

Chapter One: What is CSE and What You Need to Know?

DEFINITION OF CSE

Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board defines CSE as:

“The sexual exploitation of children and young people is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability”

In 2008 the NWG and the Children’s Society elicited young people’s own definition as follows (NWG-Network, 2008):

“Someone taking advantage of you sexually, for their own benefit. Through threats, bribes, violence, humiliation, or by telling you that they love you, they will have the power to get you to do sexual things for their own, or other people’s benefit or enjoyment (including touching or kissing private parts, sex, taking sexual photos.)”

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power and control over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

THE GROOMING/CSE PROCESS

What is grooming? The NSPCC defines it as follows (NSPCC, *What is grooming*, 2014):

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional.

Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age.

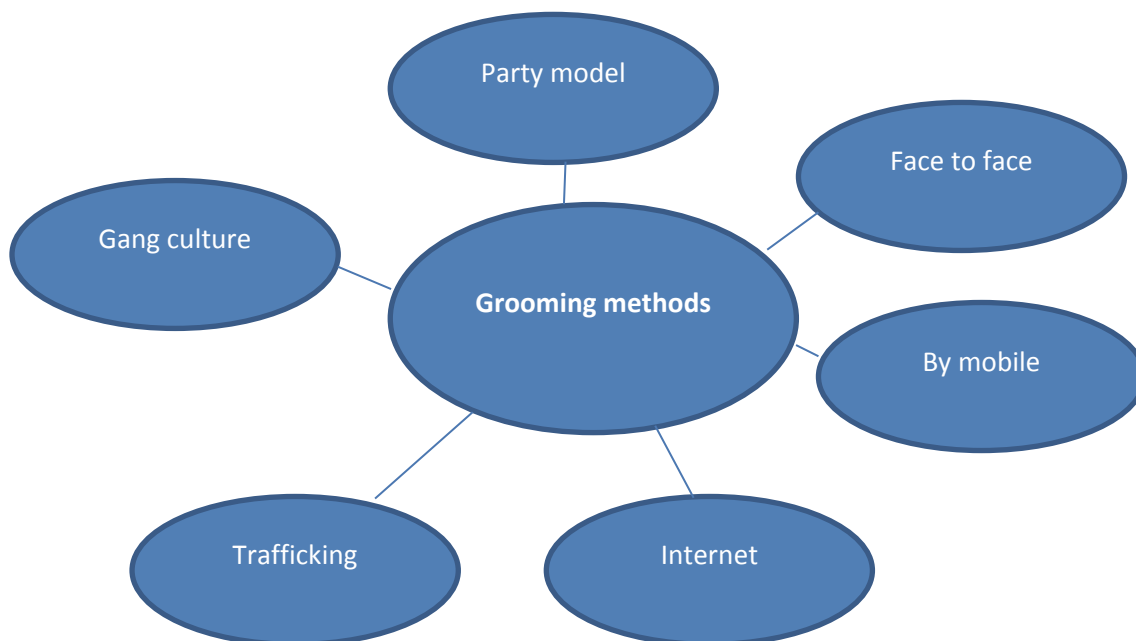
Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.

The grooming process within CSE involves recruiting, controlling and then exploiting the young person as follows:

