

Risk and Harm Assessment



Child Exploitation, Serious Youth Violence (SYV) and Gang Affiliation Risk Tool

Guidance Notes:

Having a single way of assessing when a child is at high, medium or lower risk of Exploitation, Serious Youth Violence and / or gang affiliation will allow a better perspective on the prevalence and nature of these issues across Tower Hamlets. If used consistently it is hoped this measurement of risk tool will allow teams to measure whether the risk to a young person is increasing or decreasing and so put effective measures in place to try to manage this. **However, it is important to note that this tool is not a replacement for sound professional judgement and analysis; rather it is designed to assist and inform these processes. A lower risk score does NOT mean that no action needs to be taken as the earlier the intervention the better the chances of stopping the young person slipping further into exploitation, serious youth violence and or gang involvement or could even prevent it from occurring.**

Who completes it and when?

This is **NOT** a screening tool (Tower Hamlets have a separate screening tool for Exploitation, SYV & Gang affiliation). It is designed to measure the level of risk once the screening tool has been completed and or there are indicators that have already been identified. It should be carried out on ALL children who have been referred to Children's Social Care showing indicators of Exploitation, involvement in serious youth violence and or gang affiliation. It is recommended that it is carried out by the allocated social worker - in consultation with partners, to ensure all relevant information is shared, **and where possible in discussion with the young person themselves so their wishes, their level of understanding and their willingness to engage is considered.** When a young person is hard to engage, the person with the best relationship with them should lead the work with oversight from the social worker. Remember, exploited children are victims of abuse.

The tool should be repeated whenever incidents occur which could change the level of risk to the young person. It should also be repeated as a matter of course every 3 months. All completed versions need to be kept and NOT overwritten so that the risk to the young person can be monitored over time. This will be essential in order to measure any reduction/escalation of risk. Teams must show they have reduced the risk to an individual as part of their exit strategy. Any interventions that appear to help lower the risk to individuals can be shared with other professionals via the professional network and/or the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Panel.

How to complete it?

Scores from ten main categories plus a score for your professional judgement are added together to provide a RAG rating of risk. The first page provides a summary of the scores where you can see at a glance whether the risk to that child has increased or decreased since the last time it was conducted. Fill this page in at the end. First go through the rest of the tool with the young person (using information from all relevant agencies) to find the description that best suits the young person's current situation. For example Section 1: Episodes of Missing from Home or Care. If there have been no missing episodes then circle (1). You can record further detail, observations or intelligence in the box marked 'assessor reflections'. Write the score of (1) on the corresponding section on the front summary page.

Continue with the rest of the questions until all ten are complete. Discuss and record the wishes and feelings of the young person and record and reflect on the insight offered by partner agencies. Use all this information to help you complete the Professional Judgement section and provide an analysis of what all this tells you as a professional. Evidence shows that some children can be extra vulnerable to exploitation so professionals should be especially aware of children who are:

- **Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (i.e. parental substance misuse, mental health issues, domestic violence etc)**
- **Living in residential care**
- **Homeless or living in hostel or temporary bed and breakfast accommodation**
- **Have a history of abuse or neglect**
- **Experienced a recent bereavement or loss**
- **Low self-esteem**
- **Learning disabilities or poor mental health**
- **Gang associations or living in a gang neighbourhood**
- **Friends with other exploited young people**
- **Lacking friends from the same age group**
- **Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families**
- **Young Carer**
- **Related to others who are known to the Police for violence and / or violence & drug related offences**

Consider these vulnerabilities when analysing your perception of the risk to an individual in the Judgement section. However, it is important to note that children without pre-existing vulnerabilities can still be exploited. Provide a score from 1 - 10 (10 being a higher risk) and carry this forward to the first page summary sheet. Adding the score from the 10 categories plus the score for professional judgement should give you a total score of between 11 - 60.

Data Monitoring

This Measurement tool should assist you and your colleagues across Tower Hamlets to consistently measure and monitor the risk to an individual young person and help you to take appropriate action. Completing the Data Monitoring Tool on the back page will also help us compile data on the nature of exploitation, spot trends as they emerge and have a more reliable indication of the prevalence of exploitation in Tower Hamlets as well as an idea of the type of young people who may be most at risk. This information will be reported into the LSCB sub-group for exploitation quarterly. The Board will then monitor this data as well as any issues that may arise in using the Measurement and Data Monitoring Tools. This tool is based on the Bedfordshire toolkit.

The effectiveness of this tool will be evaluated. If you would like to give us any feedback or suggestions please contact the Exploitation Consultant - Rachel.ringham@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Young persons information

Please read guidance notes before completing. Should be completed by the social worker - in consultation with young person and partners.

