

# LOOK CLOSER



**Exploited children and young people don't always look vulnerable and may not act like victims.**



If something doesn't feel right, it might not be.



**Public spaces like bus and train stations, fast food outlets, hotels and roadside services can be where young victims of child exploitation are most visible.**

If we all learn to spot the possible signs of a young person being exploited, we can all help to keep them safe and stop this abuse from happening.

Please take a few minutes to learn a little about child exploitation and what to do if you are concerned about a young person or group of young people you see.

**#LOOKCLOSER** Don't wait. Report it.

**Young people who have been exploited:**

- \* Don't always look vulnerable
- \* Don't always act like victims
- \* May not understand they are being exploited
- \* May have a distrust of police/adults in authority
- \* Can feel scared about what might happen to them next
- \* Need to feel safe and heard, so that they feel comfortable talking about what might be happening to them

**Young people can be exploited anywhere, but these locations are particularly common sites where you may be able to spot the signs:**

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** Trains, trams, coaches and buses are all methods of transport used by organised crime groups to traffic children for exploitation.



**PETROL/SERVICE STATIONS:** Children and young people being trafficked for exploitation may often stop at service and petrol stations to use the bathroom or get food.

**FAST-FOOD OUTLETS & SHOPPING CENTRES:** These provide familiar environments, affordable food and access to wifi. Some outlets are open 24 hours a day.

**HOTELS:** Perpetrators often use hotel rooms to groom and exploit children and young people for sexual abuse or criminality. Hotels can be used as a base by organised crime groups to store, prepare and distribute drugs.

**TAXIS & RIDE SHARES:** Taxis and private ride share apps can be used to transport exploited children and young people.



**SCHOOLS, COLLEGES & UNI:** Young people who are exploited may struggle to maintain their education. Changes in their behaviour, appearance and attendance can be signs that something is not right.

If something is worrying you about a young person's behaviour or appearance and it is safe to do so, ask them if they are ok – it could make a difference.

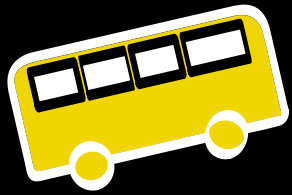
**Some ways to start a conversation:**

'You look lost. Do you need some help?'

'Hi. Are you alright? Where are you off to today? Where have you travelled from today?'

'Would you like some help with...?'

'I hope you don't mind me saying, but you seem a little upset? Can I help?'



## #LOOKCLOSER for signs of exploitation

Is a child or young person:

- \* Travelling alone, particularly in school hours, late at night or frequently?
- \* Looking lost or in unfamiliar surroundings?
- \* Anxious, frightened, angry or displaying other behaviours that make you worried about them?
- \* In possession of more than one phone?
- \* Carrying lots of cash?
- \* Potentially under the influence of drugs or alcohol?
- \* Being instructed or controlled by another individual?
- \* Accompanied by individuals who are older than them?
- \* Spending time in adult spaces such as hotel bars?

Help us protect children and young people from all forms of exploitation. **Don't wait. Report it:**

If you are concerned about a child and think it's an emergency, dial 999 or if it's not an emergency call 101.

If you are on a train text British Transport Police on 61016.

Otherwise contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

[childrenssociety.org.uk/lookcloser](https://childrenssociety.org.uk/lookcloser)

