

Vulnerable Adolescent Panel for Children at Risk of Exploitation (VAP:CRE)



Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and loving home Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support
Strong multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working is vital to identifying and responding to the needs of children and families.

Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023

This guide will explain the role of the Vulnerable Adolescent Panel in Northamptonshire and how practitioners can access its help and support in protecting children they are working with who are at low or emerging risk of exploitation.

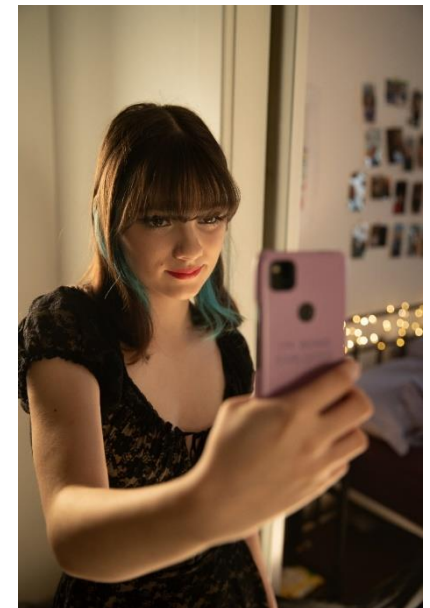
What is the Vulnerable Adolescent Panel for Children at Risk of Exploitation (VAP:CRE)?

The Vulnerable Adolescent Panel is a service that is available to professionals who are supporting young people or who are aware of young people who are at low or emerging risk of child exploitation and extra familial harm. The panel aims to ensure that, as a multi-agency partnership, we effectively share information to support young people who have low or emerging exploitation concerns, which have been identified via the CERAF tool, with a view to utilising a contextual safeguarding approach to make our young people and communities safer.

VAP is a multi-agency information sharing and consultative process. The panel does not hold accountability for the cases it hears, this remains with the lead professional and/or team working directly with the young person.

To reduce risk and vulnerabilities in children and young people who may be subject to various forms of exploitation, the VAP can offer several outcomes for professionals and teams working with young people at risk of exploitation, these may include:

- Providing expert advice and guidance to professionals.
- Providing a forum for multi-agency information sharing.
- Ensuring that all agencies have oversight of young people who are at low or emerging risk of being exploited and ensure that those risks are fully understood and supported.
- Utilising panel knowledge and experience to identify actions to reduce risk of exploitation.
- To understand and support the data set surrounding low or emerging risk.
- To drive a contextual safeguarding response to low and emerging exploitation.



Children that come to notice must be treated as children, whatever the circumstances they find themselves in.

How to refer a case to VAP and the Panel Process

The below details the important information you need to know about the processes used within VAP and how you can refer a case to be heard at the panel.

- The panel is held fortnightly and is co-chaired by a range of different professionals from across the partnership. This helps to ensure that at every panel we have a wide range of multi-agency professionals on hand to offer you the expert advice and guidance you may need for the case you are referring.
- A referral to VAP can come from any professional / agency in the partnership working with a young person who you have identified as at low or emerging risk of exploitation. This can include but is not limited to schools, colleges, voluntary sector organisations, family support workers etc. The only exception to this is where the child is already known to Children's Services and has an allocated Social Worker, the referral must come from the Social Worker.
- All referrals to VAP must be made using the Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (CERAF). This can be found on the NSCP website [here](#). Here you not only find the CERAF tool, but you will also find guidance notes, process flowcharts, local services guide, and an explanatory video to completing the CERAF.

[Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework \(CERAF\) - Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board \(northamptonshirescb.org.uk\)](#)

- The VAP will hear all cases that receive a score or professional judgement of 'low' as a result of completing a CERAF. Cases with a medium or high outcome should follow the process detailed within the CERAF.
- Cases should be referred into VAP by emailing the completed CERAF to vappanel@nctrust.co.uk you will then be allocated a date and time to attend VAP to discuss your case. Each case will be allocated a 20-minute time slot to enable the referrer to present the case and for the panel to discuss the case.
- Before being discussed at VAP all referrals should be discussed with the child and family to ensure their voice is included within the discussions that take place at VAP.



Useful Documents and Links

[Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework \(CERAF\) Tool](#)

[Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework \(CERAF\) Guidance](#)

[Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework \(CERAF\) Multi-Agency Flowchart](#)

[Child Exploitation Local Services Guide](#)

[Northamptonshire Child Exploitation Guide](#)

[Northamptonshire Child Exploitation Resources](#)

[Northamptonshire Child Exploitation Hub](#)

[I'm Being Exploited Film and Campaign Material](#)

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