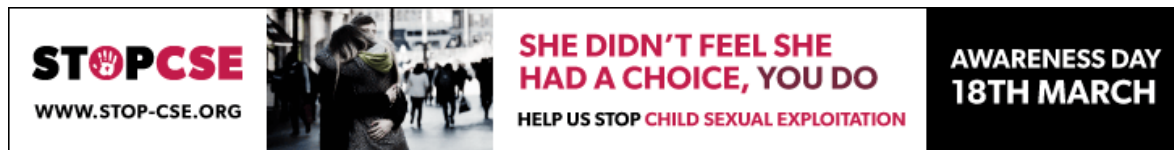


Spotlight on Child Exploitation

March 2021



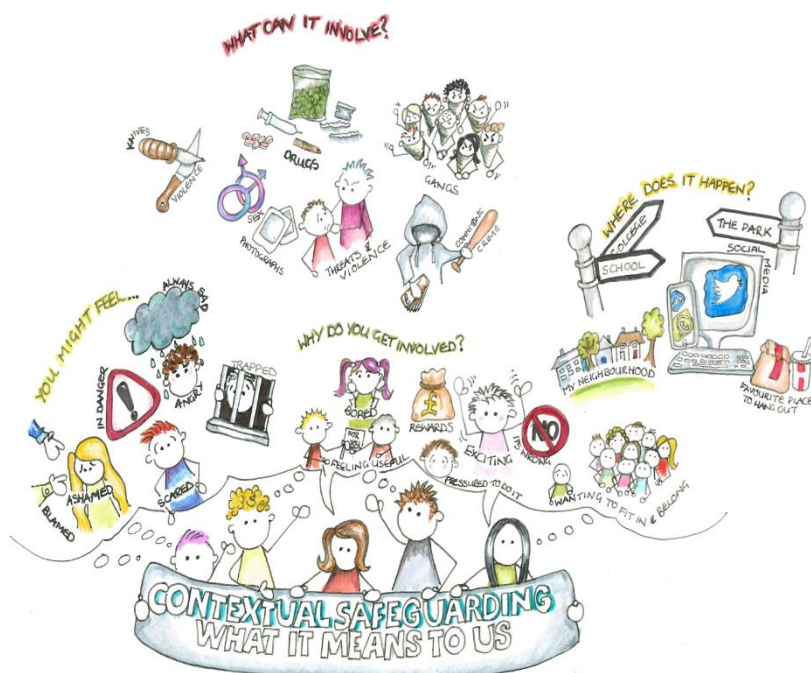
Cheshire East takes a strong approach to all forms of child exploitation where the exploitation comes from outside the home in whatever its form; this includes child sexual exploitation (a form of sexual abuse that involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18 into sexual activity), missing children, gangs, county lines, radicalisation, modern slavery and all forms of criminal exploitation.

Young People's definition: 'Trapped and you haven't got a clue'

When young people talk about this form of harm to them, they use different words and phrases. This makes it important that those working with them and supporting their family, check out the meaning of what they are saying.

They talked about the sense of excitement that they feel and that the help and support that was offered as an alternative path for them did not always compensate for the loss of this.

They were open about the financial rewards that their activities brought them set against a belief that this was within a context where they saw no economic future for themselves. We know for many of these young people access to an education has been a significant gap.



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Cheshire East's approach to child exploitation

In Cheshire East we start from a position of prevention. Our schools are key partners in raising awareness of healthy relationships and supporting children to recognise when relationships have an uneven power balance; helping them to understand what they should expect in relationships and what is not acceptable.

Our preventative approach starts from the Early Years where children explore rights and responsibilities in relationships.

We encourage people to have an open minded approach, an attitude of **it could happen here**. Pupils in school are supported with reporting mechanisms; schools have established ways in which children can speak up and gain support either for themselves or their friends where they have concerns. We have tried to move children away from thinking it isn't their business what others do, or they don't want to get involved; we have fostered an approach of, **if you are worried for someone it is a positive thing if you take advice on how to support them**.

