

# 01 Background:

According to Working Together (2018), child sexual abuse:

*Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.* (HM Government, 2018: p104)

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse.

# Why it matters:

Sexual abuse is a personal and destructive crime. Its effects can be psychological, emotional and/or physical, and the damage may last a lifetime.

4.4% of child protection plans in England were initiated in response to sexual abuse March 2017 (DfE, 2015) and an additional 7% were made for 'multiple' categories of abuse. Reporting of both recent and non-recent sexual offences has been increasing for some years following the public revelations of widespread abuse by Jimmy Savile (2013). In England there were 54,846 recorded sexual offences against under 18 year olds in 2016/17. This is a rate of 46.5 sexual offences per 10,000 children aged under 18 - the rates have doubled over the last four years

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## What to do?

Further information:

- [Regional Procedures](#)
- [Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse](#)
- [Seen & Heard e-learning](#)
- [Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#)
- [Parents Protect](#)
- [Child Sexual Abuse Video Learning Programme](#)
- [Facts & statistics](#)
- [Scale & Nature of CSA](#)

## Questions

What is the [IICSA](#)?

What is the [Truth Project](#)?

Is there any multi agency [training](#) available?

[How can practitioner's support children who have been sexually abused?](#)

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## Information:

- Research shows that children are far more likely to be abused by someone they know than by a stranger.
- The most common abuser is a member of the child's family or a friend or neighbour. In this situation, children are particularly powerless to protect themselves.
- Many children are abused by older children or adolescents; some of these young people have themselves been abused.
- Most children who are abused [do not tell](#) anyone about it at the time and many keep the abuse secret throughout their lives.

## Information:

Indicators of abuse include:

- Bruising, particularly to thighs, buttocks/upper arms/neck
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing.
- Bleeding/pain/itching in genital area
- Incontinence not related to medical diagnosis
- Pregnancy/sexually transmitted infection in a child
- Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Irregular or disturbed sleep patterns
- Bed wetting
- Uncharacteristic use of explicit sexual language
- Significant changes in behaviour/attitude.
- Self-harm
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person

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