



North Yorkshire

Safeguarding Children Partnership

Child Sexual Exploitation

Practice Guidance

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Practice Guidance

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Introduction

This guidance has been written in line with 'Working together to Safeguarding Children' (DCSF 2018) and 'Child Sexual Exploitation definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation' (DFE 2017). This practice guidance is for practitioners to work in a multi-agency context and to enable practitioners to increase their awareness and understanding of the risks for children who may be at risk of or experiencing CSE.

It has been designed to enable practitioners to reflect on a range of known indicators and circumstances that increase the individual child or young person's vulnerability to CSE. (Please note: many of these aspects are part of a general pattern of behaviours and situations; and a wider range of "problems" an individual child, young person and/or their family experience). CSE is an additional risk to be assessed in all cases and if found to be existing at any level, it must be reported and worked with, alongside the other risk factors and actions within an individual child or young person's assessment and any resultant plan.

Scope

The government guidance requires agencies to work together to:

- Develop local prevention strategies;
- Identify those at risk of sexual exploitation;
- Take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of particular children and young people who may be sexually exploited;
- Take action against those who are intent on abusing and exploiting children and young people in this way.

Legislation and Standards

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).
- Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary Guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children (DCSF 2009).
- Safeguarding Children who may have been Trafficked (DFE 2009).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).
- Office of the Children Commissioner Report Gangs and Group CSE (2013) "If only someone had listened" and "It takes a lot to build Trust" (2014).
- Children and Young Person's Missing from Home, Education or Care (2014).
- Children and Families Act (2014).
- Children Act (2004)

Policy Statement

The guidance will provide an overview of:

- Risk indicators to establish if a child is at risk of being sexually exploited;
- The referral process when it is identified a child is at risk of being sexually exploited;
- Contact points for practitioners to receive advice and support;
- Disruption strategies: The impact to children of being sexually exploited.

The Practice Guidance

The practice guidance is aimed at all practitioners who may encounter children and young people who may be at risk of being or may be sexually exploited.

Definition of Child Sexual Abuse (which sexual exploitation is a form of)¹:

‘Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.’

The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows²:

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 and Young Person

*The ‘Children Act 1989’ defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.
‘The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence’ (NICE) uses the following terms to describe children of different ages:*

- *Child (under 13 years);*
- *Young person (13-17 years).*

However there are groups who could additionally be vulnerable such as: Looked After Children, those transitioning out of care or who have left care and children who may have special educational needs and disabilities.

NYSCP promotes a multi-agency approach which emphasises the need to work together to:

- **Prevent** by raising awareness of CSE amongst young people, parents, carers and communities and to work together to provide children and young people with strategies to recognise, avoid, report and exit sexual exploitation at any stage and to remove opportunities for potential perpetrators across the County;

¹ This definition arises from joint work between project members of the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (NWG) 2008

² Department for Education. (2017). Child sexual exploitation Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation, UK Government, London.p5.

- **Prepare** by providing strong leadership, effective systems, gathering of intelligence and partnership working to tackle CSE by recognising the problem of sexual exploitation of children and young people;
- **Protect** by safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, supporting professionals, parents, carers, families and communities who may be at risk of CSE, identifying potential victims, risks, patterns and perpetrators at the earliest opportunity;
- **Pursue** by investigating, disrupting, arresting and prosecuting those who seek to coerce, sexually exploit and abuse children and young people whilst supporting victims and their families effectively through the criminal justice system.

How common is child sexual exploitation?

The signs and indicators of all forms of abuse can be difficult to detect and child sexual exploitation is no exception. A variety of factors can make it difficult to accurately assess how prevalent child sexual exploitation is. Many children who are sexually exploited may have been victims of other forms of abuse; the grooming methods that may be used can mean that children who are sexually exploited do not always recognise they are being abused, which can also affect detection rates. What is clear is that child sexual exploitation can occur in all communities and amongst all social groups and can affect girls and boys. All practitioners should work on the basis that it is happening in their area.

How children and young people become involved in CSE

It is important to remember that CSE is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.

