800 and ask to be put through to a College Safeguarding officer.