Online Sexually Coerced Extortion

Phoebe Bond

(She/Her)

North Prevention

Phoebe.bond@childrenssociety.org.uk

07756267906

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Housekeeping

▪ Please **close** all other applications while attending this event and give as much of your attention as you can.

▪ Your participation is important. Please engage with the **interactive elements** of this session.

▪ Look after yourself, **seek support** if needed. If you need to step out for a bit 'leave' the event and rejoin when you are ready.

▪ Please **do not share any confidential information** relating to any specific children or vulnerable adults during this session

▪ Please complete our **feedback form** at the end to receive slides and resources

The Children's Society: Prevention Programme

What — National programme commissioned by the Home Office

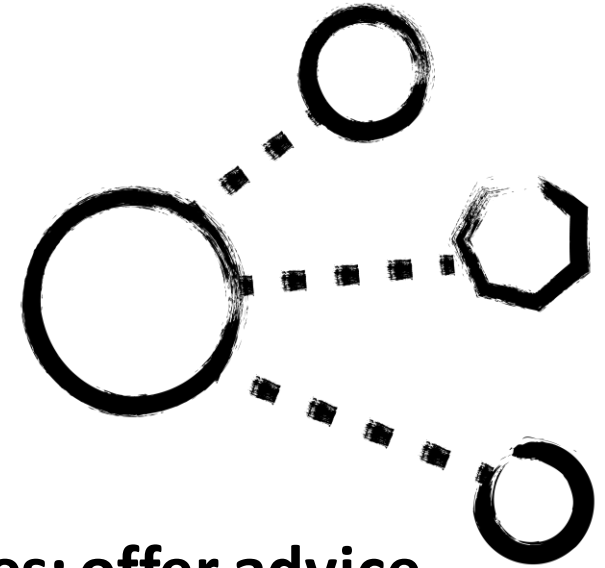**Where** — England & Wales split into 8 geographical regions

Who — Across sectors & businesses

How — Facilitate and convene; support multi-agency initiatives; offer advice and consultation; provide training and resources

Why — To prevent and improve responses to child exploitation and abuse

What is your role?

How confident do you feel about your knowledge of exploitation?
(0 not at all, 5, very)

What is exploitation?

Child Exploitation is a form of abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to force, coerce, control, manipulate a child or young person under 18 into an activity that benefits the perpetrator or facilitator. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual and criminal activity, wider forms of labour, forced begging and domestic servitude.

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Case Study: Tim

- Tim is 15 and lives at home with his parents and two sisters.

- Tim does well at school and has a small group of good friends, although he was bullied a bit when he was younger.

- He receives a follow request on Instagram. The profile who has requested to follow him has in the caption that the user is a 17 year old girl in the next town over. He looks at the pictures on the profile with his friends and they encourage him to accept and follow the girl back. He receives a message from this profile a few hours after following them back.

- For then next couple of weeks Tim is constantly messaging this account. His friends all know about it and make jokes about his 'girlfriend', but he does not tell his parents or older sisters as he thinks they would not understand him meeting someone online. Tim tells his friends this girl has been sending him 'nudes'.

- Tim tells his parents he doesn't feel well and needs to stay off school. This goes on for several days.

- Later that week, one of Tim's sisters logs into her bank account to discover £250 has been paid via an online link. She calls her bank who tell her the payment was made the first day Tim was off school. She confronts Tim that evening. Tim denies using her card but is very visibly distressed by the whole conversation and eventually runs out of the house without taking his phone.

What do we think is happening in this situation?

What could be done to support Tim?

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Case Study: Tina

- Tina is 14 and lives with her mum. She loves going out with her friends to the local shopping centre at weekends.

- Tina's friends know she has a new boyfriend who she met on snapchat, Mum also knows too, but doesn't take it seriously since she knows Tina has not met him in real life.

- Tina stops spending time with her friends on weekends and is spending more and more time on her phone.

Would you react any differently to Tina's situation than you would to Tim's?

