Child Exploitation Screening Tool

How to use this tool

* This screening tool aims to support practitioners’ focus on specific exploitation indicators. Often children do not recognise themselves as victims, or that they are being groomed, and as a result disclosure of such abuse is unlikely. This tool aids the identification of exploitation.
* This Tool is designed to be used in a multi-agency way; complete the information you have and share with relevant agencies to include what they know, work together.
* Practitioners may need to exercise their own professional judgement whilst completing the tool.
* This tool does not take the place of a referral to Children’s Social Care.

Child’s details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Family name: |  |
| Given names: |  |
| Date of Birth: |  |
| Gender: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Contact no. |  |
| Ethnicity: |  |
| Legal Status: |  |
| School / College: |  |
| Is the child looked after? | Yes  No |
| Do they live in residential care/foster care/other? | Residential  Foster Care  Other – please specify |
| Are they a Somerset child placed out of the Local Authority? | Yes  No |

Professional details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Job Title: |  |
| Relationship to child: |  |
| Contact details: |  |
| Date completed: |  |

Information Sharing and Disclosure

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Is the child aware that this tool has been completed? | Yes  No |
| Did the parents/carers provide information for the completion of this tool? | Yes  No  If no, why? |
| Who else has contributed to the completion of this indicator tool?  Please indicate other professionals/agencies. |  |
| Has the child made a disclosure of exploitation (abuse)? | Current - Yes No  Historic (more than 12 months ago) Yes No |
| Are the people who may be grooming or exploiting the young person | Known to the child? Yes No Unknown  A family member? Yes No Unknown |
| If you have answered yes to either of the above, please state who this person is |  |
| Concerns around the young person being exploited are: | Online  Offline  Both |

Risk Indicators

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Physical Health and Emotional Wellbeing | | Yes (Y)  No (N)  Unknown (U) | Current (C)  Past (P) (6 months +) |
| Physical injuries such as bruising; suggestive of either physical or sexual assault (include any knife, acid, weapon injuries and plugging). | |  |  |
| Sexually transmitted infection (STI), including recurring infections or multiple STIs. | |  |  |
| Pregnancy and/or seeking termination/emergency contraception. | |  |  |
| Poor self-image, low self-esteem, low mood and anxiety. | |  |  |
| Self-harming or thoughts or attempted suicide attempts. | |  |  |
| Eating disorder and /or weight gain/loss. | |  |  |
| Evidence of drugs/alcohol use. | |  |  |
| Physical and/or learning disability or difficulty | |  |  |
| Mental health concerns. | |  |  |
| Are they managing existing health conditions? | |  |  |
| Comments/Evidence/Description of ‘YES’ indicators (Analysis): | | | |
| Behaviour | Yes (Y)  No (N)  Unknown (U) | | Current (C)  Past (P) (6 months +) |
| Regularly in situations/places/locations that increase the child’s vulnerability. |  | |  |
| Truancy/at risk of exclusion/missing education. |  | |  |
| Reduced timetable or considerable change in performance at school. |  | |  |
| Volatile behaviour exhibiting extreme array of mood swings or abusive/sexual language which is unusual for the child. |  | |  |
| Aggressive or violent including to animals, parents, siblings, teachers or peers. |  | |  |
| Becoming angry, hostile if any suspicions or concerns about their activities are expressed. |  | |  |
| Detachment from peer/age-appropriate activities. |  | |  |
| Secretive behaviour (including online activities). |  | |  |
| Change in appearance; physical, clothing, body etc. |  | |  |
| Serious Youth Violence/ Young offender (current or previous) |  | |  |
| Changes in relationships with friends or family members. |  | |  |
| Intelligence/suspicion to suggest that they carry weapons. |  | |  |
| Maintaining peer relationships. |  | |  |
| Maintaining positive family relationships |  | |  |
| Comments/Evidence/Description of ‘YES’ indicators (Analysis) | | | |
| Grooming | Yes (Y)  No (N)  Unknown (U) | | Current (C)  Past (P) (6 months +) |
| Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults, or regular use of taxis, with no known means of paying for them. |  | |  |
| Excessive/increase in use of mobile phones (including receiving calls late at night). |  | |  |
| Young person moving around the county/ across counties with no plausable reason to be there. |  | |  |
| Possession of a second mobile phone or SIM card. |  | |  |
| Exposing or recruiting other children into exploitative situations. |  | |  |
| Seen in adult places (e.g. pubs, clubs and hotels) or venues known to be used for exploitation or criminal activity. |  | |  |
| Unexplained relationships with older adults. |  | |  |
| Associating with other children who are known to be exploited, including in school. |  | |  |
| Child Sexual Exploitation/Child Exploitation (Historic – 12 months). |  | |  |
| Disclosure of sexual /physical assault followed by withdrawal of allegation. |  | |  |
| Phone call, texts or letters from unknown adults. |  | |  |
| Mobile phone being answered by unknown adult/person. |  | |  |
| Inappropriate use of the Internet and forming relationships, particularly with adults via the Internet. |  | |  |
| Social activities with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding. |  | |  |
| Having keys to premises other than those they should have, including hotel key cards 3 |  | |  |
| Possession of money, clothes, accommodation or other expensive items with no plausible explanation. |  | |  |
| Adults loitering outside the child’s usual place of residence or school. |  | |  |
| Persistently missing from home or local authority care/foster care for different periods, including overnight or returning late. |  | |  |
| Returning after having been missing and being secretive about where they have been and who they were with. |  | |  |
| Returning after having been missing looking dirty, dishevelled, tired, hungry, thirsty. |  | |  |
| Abduction or false imprisonment. |  | |  |
| Coerced into sexual activity (sexual abuse). |  | |  |
| New contacts with people outside of town/ area. |  | |  |
| The child being in ‘debt’ |  | |  |
| Being paid/forced to carry or deliver drugs. |  | |  |
| Being paid/forced to harm others |  | |  |
| Holding money/others depositing money in child’s bank account. |  | |  |
| Not being paid for work, working long hours or working in an inappropriate environment. |  | |  |
| Comments/Evidence/Description of ‘YES’ indicators (Analysis) | | | |
| Family and Social | Yes (Y)  No (N)  Unknown (U) | | Current (C)  Past (P) (6 months +) |
| A family member or known associate working in the adult sex trade (adult sexual exploitation) or involved in criminal/drug  activity. |  | |  |
| History of physical abuse within the family:   * Sexual * Emotional abuse * Neglect concerns |  | |  |
| Victim of domestic abuse, which includes being witness to domestic abuse/abuse at home and / or coercive control |  | |  |
| Parental concern with; drug and alcohol use, |  | |  |
| Parental mental health problems, |  | |  |
| Parental physical or learning difficulty. |  | |  |
| Family involvement with Somerset Children’s Social Care? |  | |  |
| Involvement with Children’s Social Care in another LA? |  | |  |
| Period of child being looked after? |  | |  |
| Child is a young carer. |  | |  |
| Pattern of street homelessness or sofa surfing. |  | |  |
| Living in hostel, B & B or Foyer accommodation. |  | |  |
| Conflict at home around boundaries, including staying out late. |  | |  |
| Living in a gang affected neighbourhood |  | |  |
| Recent bereavement, loss, family separation and/or family breakdown (in the last 2 years).  are parents/carers protective? |  | |  |
| Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships. |  | |  |
| Lacking friends their own age/school year. |  | |  |
| Are there any cultural factors that impact on their vulnerability? |  | |  |
| Going missing with other children. |  | |  |
| No recourse to public funds (a condition imposed on someone due to their immigration status). |  | |  |
| Comments/Evidence/Description of ‘YES’ indicators (Analysis) | | | |
| Online Safety | Yes (Y)  No (N)  Unknown (U) | | Current (C)  Past (P) (6 months +) |
| Evidence/information/intelligence of vulnerability through internet or social networking sites. |  | |  |
| Concern that inappropriate images (child abuse images) of a child are being circulated via the internet/phones. |  | |  |
| Concern that the child is being coerced/ bribed/threatened to provide explicit images/ engage in inappropriate online activity. |  | |  |
| Concern that the child is being paid for sexual acts online, including live streaming (online sexual abuse) |  | |  |
| Accessing on-line dating/ ‘hook-up’ sites. |  | |  |
| Unexplained increased use of social networking, shared gaming sites and / or receiving rewards/credits. |  | |  |
| Going online during the night. |  | |  |
| Being secretive using mobile phone for accessing websites etc... including unwillingness to share/show online or phone contacts. |  | |  |
| Concerns that a child’s online exploitation has developed into an offline |  | |  |
| Have other agencies raised concerns of online exploitation? |  | |  |
| Comments/Evidence/Description of ‘YES’ indicators (Analysis) | | | |
| Child’s voice/views | | | |
|  | | | |
| What are the positive/mitigating factors?  *Services/support, trusted adult, education etc* | | | |
|  | | | |

