

# STOPCE

AWARENESS DAY 18TH MARCH



National Child Exploitation Awareness Day 2023 #CEADay23

On 18 March we want everyone to unite against child exploitation.

Child exploitation is a form of abuse that involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18.

The National Child Exploitation Awareness Day aims to highlight the issues surrounding Child Exploitation; for 2023 we are focusing on **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** and 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. **Together, we can work to inform, educate and prevent child abuse within the UK. #EndCSEin23**

**Safeguarding is everyone's business..**

Our aim is to raise awareness of exploitation and get as many people talking about it and **'Spotting the Signs'** and to start some vital conversations. **HELP US TO IMPROVE THE CHANCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE BEING HEARD AND TO DETER SEXUAL PREDATORS AND TRAFFICKING THROUGH AWARENESS OF CSE AND WIDER EXPLOITATION**

## #HelpingHands

### Write and share a pledge

Write a personal pledge on your hands to show support for our Helping Hands campaign. Post your photo on social media with the hashtags **#HelpingHands** and **#CEADay23** and **#EndCSEin23** to help us raise awareness of CSE and wider exploitation – here are some examples for inspiration!



If you tweet don't forget to tag NCASP - [@NCASP1](https://twitter.com/NCASP1)

## What is Child exploitation (CE)?

CE is a form of abuse that involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18 into criminal or sexual activity.

**Anyone child can be sexually or criminally exploited. It can happen anywhere.** However many of those who are victimised may be reluctant to disclose offences or seek support, often due to stigma, prejudice or embarrassment or the fear that they will not be believed. They may see themselves as able to protect themselves but in cases of exploitation physical stature is irrelevant due to the coercion and manipulation used.

**Despite media focus, the majority of those who are victimised are not 'looked after' children.** It is estimated that **only 20-25% of victimised children and young people 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 social services and therefore are less likely to be identified as at risk of exploitation.

**Young people are groomed and exploited in many different ways.** This could be online, through street gangs, in religious environments, and by those in positions of authority including celebrities. The common theme in all cases is the imbalance of power and the control exerted on young people by the exploiter/perpetrator.

**Those children and young people who are being victimised may appear to be willing accomplices.** This should be seen in the context of the controls exerted by the perpetrator and the submission of the child/young person to them. They are often not accomplices.

**Evidence shows that child exploitation can (and does) happen in all parts of the country, including Northumberland.** CE is **not restricted** to urban areas such as large towns and cities but does in fact happen in rural areas such as villages and coastal areas.

**Children are groomed and exploited in different ways.** It may be difficult for parents, carers and frontline professionals to differentiate between ordinary teenage behaviour and the risk of or involvement in sexual or criminal exploitation but there are some signs that may signify that children or young people are being groomed and exploited. See: [spot the signs](#)

**EXPLOITATION SPOT THE SIGNS**

**MISSING DAY OR NIGHT**  
Missing from home or education. Not knowing where they are or who they are with.

**NEW PLACES**  
Discovering they have been going to new places where they have no obvious connections.

**ONLINE USE**  
Spending more time online. Secretive activity, refusal to come offline. Have they distanced themselves from family, friends and usual activities?

**INJURIES**  
Unexplained bruises, cuts, burns, marks. Reluctance to seek medical attention.

**CHANGE IN APPEARANCE**  
Clothing, personal hygiene, talking differently, tired.

**CHANGE IN BEHAVIOUR**  
Have they become unusually secretive, fearful or withdrawn, aggressive, distanced themselves from family and friends, involved in anti-social behaviour.

**CHANGE IN FRIENDS**  
Sudden changes in who they are 'hanging out' with including meeting new people from social media.

**COPING MECHANISMS**  
Alcohol/drug use/self-harm - what they may be doing or using in order to cope.

**POSSESSIONS**  
Unexplained items e.g. New clothing, money, phone, drugs.

**EXPLOITATION AWARENESS DAY 18 MARCH**

**Child sexual exploitation has many guises this is just some of them...**

- Sexual Exploitation of Boys and Young Men**  
Young men have explained that their sexual exploitation is often overlooked by practitioners. There is some evidence that... [Read more](#)
- Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking**  
Children are trafficked into within and out of the UK exploitation this is a brief overview of some of the exploitation types... [Read more](#)
- Sexual Exploitation and Families**  
Sexual exploitation is a complex problem with social, legal, political, economic and ethical dimensions. It takes many singular... [Read more](#)
- Sexual Exploitation and Missing**  
It is estimated that in the region of 250,000 reports of missing persons are made to police forces throughout the United Kingdom each year... [Read more](#)

## Real stories

*Trigger Warning these stories contain a personal account of sexual exploitation and may cause distress.*