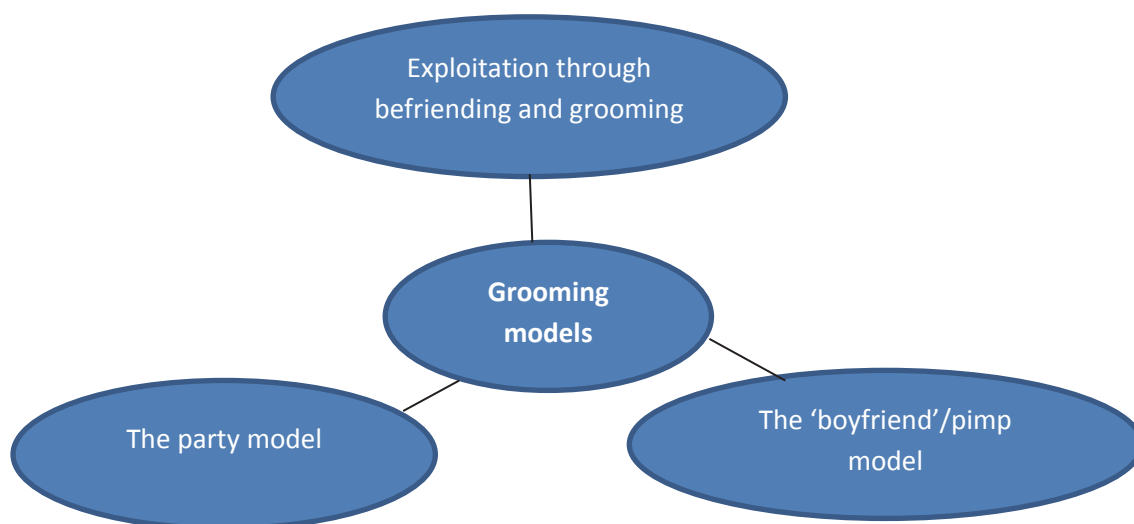
- The vulnerable young person is **targeted**,
- There is a period of **befriending** and **building trust**
- The groomer makes the young person feel **special** and **understood**.
- The groomer **enters into a relationship** with the exploited child,
- The groomer then **builds dependency** while **isolating** the young person from their family/carers/school/peers.
- The result is that the groomer has **gained control** of the young person, by **manipulation, coercion, threats and intimidation**.

In some cases there is no grooming phase with the victim being moved straight into the exploitation phase due to the location or circumstances the young person finds themselves in.

There are several **grooming methods**:



There are several **grooming models**:



EXPLOITATION THROUGH BEFRIENDING AND GROOMING

Children are befriended directly by the perpetrator (in person or online) or through other children and young people. This process may begin with a young person being targeted and befriended by a boy or girl, usually known to them as an equal, i.e. a classmate, a friend of a sibling, or a neighbour. This introductory young person later introduces the targeted young person to either one or more older men, whom s/he may describe as an older sibling or cousin. The older men offer the targeted young person attention in the form of gifts, flashy cars, cigarettes, alcohol and drugs. To the targeted young person, it is new and exciting. The older men treat the young person as an adult and deliberately portray her/his parents as unreasonable and overly-strict, should they seek to intervene.

THE 'BOYFRIEND'/PIMP MODEL Perpetrators target children posing as 'boyfriends', showering the child with attention and gifts to cause infatuation. They initiate a sexual relationship with the child, which the child is expected to return as 'proof' of her/his love or as a way of returning the initial attention and gifts. The child is effectively told that they owe the perpetrators money for cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, car rides etc. and that sexual activities are one way of paying it back.

THE 'PARTY' MODEL

Parties are organised by groups of men to lure young people. Young people are offered drinks, drugs and car rides often for free. They are introduced to an exciting environment and a culture where sexual promiscuity and violence is normalised. Parties are held at various locations and children are persuaded (sometimes financially) to bring their peers along. Children are also encouraged to associate with others via Facebook, Snapchat, etc. The parties may be held some distance from the child's home, enabling the perpetrators to force the child to have sex in return for a lift home. Drugs and alcohol are used to suppress the children's resistance. Images may be taken of them without their clothes for purpose of future bribery.

*Grooming equates to a recruitment process. Exploitation
is the process of abuse.*

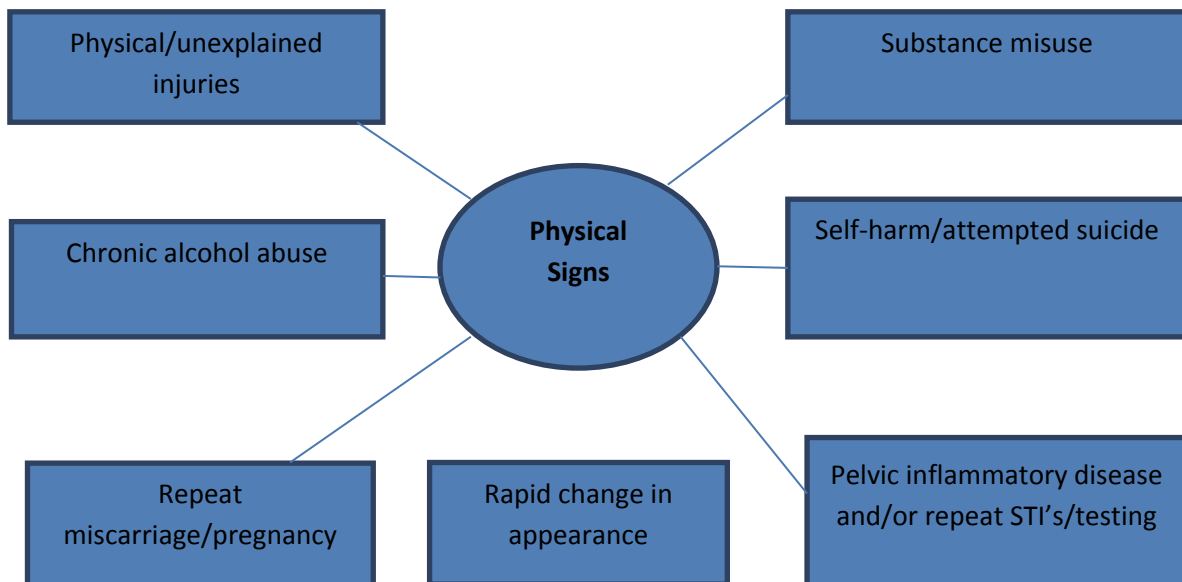
SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