Children aged 12-15 years of age are most at risk of child sexual exploitation although victims as young as 8 have been identified, particularly in relation to online concerns. Equally, those aged 16 or above can also experience child sexual exploitation, and it is important that such abuse is not overlooked due to assumed capacity to consent. Account should be taken of heightened risks amongst this age group, particularly those without adequate economic or systemic support.

Though child sexual exploitation may be most frequently observed amongst young females, boys are also at risk. Practitioners should be alert to the fact that boys may be less likely than females to disclose experiences of child sexual exploitation and less likely to have these identified by others. It is also key to remember that CSE affects all ethnic groups.

Heightened vulnerability factors: Working Together (2018) makes clear the requirements for holistic assessment. Sexual exploitation is often linked to other issues in the life of a child or young person, or in the wider community context. Practitioners should be alert to the fact that child sexual exploitation is complex and rarely presents in isolation of other needs and risks of harm (although this may not always be the case, particularly in relation to online abuse). Child sexual exploitation may be linked to other crimes such as child

criminal exploitation and practitioners should be mindful that a child who may present as being involved in criminal activity is actually being exploited.

Child grooming refers to an act of deliberately establishing an emotional connection with a child to prepare the child for child abuse. Child grooming is undertaken usually to carry out sexual abuse and other child exploitation like trafficking of children or the production of child pornography. Child grooming can happen both on and off line.

CSE can take many forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for attention, affection, accommodation or gifts, to serious organised crime and child trafficking. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power within the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, increasing the dependence of the victim as the exploitative relationship develops.

CSE involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from their peers to have sex, sexual bullying (including cyber bullying), and grooming for sexual activity. Technology can also play a part in sexual abuse; for example, through its use to record abuse and share it with others or as a medium to access children and young people in order to groom them. A common factor in all cases is the lack of free economic or moral choice.

Many children and young people are groomed into sexually exploitative relationships but other forms of entry exist. Some young people are engaged in informal economies that incorporate the exchange of sex for rewards such as drugs, alcohol, money or gifts. Others exchange sex for accommodation or money as a result of homelessness and experiences of poverty. Some young people have been bullied and threatened into sexual activities by peers or gangs, which is then used against them as a form of extortion and to keep them compliant.

The perpetrators of CSE are often well organised and use sophisticated tactics. They are known to target areas where children and young people might gather without much adult supervision, such as shopping centres, cafes, takeaways, pubs, sports centres, cinemas, bus or train stations, local parks, playgrounds and taxi ranks, or sites on the Internet used by children and young people. The process of grooming may also be visible in adult venues such as pubs and clubs. In some cases, perpetrators are known to use younger men, women, boys or girls to build initial relationships and introduce them to others in the perpetrator networks.

However, young people can also be sexually exploited by informal and unorganised groups of people. Children and young people, who are themselves the victims of exploitation, may introduce other young people to their abusers. This may not be a deliberate attempt to groom others into CSE, but rather a way of ensuring that their abuser's attention is deflected away from themselves. These children and young people are themselves victims and should not be prosecuted except as a last resort when other interventions have failed and there is an absolute need to protect others.

Other perpetrators will include friends, peers and friends of older siblings. In some cases, perpetrators may target young people through their parents or carers, by providing drugs,

alcohol or money to the parents or carers. This can often mean that the parents or carers approve of the perpetrator as a potential boyfriend or girlfriend as they are trusted and needed by the family.

Professionals need to be open to the view that the perpetrator could be male or female, many of the cases published in the media indicate that this type of offences is most often perpetrated by men and although this is backed up by number of reported incidents, females can and do sexually exploit both girls and boys. Offences perpetrated by women can often be hard to detect and may not raise suspicion in the same way as offences committed by males, therefore professionals need to ensure that they remain professionally curious where they suspect an imbalance of power regardless of gender. Professionals should also be alert to organised familial abuse or abuse within closed community groups, including sexual exploitation and the making and distribution of abusive images of children and trafficking of children into, within and out of the UK for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

The hidden nature of this form of abuse has a significant impact on the visibility of the problem. Disclosure of sexual abuse and violence is always difficult for children and young people. The sophisticated grooming and priming processes executed by abusing adults and the exchange element of the abuse act as additional barriers, which increase denial and make disclosure especially difficult.

