

SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE

Bitesize Briefing

What is Serious Youth Violence?

Serious Youth Violence includes homicide, attempted homicide, robbery, wounding, grievous bodily harm, knife and gun crime, alcohol and drug related violence and areas of criminality such as county lines and modern slavery.

The prevalence of Serious Youth Violence has increased across England and Wales since 2014, Somerset is no exception to this, with increasing numbers of young people affected.

The impact of being a victim of Serious Youth Violence can include death, life-changing injuries, trauma and poor mental health.

Risk Factors

Risk factors can include:

- Low self-esteem or self-confidence
- Low or non-school attendance
- Lack of friends in the same age group, or associating with young people who are being sexually exploited
- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance misuse, mental health issues and parental criminality)
- Experiences of domestic abuse, neglect, bereavement, or familial sexual abuse
- Learning difficulties
- Unsure of their sexual orientation, or unable to talk to their family about it
- Homelessness
- Unhappy with their living arrangements, or living in residential care
- Young Carer

Key things to remember

Key points include:

- Early help can make a difference and prevent a situation escalating
- All agencies are in a position to identify escalating risk, including Health, Police, Social Care, Education and Voluntary/Community groups
- Perpetrators of Serious Youth Violence also have vulnerabilities in their own right
- The language used to describe children also affects how we understand risk e.g. 'boys' and 'girls', not 'males' and 'females'.
- Be curious about the information you are being told by the child and/or their caregiver
- Consider the situation from the child's perspective and any history of trauma they have experienced
- Make sure that agencies who hold relevant information are contributing to the child's plan/meeting and sharing any concerns or progress

Concerned?

What to do if you are concerned:

- Speak to your Agency Safeguarding Lead
- If you have concerns about a child's welfare refer to the [Effective Support for Children & Families Document](#)
- If there are concerns about Exploitation complete the [CE Screening Tool](#) and notify Avon & Somerset Police's Operation TOPAZ using the [online portal](#)
- If you are concerned a child has, or is likely to, suffer harm call: 0300 123 3078 for advice
- If a child is in immediate danger, call the Police (999).
- If a child has been a victim of crime or witnessed an incident of SYV Victim Support: [Lighthouse Victim Care](#)

Want to know more?

Click the links below to find out more:

- [Child Exploitation Screening tool](#)
- [SYV e-learning](#)
- [Trauma Informed training](#)
- [Child Exploitation training](#)
- [SYV webpage](#)