Summary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total number of potential exploitation concerns identified: | Current:  Past: |
| Tick which type of exploitation is relevant to the child in your assessment: | Sexual Exploitation  Criminal Exploitation  Both |
| Have you completed a National Referral Mechanism (NRM)? | Yes  No |
| Have you reported concerns to the online Avon and Somerset Police exploitation portal? | Yes  No |
| Your analysis and overview: |  |
| Assessment: | |
| Based on the assessment above, please provide your professional opinion by selecting ONE of the boxes below:  No concerns of exploitation – concerns relate to behaviours associated with age-appropriate child/young person behaviours  Evidence of vulnerability to exploitation  Evidence of being groomed or targeted for the purposes of exploitation  Evidence that child is being actively exploited | |
| Planned actions and target dates as a result of the tool being completed: | |
|  | |
| Support is being coordinated via: | |
| Early Help Assessment  Child in Need  Child Protection  Child Looked After  Team Around the Child/Team Around the Family  Youth Offending Team  Other (please specify) | |
| The lead professional is: | |
|  | |
| Which agencies are supporting this young person? | |
|  | |

Safety Plan

|  |
| --- |
| E.g. parents report missing to police if child not home by agreed time |
|  |

Next Steps

* Dial 999 if you have immediate safety concerns.
* Discuss with Line Manager/Safeguarding Lead
* Contact the consultation line for advice and referral to Children’s Social Care.
* Share information with Police (<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul> )
* Request/arrange a multi-agency meeting.
* Work alongside parents/carers to identify and respond to their needs
* Refer to specialist Child Exploitation/Child Sexual Exploitation services e.g. Barnardo’s
* Refer to National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
* Consider disruption options

Definitions

Child Criminal Exploitation is a term that has come to be associated with ‘county lines’. Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity:

* In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
* For the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
* Through violence or the threat of violence.
* The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.
* The criminal exploitation of children is not confined to county lines but can also include other forms of criminal activity such as theft, acquisitive crime, knife crimes and other forms of criminality

Child Sexual Exploitation 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 in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for 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. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.