Children and young people are increasingly using computers, laptops, tablets, game consoles and mobile phones to access the internet for social networking or to visit potentially risky websites. This opens up further opportunities for perpetrators to make contact and to groom children and young people for CSE. The fact that online users often lie about their true identity means that young people can be more easily groomed and coerced into meeting up with potential perpetrators. (For more information, contact CEOP or visit their website <http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk>)

Potential indicators of child sexual exploitation

Children rarely self-report child sexual exploitation so it is important that practitioners are aware of potential indicators of risk, including:

- 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/suspicions 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; and

- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Practitioners should also remain open to the fact that child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these risk indicators being obviously present.

The first step for practitioners is to be alert to the potential signs of abuse and neglect and to understand the procedures set out by NYSCP

<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/nyscb-procedures/>

CSE Examples and Models

The following illustrative examples, although very different in nature and potentially involving different sexual or other offences, could all fall under the definition of child sexual exploitation:

- A 44 year old female posing as a 17 year old female online and persuading a 12 year old male to send her a sexual image, and then threatening to tell his parents if he doesn't continue to send more explicit images;
- A 14 year old male giving a 17 year old male oral sex because the older male has threatened to tell his parents he is gay if he refuses;
- A 14 year old female having sex with a 16 year old gang member and his two friends in return for the protection of the gang;
- A 13 year old female offering and giving an adult male taxi driver sexual intercourse in return for a taxi fare home;
- A 21 year old male persuading his 17 year old 'girlfriend' to have sex with his friends to pay off a drug debt;
- A mother letting other adults abuse her 8 year old child in return for money;
- A group of men bringing two 17 year old females to a hotel in another town and charging others to have sex with them; and
- Three 15 year old females being taken to a house party and given 'free' alcohol and drugs, then made to have sex with six adult males to pay for this.

These examples are not exhaustive: other forms of child sexual exploitation occur and new forms continue to develop. Nor are they mutually exclusive – some children will suffer abuse across a range of scenarios, either simultaneously or in succession.

Inappropriate relationships

These usually involve one offender who has inappropriate power or control over a young person (physical, emotional or financial). One indicator may be a significant age gap. The young person may believe they are in a loving relationship.

Boyfriend model

Here the offender befriends and grooms a young person into a 'relationship' and then coerces or forces them to have sex with friends or associates. The boyfriend may be significantly older than the victim, but not always.

Peer-on-peer exploitation

This refers to situations where young people are forced or coerced into sexual activity by peers or associates. Sometimes this can be associated with gang activity but not always.

Gang-associated CSE

A child or young person can be sexually exploited by a gang, but this is not necessarily the reason why gangs are formed. Types of exploitation may include using sex as a weapon between rival gangs, as a form of punishment to fellow gang members and/or a means of gaining status within the hierarchy of the gang.

Organised/networked sexual exploitation or trafficking

Young people (often connected) are passed through networks, possibly over geographical distances, between towns and cities where they may be forced/coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Often this occurs at 'parties', and young people who are involved may recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised 'buying and selling' of young people by offenders. Organised exploitation varies from spontaneous networking between groups of offenders, to more serious organised crime where young people are effectively 'sold'.

Contextual Safeguarding

In 2018 the term "Contextual Safeguarding" was inserted into Working Together to Safeguard Children as well as Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Legal Framework for Implementing Contextual Safeguarding 2019 (Contextual Safeguarding Network/University of Bedford/Institute of Applied Social Research) document outlines current legal tools available for implementing Contextual Safeguarding as well as questions that emerged when trying to test the approach.

These documents have been used in order to develop and strengthen strategic and operational practice in North Yorkshire. We will build on the work undertaken to date and utilise the material referred to above to advance contextual safeguarding within North Yorkshire.

"Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships" (Firmin, 2017, 3)

Children and young people can be vulnerable to exploitation due to their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources as outlined in the definition provided above, as well as in some cases simply just being in the wrong place at the wrong time. However there are certain vulnerabilities and indicators that may make children and young people more vulnerable to being targeted for exploitation. This is often linked to the environments within which they live or socialise. This is often referred to as contextual safeguarding and links not only to a child or young person's home environment, but also to their peer network, their school/educational environment and/or the neighbourhood within which they live.

Contextual Safeguarding was first introduced in 2015 to provide a framework for ensuring child protection systems were equipped to respond to abuse that children, particularly adolescents, are exposed to and/or experience in extra-familial settings. The work undertaken in partnership with practitioners by Firmin (2017b) identified four domains to describe child protection approaches that would engage with extrafamilial risk or abuse:

- Target – the home, peer group, school, neighbourhood or online contexts where abuse occurs, through assessment and intervention, in addition to the individuals affected
- Do this within a Child Protection Legislative Framework – to ensure that the response is welfare led, is not necessarily triggered by, or dependent upon, a crime being committed or a criminal investigation being conducted
- Build partnerships with agencies who have a reach into extra-familial contexts – such as education, voluntary and community sector organisations, youth work, housing, retail, transport and licensing, in addition to children (particularly adolescents – as peers), and parents themselves
- Measure success by risk reducing in contexts of concern, not solely by a change in the behaviours of any individuals who have encountered or instigated abuse unsafe contexts.

The purpose of the MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Level 2 process is to understand the contexts within local communities in which exploitation is occurring and to utilise the skills, knowledge and capabilities within our partnerships to tackle and disrupt the perpetrators of exploitation and create safe spaces for children and young people.

Transitional Safeguarding

Transitional Safeguarding is a term coined by Research in Practice following recognition of the need to improve the safeguarding responses for older teenagers and young adults. Research by Sawyer et al. 2018 identified emerging evidence that adolescence extends into the early/mid-twenties and children who are vulnerable to or being exploited at age 17 do not suddenly become less vulnerable the day they reach their 18th birthday. There is recognition that the support needs of those young people entering adulthood needs to be well planned and requires a fluid transition between child and adult services.

There is also emerging evidence that meeting the needs of adolescents and young adults more effectively early on, can significantly reduce the need for costly later interventions for example involvement in the criminal justice system, access health services, drug and alcohol treatments etc. (Rees et al, 2017).

Young adults can also experience a range of risk and harms that may not be as relevant to younger children and require a different safeguarding response. Hanson & Holmes (2014) outlines these often inter-connected risks including:

- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Neglect - Emotional abuse
- Homelessness
- Poor mental health and self-harm
- Criminal exploitation including gang association

- Substance misuse

Multi-Agency Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding Arrangements

Within North Yorkshire, CSE is managed through the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) and Contextual Safeguarding (CS) Arrangements. Historically different forms of exploitation have had different approaches and responses, for example child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, child trafficking etc. However, the MACE procedure takes a holistic view of exploitation whilst recognising that it can occur through different forms and often occurs in amongst other vulnerabilities that children and young people may be exposed to.

By the very nature of vulnerability and exploitation, the different themes of exploitation are invariably intertwined. The risks and vulnerabilities of the child are seen as a complete picture, so their needs can be addressed in a way that improves their long term outcomes, as appose to reducing risk in one particular area of vulnerability.

Exploitation often occurs without the child's immediate recognition and/or with the child believing that they are in control of the situation and can therefore be difficult to identify. Further, the nature of life in the 21st Century is that online and offline domains are no longer two distinct and separate areas. The relationship between the two is now fluid and interchangeable and as such we need to be able to recognise and respond to risk both in the online and offline environment.

It is important to note that there is NO specific referral form for MACE and Contextual Safeguarding which includes CSE and any child/children or young person related concerns should be managed and reported using the existing NYSCP procedures and the NYSPB referral process. There are existing statutory meeting structures in place that identify, assess and manage a child/children at risk and child/children in need concerns (Refer to Referral Section Below).