ID

Name

Date of birth

Age

Address

Postcode

Contact number

Date of risk assessment

Date referred

Visit undertaken with:

Completed by

Reason for assessment (i.e. 3 month review or incident occurred to cause risk assessment or re-review)

Summary of scores from the assessment

Episodes of missing from home / care score

School / college attendance score

Misuse of drugs or alcohol score

Parent / carer - young person relationships score

Accommodation score

Ability to identify abusive / exploitive behaviour score

Engagement with appropriate services score

Sexual health score

Association with risky peers / adults score

0

Social media (internet / mobile etc) score

0

Total assessment score

0

Professional Judgement Score (0- no risk 10-significant risk):

Overall Score (Total from 10 categories plus Professional Judgement Score)

0

RAG rating

High (41 - 60)

Medium (21 - 40)

Lower (10 - 20)

Exploitation history (is this person previously known to your service or any other Exploitation team?)

When previously reviewed on _____ this young person had a risk score of _____

Since the last review, this assessment shows the risk to this young person has

Increased

Decreased

Stayed the same

This is the first risk assessment

In the following sections tick either 1, 2 , 3, 4 or 5 on each of the ten categories which best describes the current situation for the young person. The score for each section should be recorded on the front summary page and added to the score you give for professional judgment which will give an overall total.

Episodes of missing from home / care

1. No missing episodes

2. Stays out late, not missing

3. Occasionally goes missing, whether for short or prolonged episodes

4. Frequent and short missing episodes

5. Frequent and prolonged missing episodes / Regularly found out of borough / The

young person has been
arrested outside of LBTH

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- Is there a pattern to the missing episodes and times that they are missing / out late?
- Any information about where they go, who they are with or where they are found?
- Do parents / carers work with professionals and report the young person missing?
- Do parents / carers know any information about who the young person is with or where they go?
- What is their presentation when they return home? Well-kept / dirty / under the influence.
- If the child goes missing frequently is there a safety plan in place?.

School / college attendance

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>○ 1. Engaged / re-engaged in education or training, or in work or actively seeking employment</p> | <p>○ 2. Is participating in education or employment but attendance is a concern. Education could include: Is on a roll at a school or PRU / Is on a roll at a school or PRU with alternative provision in place / Is on roll at a college / Is employed with training</p> | <p>○ 3. Is on a reduced timetable, or is persistently absent from school, or sudden noticeable change in attendance, performance or behaviour at school</p> |
| <p>○ 4. Young person is excluded from school with no planned provision, or a NEET (not in education, employment or training). But where the young person is showing an interest in accessing opportunities / The young person is struggling with school work / The young person does not have anyone to support them with school work</p> | <p>○ 5. Young person is not attending school or is a NEET and shows no interest in accessing educational or training opportunities / The young person is struggling with school work / The young person does not have anyone to support them with school work</p> | |

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- How well is the young person doing in school academically and behaviourally?
- What circumstances led to the young person's reduction in attendance, reduced timetable, any suspensions or exclusions?
- How are the school / college supporting the young person's education / what previous support has been offered?
- How are the parents / carers supporting the young person's education and attendance?
- What are the young person's aspirations for their future?

- Who are their peers / any peer concerns? If so, what are the concerns and their details?

Misuse of drugs or alcohol

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ○ 1. No concerns | ○ 2. Some concerns about drugs or alcohol use (or cigarettes in younger children) | ○ 3. Uses drugs or alcohol - increasing concerns |
| ○ 4. Alcohol / drug dependency suspected | ○ 5. Young person is dependent on alcohol / drugs. Known / disclosure or appears dependent on alcohol / drugs / The young person has been arrested for a drug related offence | |

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- What type of substance do they use? What evidence is there?
- How do they fund their drug / alcohol use?
- Who do they use substances with? Peers / associates / exploiters
- Where do they go when using drugs / alcohol?

Parent / carer - young person relationships

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ○ 1. Parent / carer and young person have a positive relationship and communicate effectively. Carer demonstrates emotional warmth and provides stability for young person. Young person responds to boundaries. The young person enjoys being at home | ○ 2. Parent / carer and young person generally have a positive relationship. Appropriate boundaries are in place. The young person does not always adhere to them. | ○ 3. Sudden negative change in quality of relationship, or relationship between parent / carer and young person is strained |
| ○ 4. Historic abuse in family (emotional, neglect, physical or sexual) or poor or negative communication with young person not responding to boundaries | ○ 5. Current / suspected abuse in family (emotional, neglect, physical or sexual) or poor communication, low warmth, attachment or trust. Parent / carer does not implement age appropriate boundaries. The | |

young person does not want to be at home or the young person feels that their friends are their family

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- Brief details of family history / CSC involvement.
- Details of current child / carer relationship – risk factors and protective factors.

