

## Background

Child Sexual Exploitation is a terrible crime with destructive and far reaching consequences for victims, their families, and society. It is not limited to any particular geography, ethnic or social background. Having a shared definition of CSE is critical to identification, monitoring & effective multi-agency responses. The government issued the following definition in 2017. "CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.

CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology."

## Why it matters

The impacts of CSE are wide-ranging, & can be profound & long lasting. This is particularly true when victims do not receive appropriate support. Victims can suffer a range of health impacts including physical injuries, sexually transmitted infections. They can experience emotional trauma/mental illness such as depression, self-harm, suicidal ideation, post-traumatic stress disorder & drug/alcohol problems. CSE also impacts longer-term, being associated with higher rates of youth offending, poor educational prospects, involvement in adult sex work, isolation from family & friends, negative future relationships & increased risk of other forms of violence or abuse. CSE can also create strong ripple effects on friendship circles, family networks & the wider community.

## Information

Like any other form of child sexual abuse, CSE:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including
- 16/17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex.
- Is abuse - even if sexual activity appears consensual
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance & may/may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others creating videos/ images & posting on social media)

# Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)



## Information Being exploited is not a choice

**CHILDREN (under the age of 18) CANNOT CONSENT TO THEIR OWN ABUSE.**

**CONSENT DOES NOT MAKE AN UNLAWFUL ACT LAWFUL.**

Young people being exploited are often victims of serious crimes. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 categorises these offences and their maximum penalty. These laws along with proper application of procedures and collaboration between agencies can be used successfully to protect children.

**Information:** The context of coercion and control may present significant barriers to victims disclosing either their own or their children's suffering, particularly in situations where the offending partner is present. Victims need repeated opportunities to disclose, and a safe, trusted environment within which they can voice their concerns.

## Resources for online safety

Erase - [www.eraseabuse.org](http://www.eraseabuse.org)

CEOP - [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

Think you know -

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

NSPCC -

[www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware)

Net Aware -

[www.net-aware.org.uk/](http://www.net-aware.org.uk/)

## What to do:

Follow DSCP procedures

<https://www.proceduresonline.com/durham/scb/>

Refer to First Contact where appropriate

and complete the CSE risk assessment tool

<http://www.durham-scp.org.uk/professionals/missing-and-exploited-children/>

Response will depend on level of risk but early intervention is essential to prevent children from being harmed

Share any intelligence information with Erase using the intelligence submission form found at the above link