



# Child Sexual Exploitation

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AT RISK

Ayrshire Multi-agency Practitioner's Guidance

February 2019



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## Who is this guidance for?

**This document is intended to provide initial guidance for any member of staff of any Ayrshire organisation who might come into contact with children or young people at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).**

This Guidance is intended to provide a concise overview of what child sexual exploitation is, the legislation in relation to child sexual exploitation, some of the issues that practitioners' should take into account when dealing with potential cases of child sexual exploitation and the immediate steps practitioners should take if concerned that someone is at risk of, or has been subject to, child sexual exploitation.

It should be read in conjunction with the Scottish Government's Child Sexual Exploitation Definition and Practitioner Briefing Paper ([www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00508563.pdf](http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00508563.pdf)) and also your organisation's policy and procedures in relation to Child Protection, where these are in place. The Child Protection Committees in Ayrshire have led on the development of this Guidance to support all staff within Ayrshire organisations, including all of the Public Protection Forums.



# Definition

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse in which a person(s), of any age takes advantage of a power imbalance to force or entice a child into engaging in sexual activity in return for something received by the child and/or those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. As with other forms of child sexual abuse, the presence of perceived consent does not undermine the abusive nature of the act.

As noted in the definition above, CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse encompasses ‘any act that involves the child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another’. CSE clearly falls within this, and like any other form of sexual abuse can include both contact and non-contact sexual activity, in person or via virtual means.

Also like other forms of sexual abuse, CSE:

- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse;
- Can involve coerced and/or enticement based methods of compliance;
- Can still be abuse even if it is claimed the child consented or assented – where the age of the child means they cannot legally give consent or the circumstances mean that agreement is not freely given.

The key factor that distinguishes cases of CSE from other forms of sexual abuse is the additional requirement for some form of exchange; the fact that the child and/or someone else receive something in return for the sexual activity:

- Where the gain is on the part of the child, this can take the form of tangible or intangible rewards (for example: money, drugs, alcohol, status, protection or perceived receipt of love or affection). Fear of what might happen if they do not comply can also be a significant influencing factor; in such situations the ‘gain’ for the child could be prevention of something negative, for example a child who engages in sexual activity in order to avoid harm to other friends or family.

National CSE guidance and legislation relating to sexual crimes and trafficking specifically covers children and young people up to the age of 18 years.

For 16 and 17 year olds it is important to remember that just because a young person is over the age of 16, whether they are subject to a statutory order or not, it does not mean that they cannot be victims of CSE. A young person who has been subject to a complex pattern of life experiences including sophisticated grooming and priming processes does not stop needing support and protection when they reach the age of 16. They remain a vulnerable young person with on-going needs. A person's vulnerability will depend on their circumstances and environment and each case must be judged on its merits. Practitioners should take cognisance of their local child protection/vulnerable young person/adult protection procedures when considering 16 and 17 year olds.

The national CSE Definition and Practitioner Briefing Paper says:

*'All forms of vulnerability and victimisation in childhood should be identified and responded to, in line with GIRFEC principles, irrespective of how they are defined or categorised.'*

It is also helpful to refer to the **GIRFEC Ayrshire Practitioners Guide** and the pan-Ayrshire agreement that any interventions and actions, including Child Protection cases, will be underpinned by these principles.

[www.girfec-ayrshire.co.uk/practitioners/document-downloads/girfec-practitioner-guidance/](http://www.girfec-ayrshire.co.uk/practitioners/document-downloads/girfec-practitioner-guidance/)

Each of the wellbeing (SHANARRI) indicators are linked to the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), The first is SAFE and Page 7 of the Practitioners Guidance says:



**Safe - protected from abuse, neglect or harm  
(UNCRC Articles 11, 19, 22, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38):**

Every child has the right to be safe and protected, and to feel safe and protected from any avoidable situation or acts of commission or omission which might result in that child or young person:

- Being physically, sexually or emotionally harmed in any way;
- Put at risk of physical, sexual or emotional harm, abuse or exploitation;
- Having their basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, sanitation, education, healthcare) neglected or experiencing that their needs are met in ways that are not appropriate to their age and/or stage of development;
- Being denied the sustained support and care necessary for them to thrive and develop;
- Being denied access to appropriate health care and treatment, and social care support;
- Being exposed to demands and expectations which are inappropriate to their age and stage of development; and
- Being harmed by the behaviour of themselves or others.

# Legislation

Like other cases of child sexual abuse, cases of CSE can potentially involve the commission of a range of sexual and other offences. CSE refers, not to the specific offence, but to the context within which this offending occurs.

## Criminal Offences

The Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009, the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 together provide for a number of sexual and other offences that can be used to prosecute cases of CSE. These are categorised by the age of the victim and a full list of the offences relative to children and young people can be found at Appendix 1 of the Scottish Government's Child Sexual Exploitation Definition and Practitioner Briefing Paper.