Accommodation

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ○ 1. Young person and assessor are satisfied accommodation meets the young person's needs ie: the environment is a stable place where the young person feels safe. | ○ 2. Young person and assessor are generally satisfied with accommodation and accommodation meets most of the needs of young person, or some concerns about longer term stability. | ○ 3. Unstable or unsuitable accommodation. Young person and assessor are not satisfied where the young person is living, or recent placement change |
| ○ 4. Frequent placement changes | ○ 5. Temporary accommodation / sofa surfing / homeless | |

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- Describe home environment – cleanliness, space, sleeping arrangements.
- Any location concerns or young people loitering outside.
- Placement breakdowns and reasons why.

Ability to identify abusive / exploitive behaviour - both young person and parent / carer

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ○ 1. Young person has a good understanding of exploitive / abusive behaviour and can use it to keep themselves safe | ○ 2. Reasonable understanding of abusive / exploitive behaviour | ○ 3. Some understanding of abusive / exploitive behaviour. May recognise risks in theory or risks to their peers but cannot apply it to keep themselves safe. |
| ○ 4. Very limited recognition of abusive / exploitive behaviour | ○ 5. No recognition of abusive / exploitive behaviour, or The young person's parent / carer cannot | |

identify or recognise the risk of abuse or exploitation

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- Is their understanding reflected or surface level?
- Does the child feel safe to talk about their associates / exploiters or the topic in general?
- Do the parents understand what grooming / abuse / exploitation is and how it links to their child's situation?
- How do the parents respond to the grooming / abuse / exploitation concerns to try and safeguard the young person?

Engagement with appropriate services

- 1. Good engagement with all appropriate services
- 2. Reasonable engagement with all relevant services, or good engagement with a single service provider but less so with others
- 3. Some engagement with services, occasional contact.
- 4. Brief engagement with service: early stages or sporadic contact
- 5. Not engaging with service / no contact

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- Who do they engage with and is this effective?
- What services have been tried / what works to engage this young person?
- What has changed to result in the young person not engaging?
- Does the young person have a trusting enduring professional relationship that they can identify?

Sexual health activities and awareness

- 1. Is not sexually active but is aware of where to get support and advice when needed. No concerns re: sexual health
- 2. Young person is sexually active and in an equal consensual relationship with a peer. Young person does not feel pressured, they feel they can say 'no' and is following 'safe sex' advice.
- 3. Is not sexually active but is feeling pressured to become sexually active, or there are some sexual health concerns
- 4. Young person is sexually active but is not receiving
- 5. Young person feels pressured to have sex or to perform sexual acts

support from any sexual health services.

in exchange for status / protection, possessions, substances or affection, or young person is in a sexual relationship with an adult / there is a wide age gap, or young person is under 13 and sexually active, or young person has many sexual partners / many tests for STIs or pregnancy, or sex is non-consensual - young person is experiencing violence or coercion with sex, or are unable to consent due to intoxication, or young person is made to watch sexual acts being performed on others.

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- Have you or any other professional asked the young person about their sexual health / activity?
- Has any support been offered? What was the outcome?
- Are there concerns around the young person's sexual health / partners / abuse / exploitation?
- Do they understand sexual consent / abuse / exploitation?

Association with gangs / criminal activities or adults and peers who pose a risk

○ 1. Young person not at risk. May have some contact with vulnerable peers but has other positive networks.

○ 4. Young person is in contact with risky adults. They are developing an awareness of risks / exploitation but contact has not significantly reduced. The young person has been approached by the police for being part of a group

○ 2. Young person is aware of gang activity in their area but is not actively involved.

○ 5. Young person is known to be habitually associating with risky adults and / or peers and does not act on this, or young person is actively involved with a gang or criminal group or associated to gang members through peers or family. Young person has been arrested for carrying a weapon NB. In this context

○ 3. Young person socialises with vulnerable peers or is in contact with peers who pose a risk

'risky' means that they either present a direct risk to the young person (i.e. in terms of domestic abuse / physical violence or sexual abuse / exploitation) or they are likely to draw the young person towards other adults / peers who present this risk.

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- Who are their peers / associates / exploiters and what do we know about them?
- What area are they connected to or known to frequent?
- Have they been stopped / arrested / charged for any crimes? Who with and where? (Check Merlin / ask OIC)
- What is the risk of harm or evidence of harm? Emotional, physical, sexual.
- Have they ever been arrested, stopped or charged by police in relation to drug offences (incl possession and / or intent to supply, in what location, in what car, with who? (Check the Merlin / ask the OIC)?