The Grooming Process

Target

- Observing children

- Finding out their vulnerabilities, needs and wants

- Gaining and developing trust

- Manipulating children to recruit them

- Glamorising their lifestyle

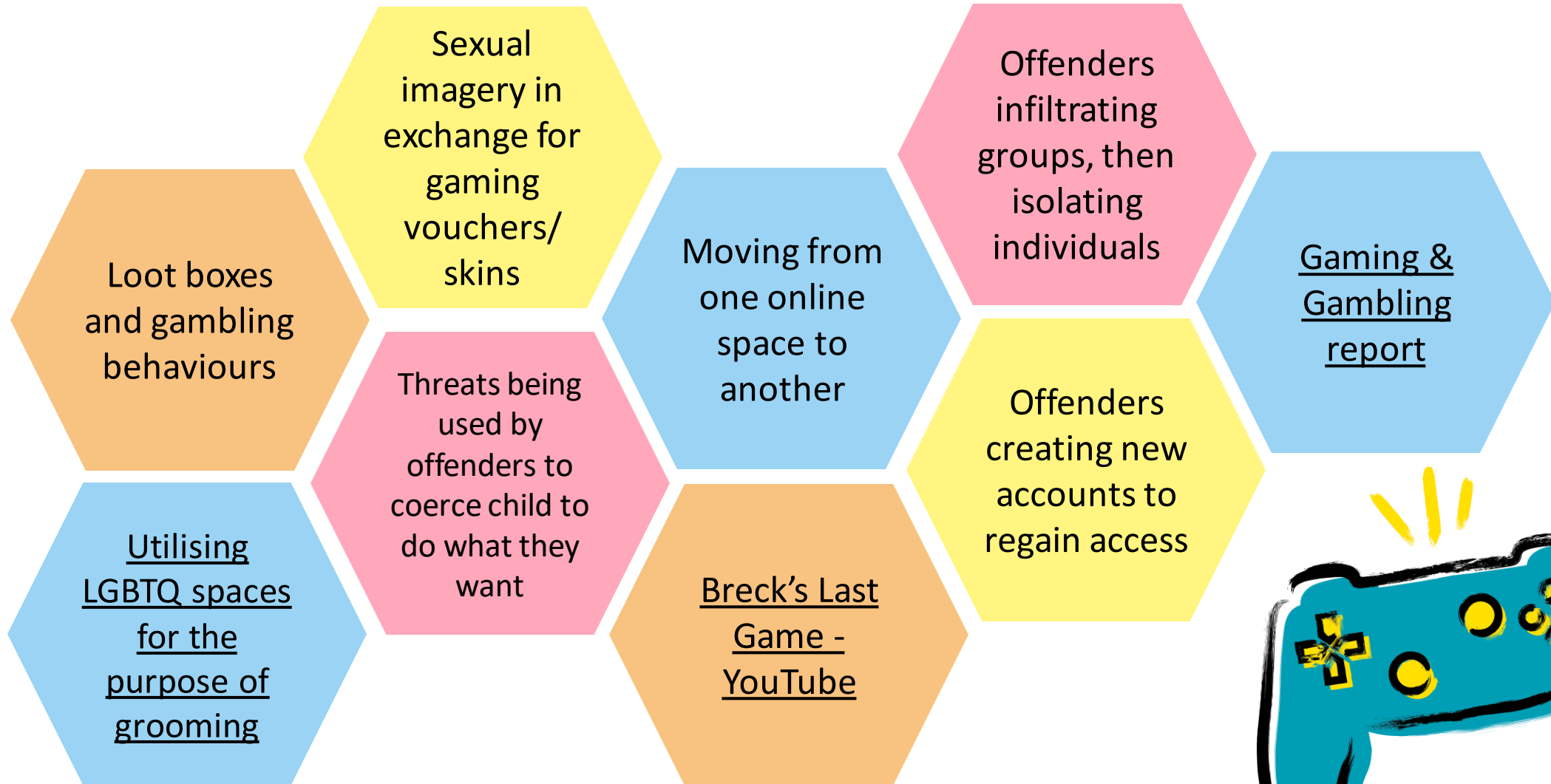- Sharing information with others in the group

Test

- Test out children's loyalty

- Offer them protection

- Give a sense of belonging

- Might create dependency

- Introduce them to more established members

- Ask for favours

- Ask to recruit others

Trap

- Experiences of physical, sexual and psychological violence

- Trafficking

- Humiliation and control

- Reinforced dependency

- Extortion

- Debt Bondage

- Isolation from family, friends and society

Grooming in an Online Context:

Loot boxes and gambling behaviours

Sexual imagery in exchange for gaming vouchers/ skins

Moving from one online space to another

Offenders infiltrating groups, then isolating individuals

Gaming & Gambling report

Threats being used by offenders to coerce child to do what they want

Offenders creating new accounts to regain access

Utilising LGBTQ spaces for the purpose of grooming

Breck's Last Game - YouTube

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Net Gains? Young people's
digital lives and well-being

A research review and new findings
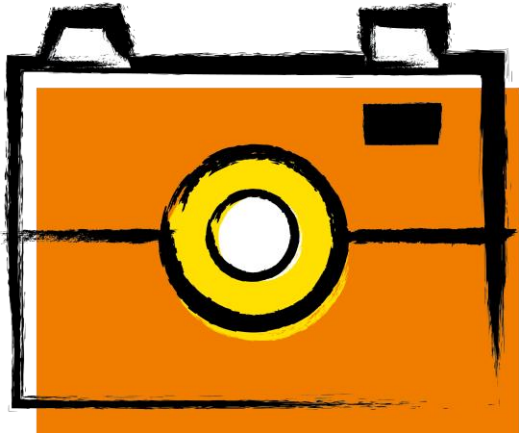
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Net Gains? Young People's Digital Lives and Well-Being

In **2022** TCS's Net Gains report was published. This research examines the health and wellbeing benefits and risks of young people being online.

Today's session will focus specifically around CSAE, but the review itself also includes:

- Young People's Use of the Internet

  - Digital Exclusion

  - 'Screen Time'

  - Cyber-Bullying

- Parent's Perceptions and Interventions

  - Young people's perceptions

  - Risks in gaming communities

Online Sexual Relationships and intimate image sharing

1 in 4 under 18s have sent imagery of a sexual nature

1 in 7 under 18s have received imagery of a sexual nature

1 in 12 under 18s have had their intimate images non-consensually shared beyond the intended recipient

Boys are most likely to send explicit images

LGBTQIA+ young people more likely to explore sexuality online

Majority of young people aged 11-17 have seen online porn

Girls are less likely to trust boys with their images

Only 3% of young people respond to online requests for intimate images. Mainly, those who did share images were older teenage boys

Young people were more concerned about their families seeing naked picture of them than about their peers

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Online Sexually Coerced Extortion

Children are groomed to send a perpetrator a sexual image or video and threats are then made to the young person regarding what the perpetrator will do with this content, unless they are paid.

Reframing the term 'sextortion' to 'sexually coerced extortion'

This type of exploitation is often referred to as 'sextortion', but it is important to emphasise the role coercion plays in this type of exploitation and to remind professionals that this is a form of child sexual abuse.

Children cannot consent to their own abuse and should never be held responsible for this or any other model of exploitation. Evidence so far suggests that not all these crimes are motivated by sexual gratification, but rather that the **financial** aspect may play a key role.

This is not highlighted if 'sextortion' is used.

North Yorkshire Context

- More girls were being identified as victims

- Perpetrators were grooming girls to send images, then were using these images to further sexually exploit the girls and control and coerce them

- 'Networks' or 'pools' of victims were being created

- In most cases, these girls were not being taken seriously as victims of receiving longer term support

Have you experience of these types of cases?

