

BCP LEARNING FROM PRACTICE BRIEFING: EXTRA FAMILIAL HARM - CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

What are extra familial harms?

Extra familial harms are harms that occur to children outside of their family, often during the adolescent years because at this age their social networks widen in a child's community spaces and places.

Extra familial harms can include child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, peer-on-peer abuse, gang affiliation, serious youth violence, trafficking and modern-day slavery, anti-social behaviours by and affecting peers, racialisation, and violent extremism.

What is child criminal exploitation?

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) takes a variety of forms but ultimately it is the grooming and exploitation of children into criminal activity. One specific model of CCE is known as "county lines", where children are coerced, controlled, and manipulated into drug dealing. This model will use mobile phone "lines" and often different forms of social media in its criminal activities.

Key messages for practitioners

- ✚ Adopt a "contextual "lens" when working with adolescent children which focuses on knowing who the child 'hangs out with' and the spaces and places they spend time in within the community
- ✚ Make sure you know the risk factors and can spot the signs and indicators when working with young people
- ✚ Be flexible and creative in your work to build and sustain relationships with young people
- ✚ Focus your work upon helping children find safer ways of engaging in peer relationships and inhabiting their growing social worlds
- ✚ Be aware of unconscious biases when working with children who are groomed, coerced, and controlled into committing crime as victims of exploitation.
- ✚ Look beyond behaviours to understand need and be aware that the use of overly emotive language can affect how risk is seen
- ✚ Know the risk factors and predictability. Use all available tools to help identify risks of exploitation, especially the <https://pdscp.co.uk/working-with-children/child-exploitation/bcp-child-exploitation-toolkit/>
- ✚ Act on those critical and reachable moments in a child's life, e.g., when a child is excluded from school, or when they are injured or arrested. Adopting a flexible and responsive approach in the critical moment in a child's life can have a powerful influence on the direction taken after the event and after conversations have happened



Key messages for managers and Independent Reviewing Officers

- ✚ **Check a family's identity** and culture is understood and that language barriers are responded to appropriately – remember to book interpreters where needed
- ✚ **Support** practitioners to adopt flexible approaches in building relationships with children in their communities and focus upon understanding their worlds. This will keep practice rooted in the reality of children's lives
- ✚ **Escalation:** if risks are not reducing, despite interventions from specialist support, escalate to senior managers and directors where appropriate if criteria met (attach escalation process link) and/or via the IRO Dispute Resolution Process (attach link).
- ✚ **Analysis and management of risk:** promote the use of available tools in your teams and ensure referrals are made to the Complex Safeguarding Team when needed. Ensure practitioners are trained in responding to extra-familial harm and monitor assessments, plans and interventions at all levels of need, are well coordinated, SMART and evidence based

Key messages for the safeguarding system

- ✚ **Community Safety Partnership:** - develop and promote the Community Safety Partnership across the network to ensure pathways are clear and known to all agencies working with children and families, and that local information/knowledge and data is routinely shared and results in community safety actions being put in place
- ✚ **The role of the education system is key:** safeguarding systems should not focus solely on a child's behaviour in school. The context of school spaces and places need to be considered in terms of safety and likely/actual risk to children
- ✚ **Police disruption and Youth Justice Service interventions:** - develop consistent, effective police activities and strategies to identify, disrupt or stop those adults/organised crime groups exploiting children and to see the children involved through the lens of safeguarding. This requires a joined-up approach across the network to recognise and respond to environmental and extra-familial risks to children and young people within their own and wider communities
- ✚ **Work with parents/carers in tackling criminal exploitation:** - consider the work of Stop and Prevent Adolescent Criminal Exploitation (SPACE), the National Parents as Partners (NPIES), Parents Against Child Exploitation (PACE) and NWG forums when developing more effective systems and strategies when working with parents/carers in tackling criminal exploitation

A family's key message: listen to the parents, any siblings, and most importantly the child's voice and support us and work with families in a flexible and creative way.

Did you know? The following links offer useful further information and guidance:

- ✚ BCP Screening Tool is designed to help identify possible risks of exploitation [bcp-child-exploitation-screening-tool.docx \(live.com\)](#)
- ✚ Visit websites: Contextual Safeguarding Network, Home Office: Modern Slavery: Statutory Guidance for England and Wales (under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015) guidance on the National Referral Mechanism