It is important that workers are aware of the signs and indicators of abuse we have split this section into:

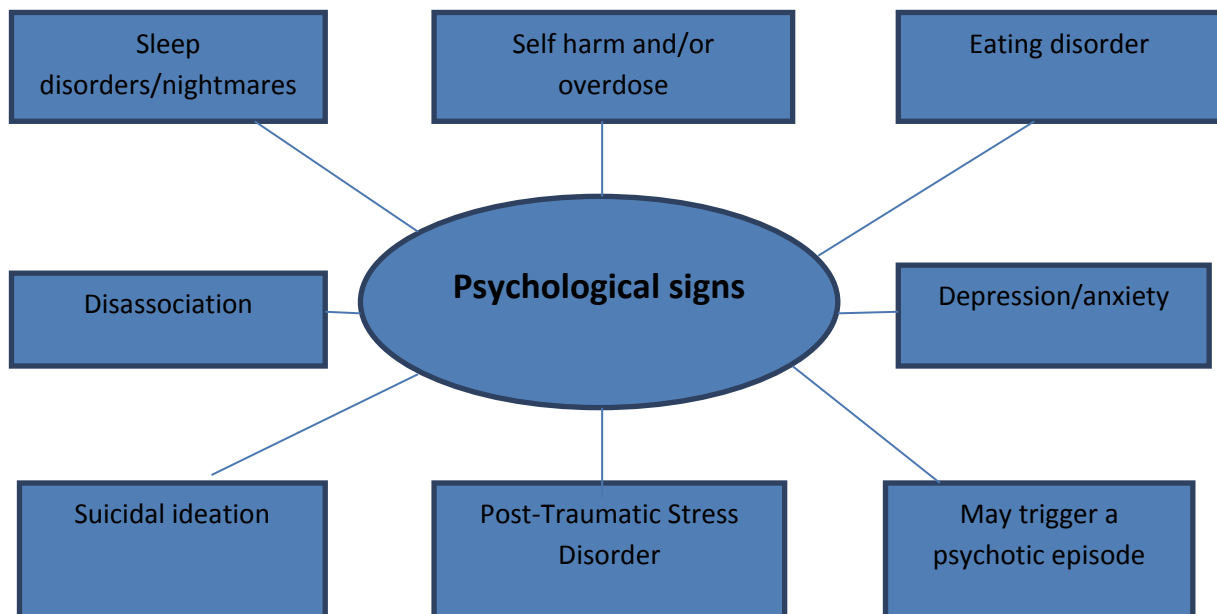
- Physical signs
- Psychological signs
- Behavioural signs

NB this is not an exhaustive list

PHYSICAL SIGNS



PSYCHOLOGICAL SIGNS



Behavioural Warning Signs

Non or low school attendance or excluded due to behaviour

Staying out overnight with no explanation

Breakdown of residential placement due to behaviour

Being groomed on the internet

Accepting money or gifts, including mobile phone credit, Drugs and alcohol

Young people regularly going from town to town

Gang member or association

Receiving money or goods as reward for recruiting peers into CSE

Offering to have sex for money or goods then running before sex takes place

Reports of being involved in CSE through being seen in hotspots

Disclosure of physical sexual assault and then refusing to make or withdrawing complaint

Regularly coming home late or going missing

Child under 16 meeting different adults and exchanging/selling sexual activity

Abduction or forced imprisonment

Being taken into pubs/clubs by adults and engaging in sexual activity

Sexualised risk taking including on internet

Association with unknown adults or other sexually exploited young people

Reduced contact with family and friends/support networks

Getting into cars with unknown adults or associating with known CSE perpetrators.