([www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00508563.pdf](http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00508563.pdf) )

## Finn's Story

Finn is 12 and he is a bit of a shy boy and has found it hard to make friends with the other boys at high school. However, he has an Xbox and is excellent at playing many games. Finn has “met” many friends through playing games on line and he talks to them most nights while playing games. Finn finds it much easier to be friends online and this has helped his mum and dad to be less worried about him. They have met one boy, Ryan, who lives nearby as he has come to the house to play the Xbox with Finn.

Within the group of boys, Finn also gets on really well with Sean. Sean has told Finn he is 13 and like Finn he finds it hard to make friends at school. Sean is a great laugh and Finn and Sean message each other outwith the group chat. Sean and Finn have started a game of dares. Sean has dared Finn to take a photograph of his mum when she is not looking, Finn has dared Sean to take a photo of his big sister's pants on the washing line. Both boys find these dares really hilarious. One night Sean dares Finn to send a photo of his penis. Finn at first says no, but Sean teases him saying he's a chicken, both boys find

this really funny. Finn then sends a photo of his penis to Sean.

Sean then tells Finn that if he doesn't meet him at the garage tomorrow night at 7pm, he will put the picture of Finn's penis on line. Finn at first thinks Sean is kidding on but Sean shows him a screenshot of the picture just needing one more click to be uploaded. Finn agrees to meet Sean. Sean is not 13, Sean is 53 and he continues to threaten to upload the photograph if Finn does not meet him and another man and have oral sex with them both.

After several weeks Finn's parents notice that he is going out more, always to meet Sean. He has become withdrawn and also seems to have lost interest in playing games on-line with his friends. One evening Finn came home with a black eye. When his mum asked him what happened, Finn broke down and told her about the exploitation. Finn's mum called the police and they have taken Finn's phone and Xbox from him and are currently trying to trace “Sean” through his IP address.



## Jodies' Story

Jodie is 14 and enjoyed spending time with her female friends at the Bus station. The young people would often drink alcohol if they could persuade an adult to buy it for them. One evening Jodie and her friends approach Mikey to ask if he would buy alcohol, he agreed and let them sit in his car to drink it. Mikey is 25. Mikey gave the girls his phone number and said they could call him any time and he would get alcohol for them. Mikey also gave the girls a lift home sometimes as he said he was worried that they were at risk from bad guys.

This went on for a few weeks and after Mikey had dropped Jodie's 2 friends off one night, he gave Jodie more alcohol and told her that he really liked her. He asked to meet Jodie by herself the following night, he told her that she was much more grown up than her friends. Jodie was really flattered that this older guy who had been really kind and had looked out for her and her friends was interested in her, so she agreed to meet him alone.

Mikey took Jodie for a burger and said he had vodka at his flat, he hadn't brought it with him as he thought it would be good to have a drink together at his flat and get to know each other better. Mikey took Jodie

home later that night. He suggested that they meet at his flat the next night, which Jodie did. Again, Mikey had alcohol for Jodie but when it came to her time to go home, he asked her to stay over and they had sex. This continued for a few weeks, Jodie started missing school to be with Mikey, she didn't see her friends as they were "too immature" and she often didn't return home, telling her mum she was staying with friends.

After a few weeks, Mikey introduced Jodie to his friend Joe. Mikey told Jodie that Joe was upset as he had fallen out with his girlfriend and it would really make Mikey happy if she would help Joe feel better by sleeping with him. Within a few months Jodie was being sexually exploited by Mikey and three of his friends. Jodie was isolated from all her own friends and family and still believed that Mikey loved her and if he hurt her it was her own fault. After all this was the same guy who used to drive her and her friends home to keep her safe from the bad guys out there.

Jodie became pregnant and she approached her GP seeking a termination, however, she changed her mind. Jodie is currently being assessed by social work and the health to establish whether she will be able to care for her baby. The baby's name has been placed on the child protection register, pre-birth. The current plan is that the baby will be accommodated with foster carers at birth. Jodie still believes Mikey loves her.

# Spotting the Signs + Symptoms of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation can happen to ANY child/ young person and the perpetrator may be male or female. CSE can present across a range of settings, and may be spotted by a range of practitioners working with children as well as those working with adults who have dependent children.

