

Child Exploitation Awareness Day

18th March 2024

National Child Exploitation Awareness Day is a time for organisations to raise awareness about all forms of exploitation. This includes modern slavery, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and trafficking. The aim is to highlight and share good safeguarding practice and key areas for practice development linked to exploitation.

The theme this year for Hillingdon is: “going back to basics”. A reminder that everyone has a responsibility to prevent child abuse and ensure that all children are safe from harm.

In this briefing:

- Training Opportunities.
- The Importance of Language.
- What is Child Exploitation.
- Signs and Indicators.
- NWG's Campaign for Child Exploitation Awareness Day.
- Local Services available for children who may be at risk.
- Resources to support safeguarding practice.

Training Opportunities

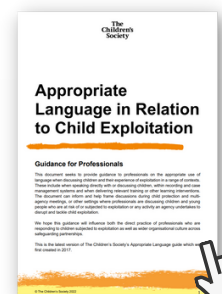
This year the Safeguarding Partnership offer includes three webinars, each an hour long and held between 12:30 and 13:30 - join us if you can!

- Monday 18th March - Myth Buster and taking us back to basics - [Book here](#)
- Thursday 21st March - Axis Understanding Local Exploitation Trends - [Book here.](#)
- Friday 22nd March - The Children's Society – Disruption and Transitional Safeguarding - [Book here.](#)

Brook have a [free e-learning course](#) to help professionals identify victims of CSE.

Language

The language that we use is important to remind us that children are victims of exploitation. The Children's Society have created this useful guidance about appropriate language to use when speaking about, or engaging with, children who may be at risk or vulnerable to exploitation.



What is Child Exploitation?

Child exploitation is a type of child abuse that usually happens outside of the family home. It occurs when an individual or group (this may be adults or other children) takes advantage of a power imbalance to manipulate a child into criminal and/or sexual activity. This includes trafficking drugs, sometimes called county lines, violent behaviour including gang related activities, and sexual exploitation. It can happen in person or online.

A child that is being exploited may be given things such as drugs, money, gifts, accommodation, status and affection. They are often tricked into believing that they are friends or in a consensual relationship. They are unlikely to realise or understand that they are being abused.

Signs and Indicators

- Going missing for periods or staying out late.
- Missing school or seeing a drop in performance.
- Change in behaviour - new concerning behaviours, aggressive behaviours or increasingly withdrawn.
- Change in appearance - wearing clothes or accessories showing gang colours or symbols.
- Unexplained injuries.
- New clothes/jewellery or new access to money.
- Spending time with people older than them.
- Spending more time online - unusually secretive about it.
- New phone or multiple phones.



Think twice, think abuse. If you see something, say something. Think, spot and speak out about exploitation of children.

The National Working Group (NWG) Network's 'Think Twice, Think Abuse' initiative is aimed at encouraging members of the community to think about exploitation and say something if you see something.

Children can be exploited anywhere and the community can help to inform local councils, police and other agencies about what is happening in public spaces. It is everyone's responsibility to speak out if they are worried that a child or young person may be a victim of exploitation.

[Click here to access the materials](#) NWG has produced to raise awareness in your place of work and in the places community members may see it

[The NWG are offering free workshops around raising awareness regarding child exploitation. Click to explore and book](#)

If you are worried about a child report it to the [Stronger Families Hub](#)

If you are worried about an adult with care and support needs report it to [Social Care Direct](#)

Local Services Available for Children and Young People Who May Be At Risk of Criminal Exploitation.

AXIS Service

AXIS is an early intervention service for children identified as at risk of Child Exploitation via triangulation of information sharing from a range of local partners. AXIS delivers and coordinates evidence-based interventions to children and young people who are at risk of offending and/or vulnerable to exploitation.

For further enquires please email: axis@hillington.gov.uk or call: 07823 501585.

The Adolescent Development Service

The Adolescent Development Service offers a whole range of targeted fun and free programmes for 8 – 19 year olds that live, learn or earn in Hillingdon.



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[Click here to see more details of the year round programme and how to refer.](#)

Professional referrals can be made for children and adolescents who:

- are aged 8 to 24-years-old and living, working, studying, or in care in Hillingdon,
- already receive targeted support from the council (through children's social care, our youth justice service or other intervention services),
- have the ability to participate in discussion-based and group work activities, and
- are willing and able to commit to the proposed intervention

The programmes delivered by the Adolescent Development Service on and around CEA Day will raise awareness through discussions about all forms of exploitation including healthy relationships, drugs and alcohol and negative peer influences.

LBH Young People's Centres and the Mobile Youth Bus

The Council's Universal Youth Service runs a number of young people's centres where fun activities, facilities, and support is available. The Transporter is Hillingdon's mobile youth bus, offering state-of-the-art facilities and a mobile drop-in for young people who might not have access to their local young people's centre and/or other facilities.

The bus is kitted out with decks, internet café, Playstation and a kitchen. It also offers young people the opportunity to get involved in music or art projects, as well as a safe and confidential environment, where they can access advice and information on:

- Education, employment and training
- Sexual health and relationships
- Alcohol and drug misuse.

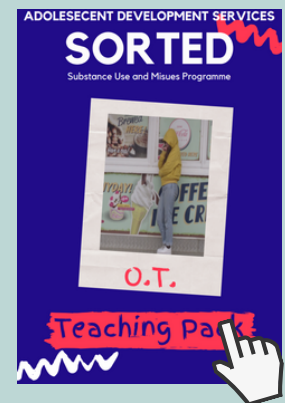
Many of our Young People's Centres will be hosting discussions and workshops around Child Exploitation Awareness Day.

Resources to support your safeguarding practice with children and young people at risk of exploitation



The Hillingdon Adolescent Development Service have produced this film called 'Out of Town' about Child Sexual Exploitation, county lines and grooming.

The film is accompanied by a resource pack that can be used directly with children and young people.



Brilliant Parents are hosting an online drop-in session for parents on Monday 20th March 12 – 1pm to have a hot drink and talk and/or listen to other parents that may be experiencing similar challenges about their children who may be exploited. To join, email: sarah.rust@brilliantparents.org

This organisation supports parents and carers whose children are being exploited by people outside of the family. They provide advice, support, training and they campaign to improve policy and practice to safeguarding children.



NSPCC

The NSPCC has published advice about how to spot the signs of criminal exploitation and involvement in gangs and what support is available for children and young people.

Find more resources on the Safeguarding Partnership website about

- [Contextual safeguarding](#)
- [Sexual Exploitation](#)
- [Serious Youth Violence](#)

