



SAFEGUARDING

OUR BI-MONTHLY SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER 2022 • #LOOKCLOSER: CHILD EXPLOITATION



WHAT'S INSIDE?

In our latest issue we will be discussing the award winning #LookCloser partnership campaign, aiming to raise awareness of child exploitation and abuse with a focus on public spaces.

If you require further support please see the links on the last page of the document.

INTRODUCTION

What is **#LookCloser**?

#LookCloser is a national campaign run by The Children's Society, the British Transport Police and the National County Lines Coordination Centre.

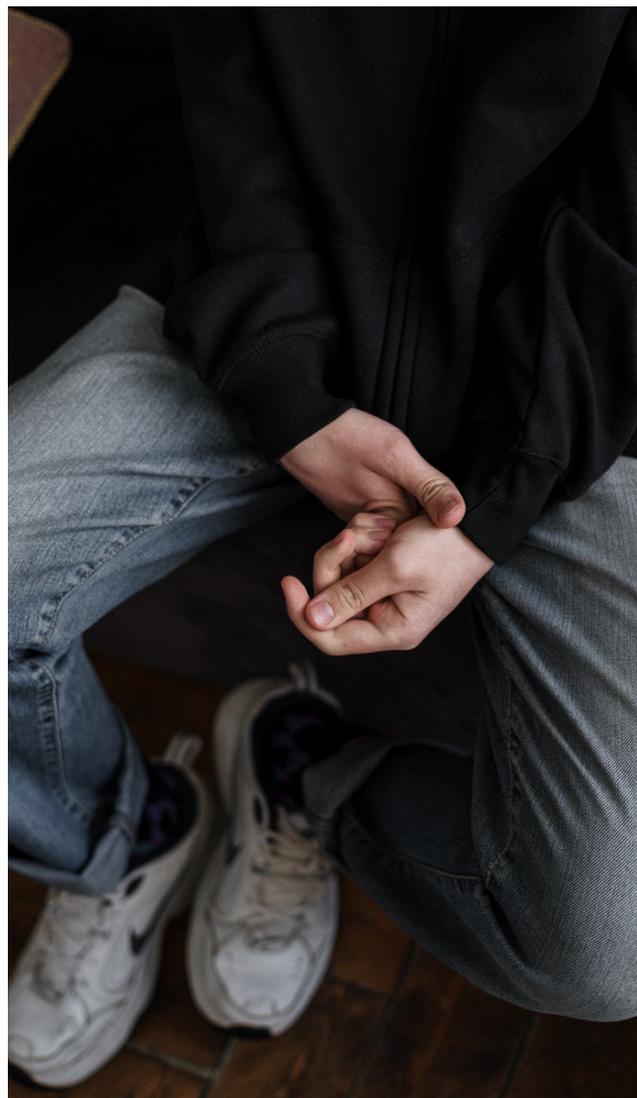
The #LookCloser campaign is designed to increase awareness of the signs and indicators of child exploitation and abuse. The campaign protects children and young people from abuse by encouraging everyone to get to know the signs and what to do when they spot them.

WHAT IS CHILD EXPLOITATION?

Child Exploitation refers to the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit, often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child.

Exploitation is when a relationship is built with a child to manipulate them, i.e when a child is exploited they're usually groomed by given things such as; gifts, drugs, money, status or affection. This is usually in exchange for carrying out criminal activity, known as **Child Criminal Exploitation** or performing sexual activities, known as **Child Sexual Exploitation**.

Exploitation can happen both online and offline.





Children and young people can be moved away from their local/familiar area to be exploited, this is known as **trafficking**. They can be moved around the country and abused by being forced into taking part in criminal or sexual acts.

COUNTY LINES

County lines are a network between an urban centre and county location where drugs are sold often over a mobile phone. Children and vulnerable people are used to transport drugs, cash or even weapons. It can involve trafficking, intimidation, blackmail and serious violence.

(<https://safeguarding.network/>)

For more information read our [County Lines issue](#), or visit our [County Lines webpage](#)

SPOTTING THE SIGNS

It's important to remember there is '**No Perfect Victim**' and any young person can be exploited or abused.

