

Child Exploitation and Transport

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), and 'County Lines' happens when anyone under the age of 18 is encouraged, forced or manipulated into criminal or sexual acts, often in exchange for something.

Anyone accessing public transport is in a great position to help our young people to feel safe and protected from child exploitation. Being aware of exploitation is the first step towards putting a stop to it.

We know that trains, buses and taxis are often used to transport children (both girls and boys) between locations for the purpose of exploitation. So it's a good idea for anyone using these kinds of transport to be able to spot the signs.

It's Never the Child's Fault

Exploitation of children is a crime that can affect any child, anytime, anywhere, regardless of their social or ethnic background. CCE and CSE can be carried out by individuals, by street gangs or by groups. It can be motivated by money or by sexual gratification. But in all cases, there is an imbalance of power – vulnerable children are controlled and abused by adults or by other young people.

Exploited children are usually too scared and/or ashamed to ask for help themselves. This is why it is important that anyone using or working within transport can recognise the signs and indicators of exploitation. They may notice when things look a little out of the ordinary and will be able to pass their concerns on to the police with confidence, preventing children from coming to harm.

The Grooming Process

Perpetrators gain control over children by grooming them, this can be in person, via mobiles or online, offering excitement, drugs, alcohol, gifts and affection.

Once a child does something – even something really small – that they know they might get 'in trouble' for, they become vulnerable. As the exploitation gets worse, threats and violence may be used to keep children compliant. They are exploited not just by the original perpetrators but often by many other abusers.



What to Look Out for

Whether it is day or night time, look out for children and young people (girls and boys) who may:

- Be from another area, so may not be familiar with an area (may look lost) and may have a distinct urban accent.
- Be travelling during school hours or unusual hours (e.g. late in the evening).
- Be with an older individual who appears controlling.
- Be a victim of physical assault or unexplained injuries.
- Be in excessive receipt of texts, phone or video calls
- Look withdrawn, uncomfortable or distressed in the company of adults
- Be in a vulnerable state due to drink or drugs, accompanied by older individuals
- Be using trains whilst under the influence of substances, anxious state or travelling late at night unaccompanied
- Using terminology or slang that is not understood by others
- Be collected and taken to hotels, B&Bs, parties or gatherings
- Be with an adult who is expressing sexualized behavior towards them
- Be dropped off at any location that causes you concern
- Have their fares paid by adults who are not in the taxi

You Should also Look Out for

- Adults who regularly request taxi rides to and from a location, taking young people with them
- Frequent suspicious activity in the same place i.e. train station

Victims of 'County Lines'

Children and young people are being exploited by criminal gangs to carry drugs from urban areas to coastal and market towns and villages. Many of these children travel between cities and rural towns and other locations via trains, private hire vehicles and taxis. This is known as 'county lines'.

What to do

- Make a note of your information, what you see and hear and with your concerns call Humberside Police on **101** if you require a non-emergency response or advice.
- Alert train or station staff if you feel concerned.
- Intelligence and information which may be useful to the police can be reported anonymously via Crimestoppers - **0800 555 111** or visit **crimestoppers-uk.org**
- If you know the name of a child or their home address report your safeguarding concerns to the Early Help & Safeguarding Hub (EHASH) **(01482) 395500**
- **IF YOU BELIEVE A CHILD MAY BE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER DIAL 999**

Don't hesitate. Your information, however small it may seem, can help us build a bigger picture.

Information to Share can Include

- Names, Locations and addresses
- Descriptions of people
- Car registration plates, make and models of vehicles
- Description of suspicious activity

Useful Resources

www.erscp.co.uk

East Riding Safeguarding Children Partnership

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.ceop.gov.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection

www.childline.org.uk

www.barnardos.org.uk