Indicators of CSE may be visible to practitioners and examples can include:

## **What you might see:**

- Physical symptoms (bruising / trauma indicating either physical or sexual assault);
- Child/young person repeatedly seeking emergency contraception or terminations, or with
- Repeat STIs or urinary infections;
- Child/young person expressing despair (e.g. challenging behaviour, aggression, self harming behaviours);
- Child/young person presenting intoxicated or misusing alcohol or drugs;
- Late presentation of or unexplained injuries or symptoms;
- Disclosure of sexual and / or physical assault, followed by withdrawal of allegation; and
- Evidence of physical abuse associated with sexual contact
- Aggressive mood swings;
- Signs of self-harm/suicidal thoughts;
- Presence of a controlling or older adult or 'boyfriend / girlfriend';
- Evidence that a child/young person is being monitored through their mobile phone;
- Child/young person with unexplained amounts of money or expensive presents or possessions;

- Child/young person who fails to attend follow-up appointments and disengages from health services or school;
- Changes in behaviour, including changes in eating habits;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour or language;
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation;
- Placement breakdown if involved in LAC / LAAC; and
- Forming inappropriate on-line relationships or evidence of 'grooming'.

#### **What they may say:**

- Child/young person who describes peers or friends as involved in sexual exploitation;
- Child/young person talks about staying out late or have unexplained absences from home or school;
- Child/young person mentions multiple sexual partners; and
- Child/young person who describes being in or taken to (or who were found in) houses / flats / other accommodation where they engaged in sexual activity with multiple or older adults

# ASK...

- What have I seen?
- What have I heard?
- What do I feel is unusual or concerning?
- What has actually happened?
- What is my concern?
- What is this telling me?
- What should I do now?

# ACT...

- **Doing nothing is not an option!**
- **Protecting and keeping children and young people safe, is everyone's duty!**
- **Keep your focus on the child or young person - their safety is paramount!**
- **Do not assume someone else will do something!**
- **Do not delay unnecessarily - act quickly!**
- **Look, listen and record your concern!**

# Recognise, Report and Record!

*If you are concerned about a child and it is an emergency call Police on 999 or alternatively use the useful contacts on page 14 for Police and Social Work*

Useful  
contacts



## Useful local contacts

### **Ayrshire Police**

*Public Protection Unit*

**01563 505012**

(Dial **101** to report a crime and **999** in an emergency)

### **Ayrshire Social Work Services**

*Out of Hours Service*

**0800 328 7758**

## East Ayrshire

### **East Ayrshire Social Work Services**

Kilmarnock: **01563 554200**

Cumnock: **01290 427720**

### **East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee**

**01563 576728** or

[www.eac.eu/childprotection](http://www.eac.eu/childprotection)

### **Break the Silence**

provides a range of tailored, holistic support options for Survivors of rape and childhood sexual abuse, all genders, aged 13 years and above. Referrals can be made by telephone, email or online via our website [www.breakthesilence.org.uk](http://www.breakthesilence.org.uk)

**01563 559558**

### **The STAR Centre**

offers free and confidential support to anyone who has experienced sexual violence.

[www.starcentreayrshire.org.uk](http://www.starcentreayrshire.org.uk) **01563 544686**

### **East Ayrshire Women's Aid**

**01563 536001**

## North Ayrshire

### **North Ayrshire Social Work Services**

Irvine and Kilwinning: **01294 310300**

Stevenson, Saltcoats

and Ardrossan: **01294 310005**

Arran: **01770 600742**

Garnock Valley: **01505 684551**

North Coast: **01475 687592**

### **North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee**

[www.childprotectionnorthayrshire.info](http://www.childprotectionnorthayrshire.info)

### **North Ayrshire Women's Aid**

is a unique specialist service which provides the full package of emotional and practical support which is both needed and valued by women and children affected by domestic abuse.

[www.nawomensaid.org.uk](http://www.nawomensaid.org.uk) **01294 602424**

## South Ayrshire

### **South Ayrshire Social Work Services**

South Ayrshire: 01292 267675

### **South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee**

[www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/childprotection/committee/](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/childprotection/committee/)

### **Moving On (South Ayrshire only)**

provides one to one counselling and support to survivors of sexual abuse/ exploitation and rape, male, female and LGBTI people aged 13+

[www.movingonayrshire.com](http://www.movingonayrshire.com)

01292 290546

### **South Ayrshire Women's Aid**

provide a confidential service that gives information, support and temporary accommodation to women and children who have experienced domestic abuse.

[www.southayrshirewomensaid.org.uk](http://www.southayrshirewomensaid.org.uk)

01292 266482

## Useful Scottish links

### **Barnardo's Scotland**

Guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation - A Practitioners' Resource Pack :

[www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/C/Barnardos-Guidance-on-Child-Sexual-Exploitation-2014.pdf](http://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/C/Barnardos-Guidance-on-Child-Sexual-Exploitation-2014.pdf)

### **West of Scotland Interagency Child Protection procedures**

[www.proceduresonline.com/westofscotland/](http://www.proceduresonline.com/westofscotland/)

### **Childline**

0800 1111

### **NSPCC 24 Hour Child Protection Helpline**

0808 800 5000

### **Crimestoppers**

0800 555 111