Where an exploitation or contextual safeguarding concern has been identified within a safeguarding referral, MACE screening and assessment will take place in the Multi Agency Screening Team (MAST). After an initial screening of any referral has taken place within the Customer Resolution Centre, the MAST role will be to ascertain whether any additional multi-agency intervention or support is required. All other relevant MACE information held by or known to North Yorkshire Police (NYP), North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and Health partners will be shared and managed utilising established MAST procedures.

There are two levels to the MACE and Contextual Safeguarding procedure in terms of how the process is structured across North Yorkshire.

Level One – Child/Children or Young Person(s) related –this involves the identification, risk assessment and risk management of those children identified as being at risk of child exploitation and incorporates three key components:

1. Initial identification of risk through a safeguarding referral into the MAST
2. Multi-Agency risk assessment and risk management of children at risk of exploitation through existing NYSCP Procedures

3. Multi-agency Locality Tasking meeting held weekly to include a review of MFH cases, new CSE/CCE cases, oversight of high risk and complex cases and agreement of cases relevant to share at the MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Level 2 meeting

Level Two – MACE and Contextual Safeguarding – information relating to the links between children at risk or subject to exploitation, perpetrators or individuals who may pose a risk by exploitation and/or locations and community intelligence. This involves the following four components:

1. The identification and assessment of perpetrators and/or individuals who may pose a risk by exploitation
2. The sharing of community intelligence related to perpetrators or individuals who may pose a risk by exploitation as well as locations where harm is being caused within communities.
3. The sharing of relevant details of children identified as at risk of or subject to exploitation through the Level 1 MACE and Contextual Safeguarding process. The purpose being to identify the community links between victims, perpetrators/individuals who may pose a risk by exploitation and locations through locality mapping exercises. This includes any concerns raised by other Local Authorities and private residential home providers and settings around OOLAC children placed in North Yorkshire
4. To develop robust locality partnership action plans to develop intelligence, pursue and prosecute perpetrators and disrupt exploitation activity within communities.

Full details of the MACE and CS Practice Guidance can be viewed at <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/practice-guidance/>

Vulnerability Check List

All agencies working within NYSCP have a responsibility to address the needs of children and young people in their area. Effective joint working provides the framework in which children's needs can be met across the spectrum.

The Vulnerability checklist include specific aspects relating to CSE. It is also intended to help identify how children's needs might be met across universal, early help, targeted prevention and intensive/acute services.

NYSCP Vulnerability Check list can be accessed by visiting:

<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/practice-guidance/>

Process

If you are worried about a child or a young person under the age of 18, you should contact the NYCC Children and Families Service. If your concern is outside of normal office hours, you should contact the Emergency Duty Team 01609 780780.

In an emergency, always ring 999
You should call 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response.

CSE - Referral flow diagram

EVALUATION OF RISK

Practitioners identify risk posed to the child consult the NYSCP Vulnerability checklist:
<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/practice-guidance/>
Practitioners can send intelligence or make a referral:



Intelligence

Information should only be shared regarding perpetrators and/or community intelligence.

If there is any information regarding specific/named child then it should be coming in through the referral route.

If there is an immediate risk to a child/children, member of the public you should call the NY Police on 999.

[NY Police Partnership Information Sharing form](#) will enable North Yorkshire Police to track intelligence and may use this information to undertake any Police enquiries as necessary.

Information being shared internally within North Yorkshire Police, follow internal procedures and pass to the Vulnerability Assessment team:

intelligenceunit@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk

Referral

Where a child is at risk of significant harm (s.47) an immediate referral to the police or NYCC Children and Families Service should be made. A child or young person who is in need of support or requires other prevention services the practitioner should follow their agency's procedures to determine if a referral is required to NYCC Children and Families Service.

Where there is a concern relating to a child at risk of CSE or subject of CSE (irrespective of whether it hits the significant harm threshold) a referral is required as below.

Discuss the concerns with the designated safeguarding lead and determine if a referral is required to:

NYCC Children and Families Service

T: 01609 780780

E: children&families@northyorks.gov.uk

Referral Form to Children and Families Service –
<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/forms-for-professionals/>



NYCC MAST will screen the referral and will determine the level of support and next steps required for the referral.