**10-YEAR-OLD DANIEL WAS EXCITED AND LOOKING FORWARD TO GETTING HIS FIRST LAPTOP...**read more [HERE](#)

**A LOT OF CHANGES STARTED TO HAPPEN TO CALLUM...**read more [HERE](#)

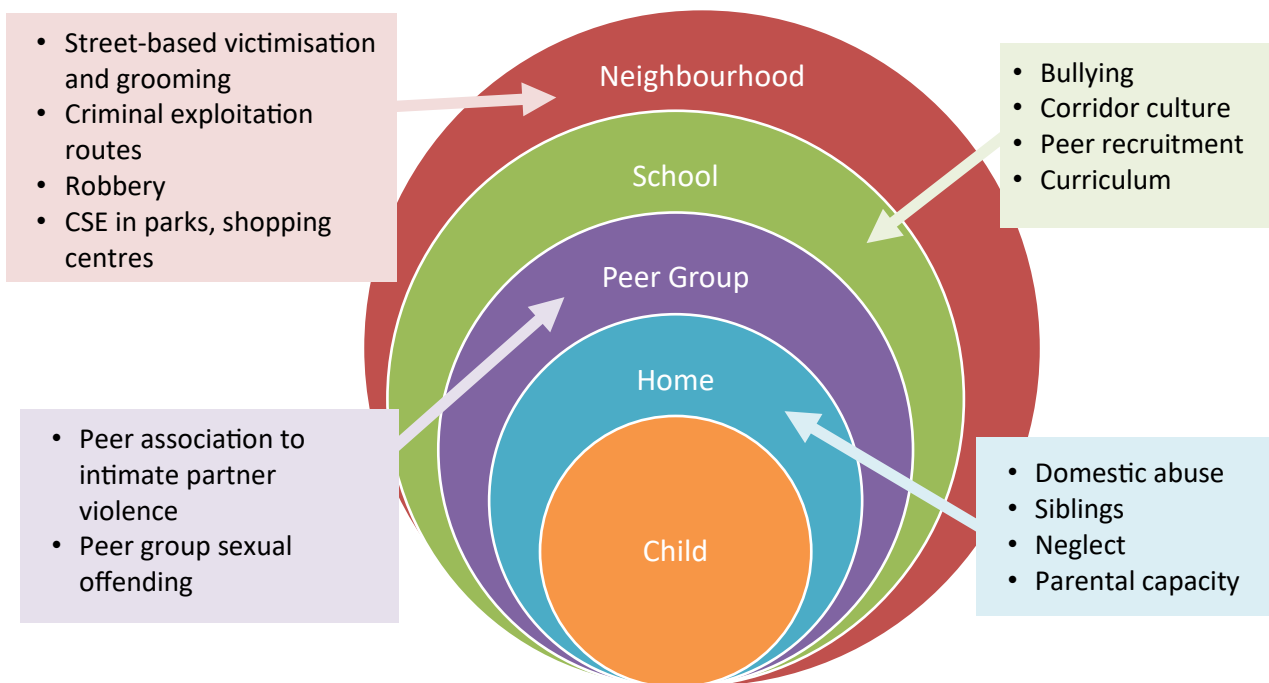
**WHEN MEGAN STARTED TO GO MISSING...**read more [HERE](#)

**Contextual Safeguarding** includes child sexual exploitation, missing children, gangs, county lines, radicalisation, modern slavery and all forms of criminal exploitation. There are clear links across these areas.

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families.

It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse.

Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.



There are lots of developments in Northumberland to help us understand and manage these risks outside of the home. We have had (and continue to roll out) contextual safeguarding training in partnership with [PACE](#).

**Child Financial Exploitation (CFE)** of children and young people, in which children and young people experience abuse or exploitation relating to money, is emerging as a growing concern. CFE can cause significant harm to a young person and can put them at risk of being pushed further into a spiral of exploitation. Despite this, it is often not well enough understood and can be overlooked. When victims are seen only the lens of committing fraud, they are often punished rather than protected, placing them at greater risk. We are developing our understanding of the risks linked to CFE and are advocating for professionals to view it as a separate concern, whilst understanding its context within other forms of exploitation.

See: [CFE explainer](#) for more info about what CFE is, the impact and what you can do..

and [Debt Bondage in a Criminal Exploitation and County Lines context](#) (support resource for professionals)

## North East Learning Session - Child Financial Exploitation - October 2022 - [Slides from session](#)

In October 2022, the Children's Society ran an online learning session in the North East which was attended by 375 participants, including frontline practitioners (such as Social Workers, Probation Officers and Family Workers) and senior managers. Some of the key findings and insights from this session are presented in this report [Key findings from learning session](#).

### Missing and Exploitation Pathways (Northumberland)

- [MSET Pathway](#)
- [MSET Stage 1 Screening Tool - WORD](#)
- [NCASP Missing Children Protocol](#): Procedures regarding children missing from home and care in Northumberland
- NCASP Practice Guidance: [Child Exploitation \(Sexual and Criminal\)](#)

### Resources

- [stop-ce.org](#)
- [NWG resources](#) for CEA Day 2023
- [#look closer resources](#)
- [NWG Resource and Knowledge Hub](#)
- [Help for Parents & Carers](#) - includes some of the physical, behavioural and psychological warning signs
- [Helpful guides for parents and carers](#)

**STOPCE**



**EXPLOITATION CAN HAPPEN TO ANY CHILD, ANYWHERE.**

Question what you think you know.  
Question what you see and hear.



**TAKE ACTION NOW TO PREVENT CHILD EXPLOITATION**