Which gender or genders are you seeing being more impacted?
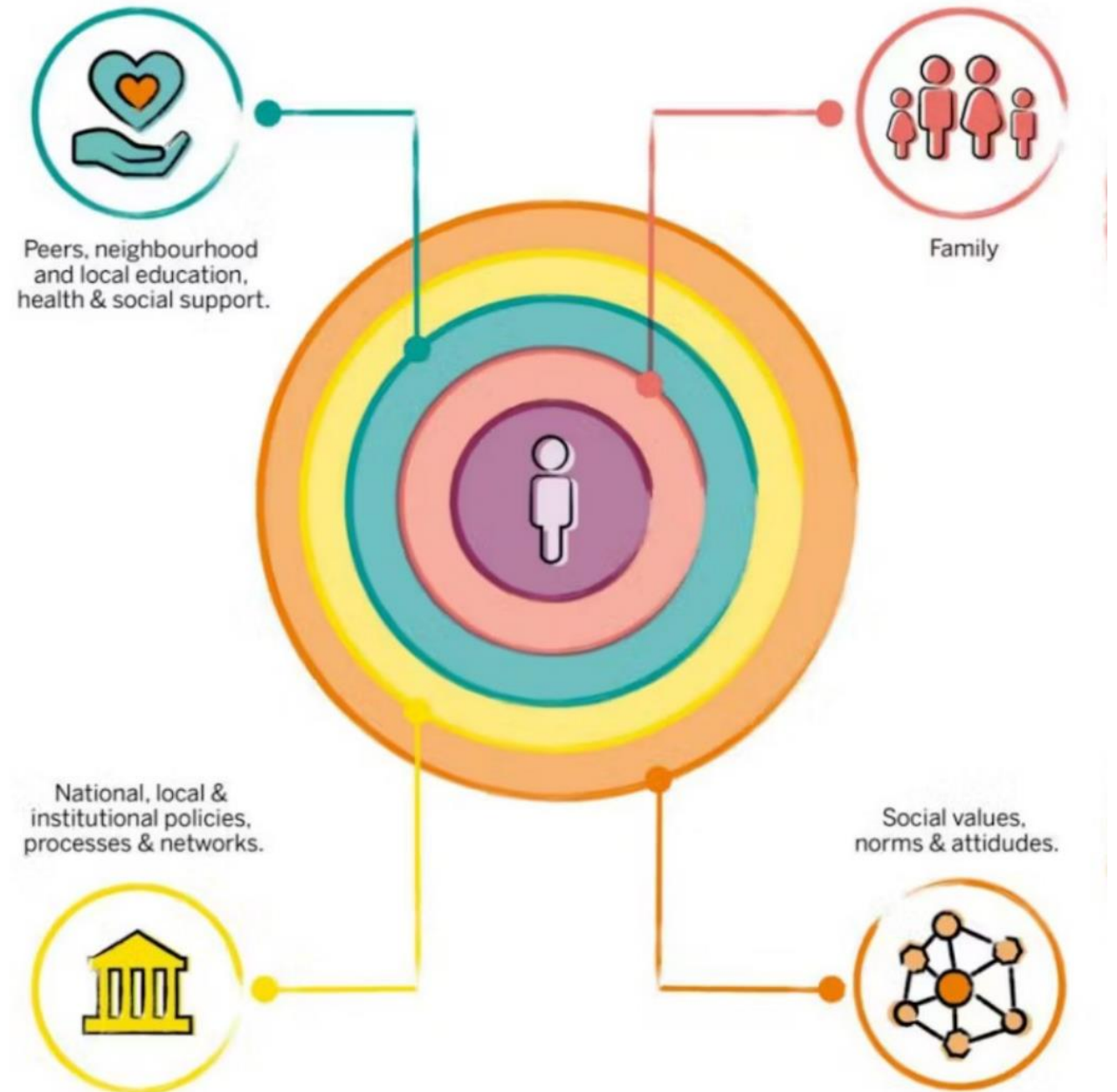
How was the child targeted and groomed? What was the response?

- Schools made the initial referral
- Targeted via mutual friends
- Specific social media sites
- Professionals and schools not confident
- Child controlled and threatened
- Victim blaming

Taking a Systems Change Approach

- Professionals awareness about the issue

- Professionals ability to handle disclosures and clarity around reporting

- End of victim blaming

- Improvements to data collection – flagging similar offences to identify emerging trends

- Recognition of the financial aspect as a form of harm in and of itself

- Education for children and young people

- The Law

Peers, neighbourhood and local education, health & social support.

Family

National, local & institutional policies, processes & networks.

Social values, norms & attidudes.

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What can you do?

- Look out for **indicators**
- **Build trust** with the child
- Remain **judgement free**
- Know how to **report** you concerns
- **Be aware** of debt bondage
- Establish if other children are at **risk**
- Share **intelligence**
- Research available **support** locally
- Talk to **all young people** about their experiences online

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What still needs to change?