Social media (internet and mobile usage)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>○ 1. Young person uses the internet and or has an instant messaging account e.g. WhatsApp, BBM, Snapchat etc. They have good awareness of potential risks / danger of internet use and there are suitable parental controls in place</p> | <p>○ 2. Young person has accessed one or more social networking sites and may have links to, or is 'friends' to numbers of unknown people (ie: doesn't know them in real world)</p> | <p>○ 3. Unmonitored / secretive use of internet / Young person receives texts / calls from unknown people / In possession of a mobile phone which parent / carer has no or only limited knowledge of.</p> |
| <p>○ 4. Young person proactively exposes themselves to online dangers - for example Facebook, dating sites, tinder, broadcasts pin on BBM etc. Or regularly posts inappropriate images of themselves online unprompted.</p> | <p>○ 5. Young person has posted inappropriate language / information / sexual pictures when contacted by an adult / older peer / unknown person. Does not acknowledge the risks of this, or young person plans to meet face to face person they only know online.</p> | |

Social work evidence, concerns and analysis:

- What social media apps do they use? Is it password protected and does the parent / carer monitor this?

- Is the young person aware of online risks and can they link risks to their personal experiences?
- Do they make requests / accept requests from / speak to / meet with strangers online?
- Do we have the young person's account details? What are they?
- Any concerns around what they post, contact they receive?
- Is there a safety plan in place and does the young person have a trusted person they could seek support from if they felt at risk online?

Consultation

This risk assessment must be carried out in consultation with the young person involved and multi-agency partners.

Wishes and feelings of young person

Professional relationships

YOS - contributed

Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Health (GP, mental health etc) - contributed

Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Education / College / EWO / Connexions - contributed

Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Area social worker - contributed

Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Parent / carer - contributed

Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Young person - contributed

- Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Housing - contributed

- Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Residential care home - contributed

- Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Foster carer - contributed

- Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Sexual health advisor - contributed

- Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Exploitation team - contributed

- Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Alcohol / drug services - contributed

- Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Other local authority - contributed

- Yes No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Other - contributed

Yes

No

Contact details and comments: If you have chosen not to consult with them please record why.

Risk analysis questions

1.1 Identified risk factors - Identify those factors relating to the child's development, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors that may increase the risk of future harm.

1.2 Identified protective factors - Identify those factors relating to the child's development, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors that may diminish the risk of future harm.

2. Which of these factors are likely to be most significant for the child in terms of increasing or reducing risk and protective factors? Assess the relative strength of the risk and protective factors in the child's world.

3. What are the likely outcomes of this for the child? Assess the likely outcomes of future harm for the child if the current level of risk continues - consider safety, health and development. Assess the acceptability of the estimated risk, given the likely outcomes identified.

4. What needs to change if the level of risk is to be reduced? Specify those actions and resources needed to boost the strength and range of identified protective factors, or diminish risk.

Professional judgement

Use this section to provide an analysis of what the information you have from all agencies is telling you about the young person and their life. Highlight any concerns that have been raised which add to the young person's vulnerability such as recent bereavement, domestic abuse, mental health issues, low self-esteem, learning disabilities etc. (use the vulnerability indicators in the guidance section). Also include any previous referrals (even if NFA) and whether young person has received any gifts - money, mobile phone, clothing, accessories etc.

Score - Ensure you enter a number between 1-10 (10 being a higher risk). This score will then carry forward and include in the total on the front page.

SW managers name

Date

Managers comment

Do you need to convene a strategy meeting for this child / young person?

Yes

No

Data monitoring tool

Sexual identity

Gay man

Gay women / lesbian

Bisexual

Hetrosexual

Prefer not to say

Prefer to self describe

If self describe please specify

Disability

Yes

No

If yes, please give details

Nature of risk

Criminal exploitation

Yes

No

County lines

Yes

No

Gang affiliation

Yes

No

Serious youth violence

Yes

No

Sexual exploitation

- Yes No

Current living situation

- At home Foster care - in borough Foster care - out of borough
 Independent living Residential care - in borough Residential care - out of borough

Type of case

- LAC CP CIN
 MASH / AI

EET

- School Home-schooled College / apprenticeship etc
 Not attending PRU Training
 Employment NEET

Health

Alcohol use

- Yes No

Drug use

- Yes No

Cigarette use

- Yes No

Mental health concerns

- Yes No

Emotional health concerns

- Yes No

Physical health concerns

Yes

No

Sexual health concerns

Yes

No

Other risk factors

Social care history

Yes

No

Missing

Yes

No

Domestic violence

Yes

No

Other violence

Yes

No

Self-harm

Yes

No

Peers / associates

Yes

No

Criminal justice issues

YOS

Yes

No

Current orders

Previously known details

Weapons possession

Yes

No

Drug related offending

Yes

No

[Details](#)