

Are you worried about your child or teenager ?

- Do they stay out overnight ?
- Have they been missing from home ?
- Do they skip school ?
- Have they come home with money, clothes, jewellery or a mobile phone they can't account for ?
- Do they have an older boyfriend or girlfriend ?
- Are you worried that they are using drugs or drink alcohol?
- Are they losing touch with you, your family and friends of their own age ?
- Do they lack self-esteem ?
- Are they secretive about where they go and who they see ?
- Do they chat to people online they have never met ?
- Are you worried about unsafe sexual behaviour ?

If this sounds familiar, your child or young person could be at risk of sexual exploitation. Taking risks is part of growing up, but sometimes they can get out of their depth.

 **If you think a young person is at immediate risk call 999**

 **Kent County Council Early Help Service**
03000 419222

For advice and guidance and to seek additional support from local organisations.

 **Kent County Council Specialist Children's Services**
03000 411111

To seek specialist advice and support from Kent County Council's Social Services.

 **Police non-emergency number**
101

Call this number to report any concerns that do not require an emergency response or if you need advice or support from the Police.

 **SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre)**
01622 726461
www.beechhousesarc.org

The SARC is a safe place where you can seek confidential advice from specialist healthcare staff.

 **PACE (Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation)**
0113 240 5226
www.paceuk.info

PACE is the leading national charity working with parents and carers whose children have been sexually exploited. Call this number for confidential support and advice.

This publication is available in other formats and can be explained in a range of languages. Helpline: **03000 421553**
Email: **alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk**

Child Sexual Exploitation

A guide for parents and carers



 **Kent Safeguarding Children Board**

How to get help if you think your son or daughter is being sexually exploited

What is sexual exploitation ?



Sexual exploitation can involve swapping sexual favours for things like drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and other presents; or selling sex for money, sometimes with several others. Young people may feel they must have sex because someone gives them something, or because they feel threatened or frightened.

Some young people may want to have sex because they think the other person is their boyfriend or girlfriend. In reality they are being used for sex and the 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend' may pass them onto other people too. **Remember sexual abusers can be women or men.**



How does it happen ?

We know from experience that some people draw young people into abusive sexual relationships. This is how it can happen:

- At the beginning the young person is made to feel special by showing them a lot of interest and affection.
- Sometimes they ask groups of young people to come back to their house or go to parties.
- Sometimes young people are offered drugs, alcohol and a place to chill out.
- They may be given presents like clothes or a mobile phone, or money to buy things like alcohol or cigarettes.
- Once they have gained the trust and affection of the young person then things will change.
- They will ask for sexual favours for themselves or other people in return for alcohol, drugs, presents, money etc. All the things they previously gave the young person for free.
- They stop being nice and can become threatening and violent.

What can I do ?

If you are worried about a child or young person, you must do something – but it may not be easy to find out what is going on from them.

Your child or young person may have been told not to talk about what they are doing or threatened with violence. Or they may think they are in an exciting relationship, which they don't want to end.

Try to find a time to talk to them calmly about how they feel. Your young person may open up and admit they are unhappy about a part of their life. They may even admit they need help.

But if they won't talk to you do not let the matter drop. Is there someone else that you both can trust that could talk to them – a grandparent, uncle or family friend? Or someone from their school or local community? Tell the trusted person about your concerns and ask them to have a word.

Child sexual exploitation is a crime – The police and social services will act to stop it happening. If you are still worried you can get advice and support from a number of different agencies. There are people in these teams who can advise you on what to do next.

See the numbers on the back of this leaflet