It is crucial that we challenge stereotypes of what a 'typical victim' of exploitation looks or acts like. Bias can be a large barrier in identifying young people who are being exploited.

Young people who have been exploited or abused;

- Don't always look vulnerable
- Don't always act like victims
- May not understand they are being exploited
- May have a distrust of police/adults in authority
- May appear angry or aggressive; these are common signs of trauma
- Can feel scared about what might happen to them next
- Need to feel safe and heard, so that they feel comfortable talking about what might be happening to them

Young people can be exploited anywhere, but **these locations are particularly common sites where you may be able to spot the signs;**

- **Public Transport:** Trains, trams, coaches and buses are all used by organised crime groups to transport children for exploitation.
- **Petrol/Service stations:** Young people who are being exploited may stop at service and petrol stations to use the bathroom or get food.
- **Car washes:** Young people trafficked into the country are sometimes made to work in this setting.
- **Fast food outlets, cafes and shopping centres:** These popular youth spaces provide affordable food and access to wi-fi. Some outlets are open 24 hours a day. Perpetrators sometimes take advantage of this.
- **Hotels/private lets:** Perpetrators often use hotel rooms or private lets to sexually abuse and criminally exploit young people. They can also be used as a base by organised crime groups to store, prepare and distribute drugs.
- **Taxi and ride shares:** Taxis and private ride share apps can be used to transport exploited children.
- **Hair and beauty salons:** Young people trafficked into the country are sometimes made to work and stay in these settings.

LEARN MORE

Visit ChildrensSociety.org.uk to find out more about the #LookCloser campaign and access a range of resources

[Visit #LookCloser](#)

#LOOKCLOSER FOR SIGNS OF ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION

Is a child or young person:

- Travelling alone, particularly in school hours, late at night or frequently?
- Looking lost or in unfamiliar surroundings?
- Anxious, frightened, angry or displaying other behaviours that make you feel worried about them?
- In possession of more than one phone?
- Carrying lots of cash?
- Potentially under the influence of drugs or alcohol?
- Being instructed or controlled by another individual?
- Accompanied by individuals who are older than them?
- Seen begging in a public place?

If something is worrying you about a young person's behaviour or appearance and **it is safe to do so**, ask them if they're ok - it could make a difference!

Some ways to start a conversation:

- You look lost. Do you need some help?
- Hi. Are you alright? Where are you off to today? Where have you travelled from today?
- I hope you don't mind me saying, but you seem a little upset? Can I help?

If something doesn't feel right, don't wait, report it

Call the police on 101 or 999 in an emergency

You can also report to the police online. Only report your concerns when it is safe for you to do so, even if this is after the event that your concerns initially arose. Do not attempt to intervene yourself.

Text the British Transport Police on 61016

If you are on a train, you can text the British Transport Police. Information on routes of travel, addresses, appearance, and behaviour of a child can all help to protect young people.

Call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

If you have information on child exploitation and abuse or suspect it may be happening but want to remain completely anonymous, you can contact the independent charity Crimestoppers online or on the phone.

Call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000

The NSPCC helpline is staffed by trained professionals who can provide expert advice and support if you're concerned about a child.

INFORMATION FROM: [HTTPS://WWW.CHILDRENSOCIETY.ORG.UK/](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/)

9 PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

PREVENT DUTY

The Prevent Duty is part of the government strategy to reduce the risk of Extremism, Terrorism and Radicalisation.

View our Prevent Leaflet

Report possible terrorist activity online. If you are concerned about someone or see anything suspicious call the local police or the police anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

BRITISH VALUES

British Values are defined as;

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Contact Steadfast Training's Safeguarding team on 0845 223 2401 or email safe-guarding@steadfasttraining.co.uk

Our Safeguarding Officers

Robert Wright - 07985338185
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Report a Safeguarding Issue



For more information on anything covered in the newsletter, feedback or ideas for the next issue, please contact us on chloe.robinson@steadfasttraining.co.uk.