Having a much older boy/girlfriend.

Please be aware that some of the above could be seen as typical teenage behaviour but if you have concerns, do not discount them, complete the CSE assessment tool

PUSH/PULL FACTORS

There are a number of factors that can both push and pull vulnerable young people into being sexually exploited

PUSH FACTORS:

These are vulnerabilities or issues that 'push' the young person towards the perpetrator.

- Children who have been the victim of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and emotional abuse
- Children from households where domestic violence and abuse has been a feature
- Children of parents with a high level of vulnerabilities (e.g. drug and/or alcohol abuse, mental illness, learning disability, their own history of an abusive childhood)
- Family breakdown / disrupted family life / problematic parenting
- Insecure immigration status
- Children who have physical or learning impairments

Often, when we recognise the push factors, if we seek to make changes with the young person, then the risk can be reduced.

PULL FACTORS:

The grooming techniques used to gain the child's attention, admiration and affection often taps into insecurities or a desire for acceptance and status by the young person. These can be referred to as 'PULL' factors and include:

- Being liked by someone older;
- Being liked/fancied enough that a stranger asks for their mobile number;
- Meeting someone who thinks they are special on the internet;
- Receiving alcohol, drugs, money or gifts;
- Getting a buzz and the excitement of risk taking/forbidden behaviour;

- Being offered somewhere to stay where there are no rules/boundaries;
- Being taken along to adult entertainment venues, red light or gay cruising areas (public sex environments);
- Being given lifts, taken to new places, and having adventures with a casual acquaintance.

If we are asking a young person to give up feeling loved, excitement or a person who they feel listens to and understands them; we need to give them something in return.

SOMETHING IN RETURN:

- Give the young person time
- Positive affirmation
- Sense of self
- Positive community activities
- Giving them a understanding of what a healthy relationship is
- Helping them re-engage with parents, family, carers and friends

CSE MYTHS

There are a lot of myths that have built up around CSE which need challenging:

Myth	Reality and Challenge
Some people can be both victims and perpetrators	Victims may appear to be willing accomplices however this should be seen in context of the controls exerted by the perpetrator and the submission of the victim to them.
It is only perpetrated by men	Women are known to be perpetrators of this crime too. They may use different grooming methods, but are known to target boys and girls. The imbalance of power and control is still present in these cases.
Only adults exploit children and young people	Peer on peer happens too. Young people are known to invite other young people to locations, or parties where they will be introduced to adults or forced to perform sexual acts on adults. Young people are also known to use 'sexting' as a way of communicating/distributing images etc.
It only happens to girls and young women	It happens to boys and young men too. Boys are just as likely to be targeted as victims of CSE by perpetrators. However, they are less likely to disclose offences or seek support, often due to stigma, prejudice or embarrassment, or the fear they will not be believed. They may feel they are able to protect themselves but in cases of CSE, the physical stature is irrelevant due to the coercion and manipulation used.
Parents should know what is happening and should be able to stop it.	Parents are unlikely to be able to identify what is happening. They may suspect something is not right, but may not be in a position to stop it due to controls/threats/fear of the perpetrators.
A child is not a victim of CSE if they are unwilling or rejects offers of help	It is not uncommon for victims of CSE to initially reject offers of assistance and help. This is not a situation that is unique to victims of these crimes, but due to the CSE process, self-identification and engagement with the authorities and other support agencies remain low.
Crossing a border is required in order to be trafficked	Trafficking does not have to occur across borders. It can occur within a country/city/town/county/village etc.
It only happens to 'looked after' children/children in local authority care	Despite media focus, the majority of victims are not 'looked after' children. It is estimated that only 20-25% of victims are 'looked after'. Children and young people living at home can be just as vulnerable if not more vulnerable as they may not be known to services and are therefore less likely to be identified.
A child cannot be a victim of CSE if they go home and sleep every night in their own bed at night.	The perpetrators attempt to maintain a covert relationship with the victims. Much of this type of exploitation is committed during the child's free time in order to frustrate detection.
The child did not take the opportunity to escape so is not being coerced.	Remaining in an exploitative situation could indicate a willingness to remain there and/or an absence of coercion. But there are many reasons why a person may not choose to escape an exploitative situation. e.g. fear of reprisals, vulnerability, Stockholm Syndrome.