- Professionals awareness about the issue

- Professionals ability to handle disclosures and clarity around reporting

- End of victim blaming

- Improvements to data collection – flagging similar offences to identify emerging trends

- Recognition of the financial aspect as a form of harm in and of itself

- Education for children and young people
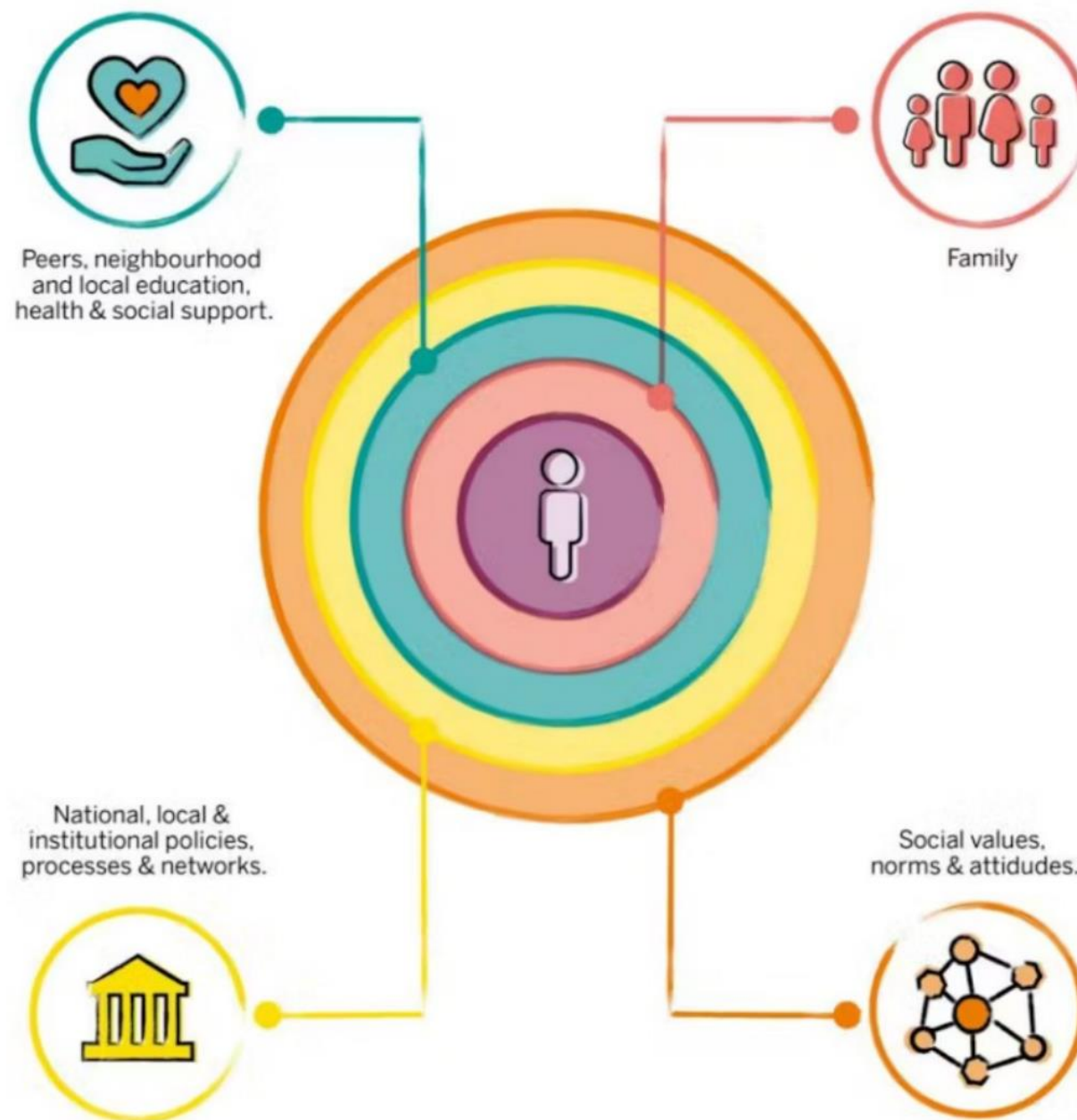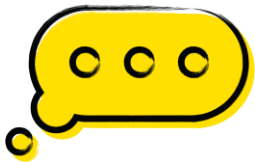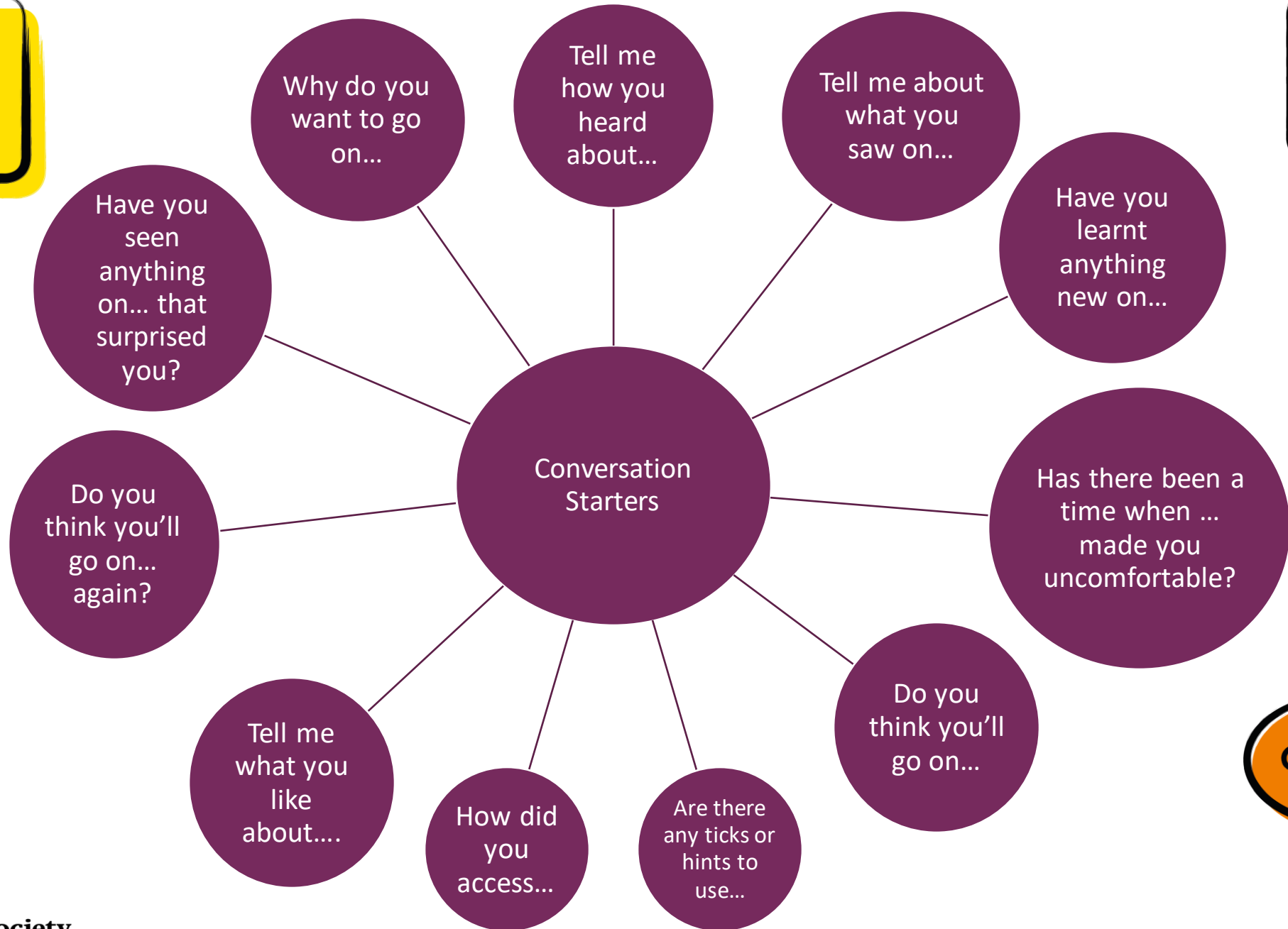
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Tackling Child Exploitation
Multi-agency Practice Principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm

Approach parents and carers as partners wherever possible

"I am included in decisions about involving my parents and carers. Supporting my parents and / or carers to understand what has happened to me can help improve family relationships and the support I receive."

Find out more

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Parents against child exploitation

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Responses to child exploitation and extra-familial harm must...

- Put children and young people first
- Recognise and challenge inequalities, exclusion and discrimination
- Respect the voice, experience and expertise of children and young people
- Be strengths and relationship-based
- Recognise and respond to trauma
- Be curious, evidence-informed and knowledgeable
- Approach parents and carers as partners, wherever possible
- Create safer spaces and places for children and young people
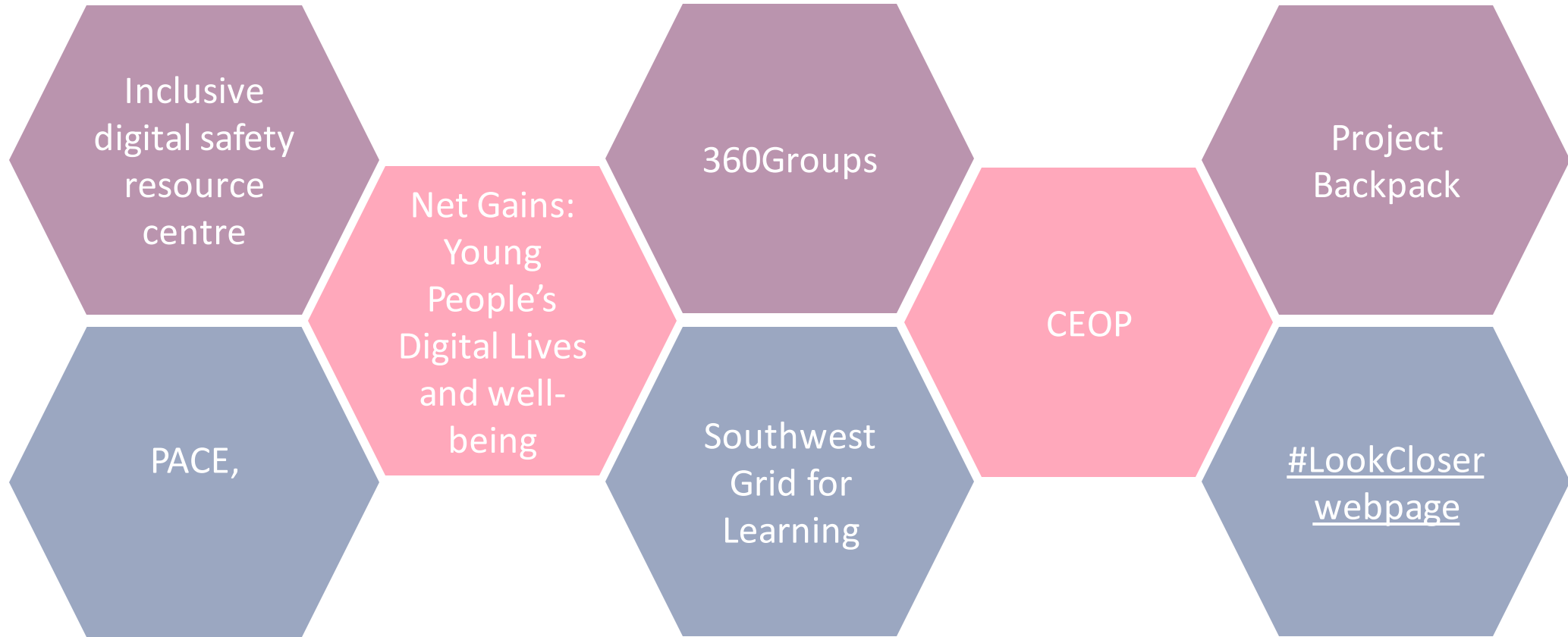
The Practice Principles

What do parents and carers want professionals to hear?

A child who has been coerced into sharing indecent images of themselves to a perpetrator is a victim. A young person should always be awarded their victimhood and should never be criminalized or blamed for their exploitation.
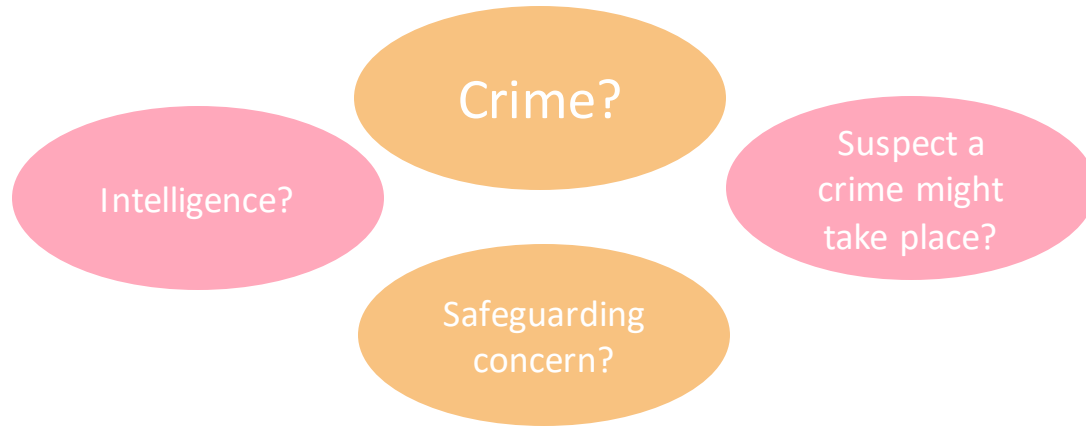
Finding the perpetrator is important, but so is supporting the victim. Ensuring wrap around support for the victim and their family, during an investigation, is imperative.