Child Exploitation Concerns

Cheshire East has created a multi-agency assessment toolkit to support practitioners to undertake effective assessments and to review the effectiveness of the support plans that are in place and the outcomes for the child/ren.

<https://www.cescp.org.uk/pdf/multi-agency-toolkit/ce-scp-multi-agency-toolkit-final-february-2021-002.pdf>

Using the assessments early in intervention will hopefully support positive outcomes for children, meaning onward referral may not be required.

However, should a case need referral, professionals will be expected to evidence why a threshold has been met despite appropriate intervention. The assessments included in the toolkit will provide a record of evidence for this purpose.

If evidence identifies for you that the child is at a level of risk that requires further assessment or intervention, you should seek parental consent and contact **ChECS on 0300 123 5012** for a case discussion.

Practitioners should then forward the screening tool via secure email to the ChECS mailbox - checs@cheshireeast.gov.uk.cjism.net.

The absence of consent should not prevent the contact being made where the risk for the child is significant.

Where the threat is immediate it may be appropriate to inform Cheshire Police on telephone number 101 or if necessary, through the emergency number 999.



Spotlight on Child Exploitation

National Child Exploitation Awareness Day

On Thursday 18th March 2021 National Child Exploitation Awareness Day is an opportunity to raise awareness and highlight the issues amongst staff, pupils and parents with the aim of encouraging everyone to **think, spot and speak out against abuse** and adopt a zero tolerance to adults developing inappropriate relationships with children or children exploiting and abusing their peers.

What could your school do?

In previous years schools have done a wide range of things to raise awareness amongst staff, parents and pupils; here are some ideas to inspire you:

- For young children you could spend time talking about what people's rights are in relationships and how we should treat others.
- Flood the school / college with the materials which are available: <https://www.stop-cse.org/national-child-exploitation-awareness-day/raise-awareness/> to get the conversation started.
- Deliver a CSE slot in all tutor sessions / assemblies / PSHE lessons over the course of the week.
- Discuss with pupils what exploitation means to them, what concerns them in relation to this and what do they think needs to be done.
- Take time in a staff meeting to look at the "exploitation" section of the multi-agency toolkit. This could be an opportunity for them to become familiar with it, to complete it together in regard to a specific child or to review a screening tool which is already in place to consider if interventions are working and if risk is reducing.
- Look at the "exploitation tool" with pupils as a basis for discussion- if they had concerns what would they do?
- Share materials with parents to raise their awareness. Make them aware of the following website which has information for parents where their children are involved in Exploitation <http://paceuk.info/for-parents/advice-centre/>
- Raise awareness of online exploitation
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>
<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/young-people/resources-3-11s>
<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/young-people/resources-11-19s>
- Look at Cheshire's Know and see website with pupils and staff; share the link with parents <https://knowandsee.co.uk/>



Spotlight on Child Exploitation

- Show all staff and students the following presentation which has been written by two pupils who live and are educated in Cheshire East. This presentation captures their real life personal experience of being sexually exploited. It recently gained an award at the Cheshire East Safeguarding Awards. It took a great deal of courage and emotion for them to create this; you can reward their courage by sharing it so that children and staff can learn the lessons from their experiences.

[A CE child's journey through CSE](#)

- Staff could write a personal pledge on their hand to show support for the Helping Hands campaign. They could do this and not tell pupils what it is or why it is there; they could wait until pupils ask them and could then let them know.
- Pupils and parents could be encouraged to do the same and to post them on social media with the hashtag #HelpingHands and #CEADay21 to help us raise awareness CE.



Whatever you do next week around this please let SCiES know so that we can share it with the Safeguarding Children Partnership and we can collate your activities into a newsletter so that you can inspire others with what you have done....no matter how small.

sciesteameast@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Together we will make a difference!