CSE AND ITS LINKS TO MISSING CHILDREN

The link between CSE and children and young people going missing is inextricable since going missing can be both a cause and a consequence of being sexually exploited.

70% of children who are sexually exploited go missing (CCO, 2012). Some young people go missing as a consequence of sexual exploitation, but others are at risk of being targeted by perpetrators who groom them for exploitation whilst they are missing.

Children running away from care are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Many have had difficult starts to their lives and experienced neglect, abuse or trauma which may make them more vulnerable to grooming behaviours.

Negative attitudes from professionals – social workers, care home staff and the police – who view children involved in sexual exploitation and children who run away as ‘troublemakers’ were also found to hamper support for these vulnerable children.

Therefore children who go missing from home are at extremely high risk of being sexually exploited “think missing, consider exploitation”

CSE AND ITS LINK TO LONG TERM MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

There are numerous studies that look at the effect of child sexual abuse on the developing psyche of children and its affects into adulthood. Research has indicated the following long term implications:

- Post traumatic symptoms
- Depression
- Substance misuse
- Feelings of helplessness
- Aggressive behaviours and conduct problems
- Eating disorders
- Risk factor for developing psychotic and schizophrenic syndromes
- Self harm activities e.g. cutting and burning
- significant risk factor for suicide attempts and for (accidental) fatal overdoses

(Cashmore, 2013)

CSE AND THE EFFECTS ON THE FAMILY

Aravinda Kosaraju (*Kosaraju, 2009*) in preparation for the CROP (now PACE) Working With Parents to End Child Sexual Exploitation Conference states:

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) has devastating consequences not just to victims, but to those around them. Some of these costs are directly obvious while others are more subtle, hidden and not readily apparent....

Sexually exploited children suffer physical, psychological, behavioural and attitudinal changes; these all present challenges to the parents and threatens the peace and stability of the family environment. To cite an example, the victim may direct emotional, verbal and even physical aggression against parents, siblings or pets resulting in chaos within the family home. The child's estrangement from the family achieved by the perpetrator as a result of calculated grooming leads to strained relationships, broken families, further amplifying social costs. Families are often compelled to take extraordinary measures in their attempt to care for the frontline victim: some uproot the family, moving to another city or even country to get away from the cause of the problem.....

Parents are sometimes much nearer to being frontline victims - through threats, assaults and other damage caused by perpetrators. Siblings are targeted in order to put pressure on the whole family. The stigma associated with sexual exploitation and its consequences on the child such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders and self-harm cause misery and isolation for parents and other family members. Problems with relationships, truancy and exclusion from school, misuse of harmful substances also add to parental distress.

It is essential that workers consider parents to be victims as well as the actual child being exploited. Some parents may contribute to not keeping their child safe, but most parents are desperate for help and understanding.

Parents can be key partners in keeping their children safe and should be treated as such by professionals

CSE AND THE LAW

The law seeks to address Child Sexual Exploitation through a number of criminal offences, the bulk of which are contained within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (UK.GOV, 2003). The key offences are outlined below with specific offences that recognise the grooming, coercion and control of children.

- [section 14](#) arranging or facilitating a child sex offence (child under 16)
- [section 15](#) meeting a child following sexual grooming (child under 16)
- [section 47](#) paying for the sexual services of a child
- [section 48](#) causing or inciting child prostitution or pornography
- [section 49](#) controlling a child prostitute or a child involved in pornography
- [section 50](#) arranging or facilitating child prostitution or pornography
- [section 57](#), [section 58](#) and [section 59](#) trafficking into, within or out of the UK for sexual exploitation.

The Act includes three broad categories of sexual offences against children.

OFFENCES AGAINST CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 13

Sexual activity with a child under the age of 13 is an offence regardless of consent or the defendant's belief of the child's age. The offences carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment or 14 years imprisonment, depending on which offence applies. The offences are:

- rape
- assault by penetration
- sexual assault
- causing or inciting a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity.