Following the referral, a thorough risk assessment will be undertaken by Children and Families Service in conjunction with partners using the Child Exploitation risk assessment.

National Referral Mechanism

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.

The NRM is also the mechanism through which the [Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit \(MSHTU\)](#) collect data about victims. This information contributes to building a clearer picture about the scope of human trafficking and modern slavery in the UK.

The NRM was introduced in 2009 to meet the UK's obligations under the Council of European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. At the core of every country's NRM is the process of locating and identifying "potential victims of trafficking".

From 31 July 2015 the NRM was extended to all victims of modern slavery in England and Wales following the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Modern Slavery encompasses:

1. Human trafficking
2. Slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour

From 31 July 2015, in all UK referrals, the Competent Authority (trained decision makers) must consider whether the person is a victim of human trafficking. In England and Wales, if someone is found not to be a victim of trafficking, the Competent Authority must go on to consider whether they are the victim of another form of modern slavery, which includes slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

The NRM grants a minimum 45-day reflection and recovery period for victims of human trafficking or modern slavery. Trained decision makers decide whether individuals referred to them should be considered to be victims of trafficking according to the definition in the Council of Europe Convention. In England and Wales, further consideration is made to those who do not meet the definition of trafficking. Their cases are then considered against the definitions of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

All agencies and organisations that have concern for a person they believe may be a victim of human trafficking have a responsibility to identify the person as a possible victim and put them in touch with the responsible authorities and support providers. A formal referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) by first responder organisations including:

- Local Authorities Children Services
- Specified persons within Safeguarding Children Partnerships
- Police Forces
- NSPCC
- Salvation Army
- Barnardo's
- Border Force
- Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA)
- CTAC (NSPCC Child Trafficking Advice Centre)
- Home Office UK Immigration & Visas Directorate (formerly UKBA)

For more details about the NRM visit: <http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/national-referral-mechanism>

Refer potential victims of modern slavery/human trafficking to the NRM here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms>

When a referral is submitted to the NRM, North Yorkshire Police should be copied in to the email using the following address modernslavery@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk to ensure an appropriate crime. Only secure mail should be used to share personal and sensitive information via email.

Information Sharing

The NYSCP and its partners have adopted the [Joint Information Sharing Protocol](#) which sets out the guidance of when information can be passed on from relevant agencies relating to a child or young person.

The information within the North Yorkshire Police Information Form (stage 3) can be shared within the following Acts: the 'Crime and Disorder Act 1989' (prevention and detection of crime); and, the 'Data Protection Act 1988' (prevention and detection of crime and/or apprehension of offenders; and, protection of personal data). Under the provisions in the above acts, it is not necessary to obtain consent to share relevant information.

The 'Sexual Offences Act 2003' introduced a range of offences specifically focused on the protection of children from sexual exploitation. Child sexual exploitation which is a form of child abuse as set out in the 'Children Act 1989'.

Key Principles

The key principles should be:

- A child-centred approach which is focused on the child's needs, including consideration of children with particular needs or sensitivities, and the fact that children do not always acknowledge what may be an exploitative or abusive situation;
- A proactive approach which is focused on prevention, early identification and intervention as well as disrupting activity and prosecuting perpetrators;
- Parenting, family life, and services that take account of family circumstances in deciding how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people;
- The rights of children and young people to be safeguarded from sexual exploitation just as agencies have duties in respect of safeguarding and promoting welfare;
- Responsibility for criminal acts. Sexual exploitation of children and young people should not be regarded as criminal behaviour on the part of the child or young person, but as child sexual abuse. The responsibility for the sexual exploitation of children lies with the abuser and the focus of police investigations should be on those who coerce, exploit and abuse children and young people;

- An integrated approach as detailed within Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Within this, sexual exploitation requires a three-pronged approach tackling prevention, protection and prosecution;
- A shared responsibility of effective joint working between different agencies and professionals underpinned by a strong commitment from managers who understand the sexual exploitation.

Frequently Asked Questions

I need further advice and guidance, who do I contact?

