

...Sexual Exploitation...

Child sexual exploitation is a fairly new term used in the media, however, the reality of it can ruin lives of young people. The signs to look out for are extensive, one or two on their own may not mean a child is being sexually exploited, however, they may mean you being to ask questions.

The signs for sexual exploitation can be broken down in to the following areas:

Appearance and behaviour:

- Physical symptoms such as bruising.
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse.
- May have mood swings and use abusive language.
- They may begin to truant or become disengaged in school.
- They may begin self- harming and have a low opinion of themselves.
- They may become violent towards others.
- Change in appearance / always tired.
- Sexually transmitted infections / pregnancy / seeking an abortion.
- Sexual / unexplained relationships with older people.
- Clothing – inappropriate for age, borrowing clothing from others.

Relationships:

- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults.
- Hostility in relationship with parents/carers and other family members.
- Associating with other young people who are known to be sexually exploited.
- Inappropriate use of Internet and forming relationships with adults.
- They may receive phone calls, text messages or letters from unknown adults.
- Adults or older youths loitering outside the child's usual place of residence.

Missing:

- They may begin to truant school.
- They may be persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late.
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for in spite of having no known home base.
- Missing for long periods, with no known home base.
- Going missing and being found in areas where the child or young person has no known links.

Financial:

- They may begin to become involved in petty crime e.g. shoplifting, stealing.
- They may have keys to other premises which they can't explain.
- They may begin to where expensive clothes, have a new mobile phones or other possessions without explanation.
- They may tell stories about social activities that they have been involved in which require money.
- They may have possession of large amounts of money with no plausible explanation.