



## **Safeguarding Children at Risk of Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is when children and young people receive something (such as food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, or money) as a result of performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of the internet or on mobile phones. In all cases, those exploiting the child or young person have power over them because of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or resources. For victims, the pain of their ordeal and fear that they will not be believed means they are too often scared to come forward.

### **Signs/Indicators**

- Physical symptoms (bruising suggestive of either physical or sexual assault)
- Volatile behaviour, mood swings, use of abusive language
- Truancy, disengagement from education or change in performance at school
- Low self- image, low self-esteem or self-harming behaviour
- Physical aggression towards others
- Change in appearance, always tired
- History of abuse or neglect
- Reports that the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Reports that suggest the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation (e.g. from friends or family)
- Inappropriate use of internet or forming relationships with adults
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late
- Having keys to other premises
- Adults or older youths loitering outside the child' usual place of residence.
- Placement breakdown