As a practitioner, if you are unsure and would like further advice or guidance, the first step is to approach your line manager or your designated safeguarding lead. Alternatively, you can contact either:

North Yorkshire Multi Agency Screening Team (MAST)

T: 01609 780780

E: children&families@northyorks.gov.uk

Referral Form: [Referral Form to Children and Families Service](#)

North Yorkshire Police

Telephone 101

Q: What if the young person is apparently consenting to this exploitation?

*A: The legal position is that any young person over the age of 16 can consent to sex with people their own age or older. However, it is vital to note that a **person under 18 involved in an exploitative relationship cannot give consent to their own abuse** even if they do not recognise it as such. This applies to “boyfriend” models equally as to the provision of sexual services in return for payment or promised payment.*

*Sexual activity for under 18s as part of an exploitative situation is child abuse and **cannot** be deemed a “lifestyle choice”, even if the victim does not see themselves as a victim. A child under the age of 13 is unable to consent to **any** sexual activity, irrespective of whether the child sees it as abusive or not.*

Q: I have just heard something in passing and am not sure if it is relevant?

A: Any information should be passed on to the Police via the [NY Police Partnership Information Sharing form](#)

It may be that it does not relate to any particular individual but just a comment relating to a place, people in a car or shop that is providing alcohol or where individuals of concern appear to be congregating. It could prove valuable in identifying a location, a perpetrator or other potential victims and help the police take disruptive and pre-emptive action to remove any specific threat.

Q: I am concerned that if I identify someone at risk they will not be happy with my actions and it may jeopardise my relationship and trust with them?

A: It is also your duty of care to share this information with the key agencies in order to protect the child or young person.

Q: I am concerned that if I flag someone as being at risk of CSE that this will remain on their file:

A: A child or young person's risk assessment should be reviewed at appropriate intervals to determine if they have the accurate risk category assigned to their case. The appropriate CSE risk will be flagged on the Children and Families Service case management system. As part of the step up / step down procedures and case closure process, the child or young person will be assessed and if they are no longer at risk of CSE, the CSE risk flag will be removed from the system/s

Useful Numbers	
NYCC Multi Agency Screening Team	01609 780780 Children&families@northyorks.gov.uk
Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours)	01609 780780
North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership	01609 535187 www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk
Police Vulnerability Assessment Team	intelligenceunit@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk 01609 643162
North Yorkshire Police	Emergency 999, Non-Emergency 101
Sexual Assault Referral Centre	01904 669339
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	0808 800 5000
ChildLine	0800 1111
Missing People Helpline	0808 800 7070
Rape and Abuse Line	0808 800 0123 (answered by women every evening)
NHS Direct Health Advice	91
Supporting Victims	01904 669 276 help@supportingvictims.org
Domestic Abuse Support	03000 90 90
Drug and Alcohol Advisory Services (FRANK)	0800 776600
Useful Websites	
Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP)	www.ceop.police.uk
National Working Group (NWG)	http://www.nwgnetwork.org
National Referral Mechanism	http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/national-referral-mechanism https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms
Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation (PACE)	http://www.paceuk.info

Glossary of Terms

Term	Meaning
CIN	Child in Need
S47	Section 47 of the 'Children Act 1989' (indicative of concerns about significant harm)
MAST	Multi Agency Screening Team
MACE	Multi Agency Child Exploitation
CS	Contextual Safeguarding
CP	Child Protection
Disruption	Tactics used to divert or stop perpetrators exploiting young people where there is little or no evidence to prosecute
Gang	Organised groups with an element of status, membership and criminality or 2 or more young people involved in delinquent peer groups.
Hot spot	Specific areas, streets or houses used to target young people
Information Sharing Form	Template for sharing information about risks to CYP which will inform multi-agency responses and intelligence gathering / Police Problem Profiling
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
NYSCP	North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
Perpetrator	Any person who poses a risk or commits crimes against a young person
Risk Indicator	Common or known signs of child sexual exploitation
Sexting	Sharing sexualised photos and language/photographs
Soliciting	Legal term for exchanging and selling sexual favours (prostitution)
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TAF	Team around the Family
Trafficking	The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs

