

Child Sexual Exploitation

Look out for
the signs

How to keep
you and your
friends safe



Think about your different relationships

Close friends, a boyfriend, a girlfriend – maybe groups of friends from school or where you live. As we grow up we develop relationships with lots of different people. It's how we learn to enjoy healthy relationships and it's a great skill to have.

But things can go wrong along the way. Before you realise it, someone could be trying to take advantage of you, putting you into dangerous situations.

So, you need to be aware of the signs that someone may be trying to take advantage of you, and you should be careful who you trust.

So, sexual exploitation – what do you know?

You've heard about it, but what does it really mean? Sexual exploitation can be difficult to spot, because at first you may think you are in a good relationship with the person or people who want to abuse your trust in them. It could be a friend, or group of friends. It could be someone you think of as your girlfriend or boyfriend.

It could be someone you have just met, or known for a long time, or just talked to online.

Whoever it is, they could use ways to take advantage of your relationship – and that means you could be harmed almost before you know what's going on. You could be taken advantage of.

For example, someone might give you a mobile phone, money, drugs, alcohol, other gifts or somewhere to stay then encourage you do one or more of these things in return:

- Have sex with them.
- Do something sexual to them.
- Be touched inappropriately in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Look at sexual images, including films or pictures.
- Watch them do something sexual, including having sex or touching themselves sexually.

It's important to look out for sign like these and others, that someone's behaviour towards you may not be all it seems.

It's not always easy to tell who you can trust. Sexual exploitation can happen to you, no matter what your gender, age or background.

Warning signs

Someone may try to get to know you better by giving you lots of attention and making you feel really special. They may buy you gifts or involve you in activities that seem exciting or fun, take you to parties and give you access to drugs and alcohol.

That person then gradually starts to try ways of controlling you, such as making promises they can't keep, threatening you or even becoming violent if you don't do what they want.

They may try to isolate you from your friends, family and other people you care for. When that happens it's easier for the abuser to put you in dangerous situations or force you to do things you don't want to do – with them, or people you know. They are not doing you a favour – they are exploiting you.

Be aware, and follow this advice:

1. Trust yourself to know when something is wrong. If someone makes you feel unsafe, pressured or frightened, follow your instincts and ask for help.
2. Don't trust people you don't really know – even if they seem friendly, and make sure you know who you are talking to online. Never give away personal details or agree to meet someone you have only talked to online.
3. Don't be tricked into doing things that are unsafe, even if they seem like fun. What might look like exciting at first could be a lot more dangerous than you realise.

If you are concerned about a situation you or a friend may be in, talk to an adult that you trust as soon as you can.

People who can help you include teachers, parents, carers and social workers.



About us

Sunrise is the multi agency team that tackles sexual exploitation and related harm in the borough of Rochdale.

We bring together professionals from the police, children's social care, sexual health and Early Break.

If you are in immediate danger or want urgent help please call 999.

Contact the Sunrise Team

t. 0161 856 1734

8.30am - 4.45pm Monday to Friday

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 @TheSunriseTeam

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