Learning that your child has been a victim of online exploitation is hard. Professionals should ensure that the parent/carer has the support they need to navigate this new chapter of parenting.

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Parents against child exploitation

Resources and Online Safety

Inclusive digital safety resource centre

Net Gains: Young People's Digital Lives and well-being

360Groups

CEOP

Project Backpack

PACE,

Southwest Grid for Learning

#LookCloser webpage

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Reporting

Crime?

Intelligence?

Suspect a crime might take place?

Safeguarding concern?

Call 999 in an emergency and always follow your safeguarding policy.

Call the police to report exploitation or abuse

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Report Harmful Content: Here

'Report Remove' nude images: NSPCC/IWF

Child Exploitation & Online Protection (NCA): CEOP

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support: 0344 225 0623 click here

Professionals Online Safety Hotline: 0344 381 4772 click here

Hate Crime: True Vision click here

Online Sexual Abuse, report to the Internet Watch Foundation: IWF

Links with radicalization, report to Action Counter Terrorism: ACT

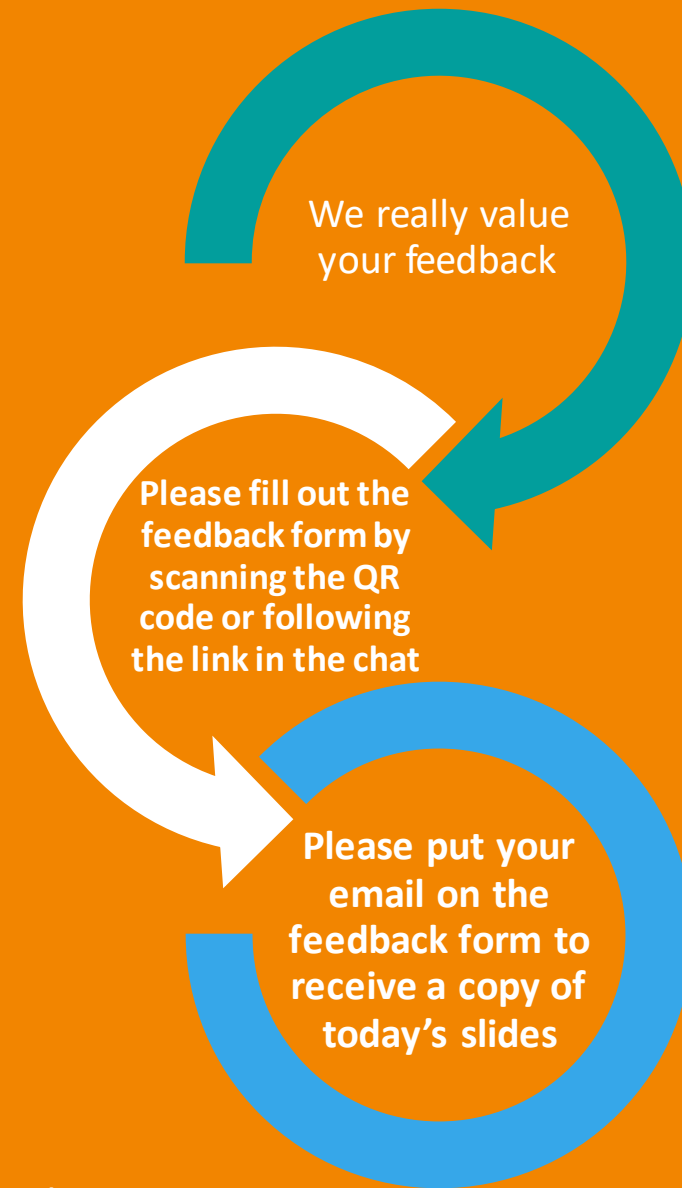# What action are you going to take as a result of the session today?

Thank you for joining us today

We really value your feedback

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