OFFENCES AGAINST CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 16

These offences apply regardless of whether the child consented to the sexual activity but, unlike the offences relating to children under 13, an offence is not committed if the defendant reasonably believed that the victim was 16 years or over. These offences carry a minimum sentence of 10 or 14 years imprisonment, depending on which offence applies. Where the offender is under 18, the maximum sentence is 5 years imprisonment. If any of these offences is committed against a child under 13, the defendant's belief of the age of the child is irrelevant.

The offences are:

- sexual activity with a child
- causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity
- engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child
- causing a child to watch a sexual act
- arranging or facilitating the commission of a child sex offence
- meeting a child following sexual grooming (under section 15, an offence is committed if an adult meets or communicates with a child on at least two previous occasions, and then meets the child, arranges to meet the child or (the adult or child) travels for such a meeting, where the adult intends to commit a sexual offence.

OFFENCES AGAINST CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18

There are a number of sexual offences in the Act that apply to all children under the age of 18. These include sexual offences where there is abuse of a position of trust (sections 16 to 24) and familial child sex offences (sections 25 to 29). When children and young people who are at risk of CSE are found at repeat locations, orders such as Child Abduction Notices can be utilised. The Act also provides for offences specifically to tackle the use of children in the sex industry, where a child is under 18 (sections 47 to 50). These offences are:

- paying for sexual services of a child
- causing or inciting child prostitution or pornography
- controlling a child prostitute or a child involved in pornography
- Arranging or facilitating child prostitution or pornography.

The grid on the following page helps to summarise the sexual offences act:

SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT (2003)

12 years 364 (and under)	13 years	14 years	15 years	16 and 17 years
<p>Any sexual activity is an offence – unable to consent to sexual activity.</p> <p>Refer on Sexual activity will be statutory rape</p>	<p>“Sexual activity can be mutually agreed, but remains an offence</p>			<p>Sexual activity is legal in a <u>consenting</u> relationship otherwise it is a criminal offence.</p> <p>It is an offence to take, distribute possess an indecent image of a child under 18</p>
	<p>Risks to be assessed and young people vulnerable to abuse / exploitation to be referred on as appropriate</p>			

(Above slide courtesy of Andy Bowly from Barnados)

OTHER LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND ORDERS

The following Orders, Warnings and Notices can be used to help disrupt the exploitation of children and young people:

- [The Magistrates’ Courts \(Risk of Sexual Harm Orders\) Rules 2004](#) – see also [sections 123 to 129](#) (UK:GOV, 2004)of the Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The [Magistrates’ Courts \(Sexual Offence Prevention Orders\) Rules 2004](#) – see also [sections 104 to 113](#) (UK:GOV, The Magistrates’ Courts (Sexual Offences Prevention Orders) Rules 2004, 2004)of the Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The [Magistrates’ Courts \(Foreign Travel Orders\) Rules 2004](#) (UK:GOV, The Magistrates’ Courts (Foreign Travel Orders) Rules 2004, 2004)– see also [sections 114 to 122](#) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Harassment Warnings (Police Information Notices) – see also [ACPO \(2009\) Practice Advice on Stalking and Harassment](#) (ACPO, 2009)
- [Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003](#) (GOV:UK, 2003)
- Child Abduction Warning Notices
- [Police protection](#) – section 46 of the Children Act 1989 (UK:GOV, Children Act 1989, 1989).
- Hotel Notices -[sections 116, 117 and 118](#) Crime and Policing Act 2014 (UK:GOV, Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, 2014)

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provide three new provisions for the investigation of child sexual exploitation offences. [Sections 116, 117 and 118](#) allow the police to issue a notice requiring the owner, operator or manager of relevant accommodation to disclose information where intelligence indicates the premises are being or have been used for the purpose of child sexual exploitation. This includes preparatory or other activities connected to child sexual exploitation.

The police, where they reasonably believe child sexual exploitation is taking place, can request the owner, operator or manager to provide information about their guests. This includes the name and address, and other relevant information, e.g. age. The information supplied can be used as intelligence to support the investigation of any criminal offences which may have been or are being committed on the premises, thereby helping to identify paedophile rings and other organised groups involved in child sexual exploitation.

A police officer of at least the rank of inspector may serve a Section 116 notice on an owner, operator or manager requiring them to provide information. The notice specifies the information that should be provided, how frequently, and over what period of time. The specified period will be no more than six months, although a subsequent notice may be served on the expiry of that period. The officer must reasonably believe that the hotel has been or will be used for the purposes of child sexual exploitation, or conduct that is preparatory to, or otherwise connected with, child sexual exploitation.

The hotel operator commits a Section 118 criminal offence if they fail to comply with the notice without a reasonable excuse. It is also an offence to provide information without taking reasonable steps to verify it, or knowing it to be incorrect. They will not commit an offence if there were no reasonable steps they could have taken to verify the information.

Prosecution of these offences will be heard in the magistrates' court, with a maximum penalty on conviction of a level 4 fine (currently £2,500). A person served with a notice has a right of appeal to the magistrates' court under Section 117 of the Act.

CSE BOYS AND YOUNG MEN

In their seminal research Barnados (*Barnado's, Hidden in Plain Sight, 2014*) found the following:

- Of the 9,042 Barnardo's records for child sexual exploitation (CSE) that were analysed, 33% of service users were male; however, this masks a significant variation in the figures for individual services (from 5% to 57%).
- Male service users were 2.6 times more likely to have a recorded disability than female service users (35% compared with 13%).
- 48% of male service users and 28% of female service users had a criminal record.
- The age of referral to Barnardo's services was slightly lower for boys than for girls.
- While there were differences between males and females, the research strands also identified similarities: experiences of running away and homelessness, being in care and experiences of non-CSE-related violence.
- Sexual orientation of Barnardo's service users is not currently routinely recorded. However, professionals noted that while boys of any sexual orientation are at risk of sexual exploitation, there may be specific risks and impacts that relate to gay, bisexual and trans (GBT) young men.
- The research identified some prominent routes by which males become victims of sexual exploitation, based on different types of relationship: trusted friend, exploitation of vulnerable GBT and curious men, female perpetrators and commercial exploitation.
- The research indicates that boys are less likely to be identified as victims of exploitation, although by the time they are, they may present with particularly high risks and vulnerabilities compared with girls.
- In line with gender stereotypes and wider societal perceptions, professionals' attitudes towards boys and young men can be less protective than towards girls. Professionals working with sexually exploited boys and young men found that they are more likely to express their anger and trauma externally and be labelled as 'aggressive', 'violent', or an 'offender', whereas girls are more likely to internalise their distress.
- There are a number of barriers to disclosure specific to boys and young men: discriminatory social attitudes and stereotypes; expectations of 'masculine' behaviour, gender differences in educational initiatives and gender differences in emotional responses.
- Male service users were more likely to be referred by criminal justice agencies and less likely to be referred by social services and education. Very few males or females were referred by health services.

- 80% of male service users were referred to Barnardo's services due to going missing.
- Professionals had different views on what type of service provision males should receive, based on their own professional experience.

So the key message here is boys can be victims of CSE, and those boys with learning disability, disability and/or GBT are more vulnerable still

CSE AND ON-LINE GROOMING

Groomers use:

- social media sites
- webcams
- instant messaging apps including teen dating apps
- online gaming platforms to connect with a young person or child.

Through the above, the perpetrators spend time learning about a young person's interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship. It's easy for groomers to hide their identity online and can be both male and female - they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become 'friends' with children they are targeting.

Groomers could have numerous online identities and they groom over the internet as they feel invisible. Like grooming in the real world, online grooming can take minutes, hours, days, weeks or years.

Also, if a young person displays on the internet that they have issues at home, this is a key marker for online groomers. Remember people that use the internet to groom are not always older men or women, they can be teenagers or just slightly older than the victim/s. Finally, they will often use a scatter gun approach and try and contact lots of victims via some of the platforms highlighted above.

Warning signs for online grooming

GIFTS	PERSON
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile phones • Top ups • Underwear • Pornography • Money • Perfume • Travel tickets • iTunes vouchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental reports of change in behaviour, friendships or actions and requests for support. • Secretive • Prolonged time on the internet • Mood swings • Withdrawn

When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded, or forced, to:

- *Send or post sexually explicit images of themselves*
- *Take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone*
- *Have sexual conversations by text or online.*

Abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity.

Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped.

NSPCC

If you are concerned about anything suspicious on line you can report it to Northamptonshire Police ringing 101.