# **cid:image001.jpg@01D564E3.3F9C4F60 Screening Tool**

# **Child Exploitation and Serious Youth Violence**

The screening tool uses the term ‘child’ deliberately to remind us that a child at risk of exploitation, going missing or a victim or perpetrator of serious youth violence is a child in need of protection and not a young adult making poor choices.

# The purpose of completing the screening tool is to identify whether there are indicators of child Exploitation or Serious Youth Violence. The screening tool can be applied to all children under the age of 18 years.

**It is intended to be a starting point to identify what is happening to a child - it is not a risk assessment.**

# **What do we know about Exploited Children and Serious Youth Violence?**

Children who are being exploited or, where there are indicators they may be exploited, will have varying levels of needs and they may have multiple vulnerabilities - yet exploitation does not occur because of a child’s vulnerability, it occurs because there is someone willing to take advantage of this vulnerability and because there are inadequate protective structures around the child and family to mediate against this.

Therefore, an appropriate multi- agency response and effective coordination is essential to ensure the child’s safety. We know that children do not make informed choices to enter or to remain in exploitative situations or commit serious violent harm and only do so through coercion, enticement, manipulation, self-preservation or desperation and it is critical that as professionals we are careful that we do not adopt a blame approach.

Although it is rare, parents/carers may be involved in the exploitation of their children. Since the perpetrator of harm is not usually within the family, we use the term ‘extra familial harm’

Your observations of behaviours and any significant changes will be important as children will often deny or be unaware that they are being exploited. Significant changes in behaviours, a single high-risk episode or multiple risk factors may indicate that the child is a victim of abuse through exploitation rather than a teenager experimenting with risk taking.

Important points to remember when considering child exploitation:

* Both girls and boys can be victims of child exploitation and serious youth violence are equally vulnerable.
* Disclosure of information by a child may take time and may only emerge during ongoing assessment, support and interventions with the child and/or family.
* Children and young people can be coerced, manipulated or deceived into sexual or criminal activity in exchange for something they need or want such as money, drugs, alcohol or accommodation. They may feel they are in control of a situation and not recognise they are being exploited.
* The coercer(s) and perpetrator(s) of child exploitation are usually adults, but some children and young people can also be coerced to bring other children into the exploitative relationship. Children may be both criminally and sexually exploited – and are unlikely to view themselves as having been exploited.
* Groups of children and multiple perpetrators may be involved (organised abuse).

**Definition**

**Exploitation** is the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person. It is taking advantage of another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain.

Exploitation comes in many forms, including, but not limited to:

* Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
* Child Criminal (Drug) Exploitation (CCE)
* Peer on Peer Exploitation
* Extra Familiar Harm and Exploitation
* Human trafficking – including intra and international trafficking
* Modern Slavery, including domestic servitude

Exploitation of children through radicalisation should be managed through the existing Prevent and Chanel structures.

**Serious Youth Violence** as currently defined by the pan Sussex Serious Violence Reduction Steering Group is violence that:

* + occurs in a public place, or has a victim, suspect or offenderunder the age of 25, and
  + either causes or is intended to cause serious injury (GBH/wounding criminal definition), or involves the use of one or more of the following:
  + a firearm
  + knife or other bladed/pointed weapon, whether made, adapted or intended as a weapon
  + other offensive weapon (whether made, adapted or intended), including acid or corrosive substance.

# **Guidance on the use of the Screening Tool**

1. You should talk to the child’s school or other agencies who know the child to ensure that there is a holistic and shared understanding of what is happening to a child.
2. Assessing or screening for child exploitation should not be seen as a one off event. Risks to children can quickly escalate, therefore regular use of the Screening Tool is advised. Any escalation of harm should be immediately brought to the attention of a Team Manager/IFD.
3. Children with additional needs require special consideration up to the age of 21 years. If your concerns are about a disabled child you must consider the child’s disability and additional needs in order to understand indicators relevant to the child. You must also consider how you can communicate effectively with the child, and any specific resources you need in order to reach an informed opinion.

# **Screening Tool - Child Exploitation and Serious Youth Violence**

**PART ONE – PERSONAL DETAILS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Child’s details | | Person completing Screening Tool | |
| Name |  | Name |  |
| Date of birth |  | Role |  |
| Address |  | Agency |  |
| School / College |  | Contact Tel no |  |
| Ethnicity/cultural background |  | Email Address |  |
| Disability or learning difficulty |  |  |  |

**PART TWO – OBSERVATIONAL FACTS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators of Child Exploitation** | **Please indicate Yes/Maybe/No/**  **Don’t Know** | **If indicator exists, please give timeframe of most recent occurrence** | **If Indicator exists please give details of frequency** |
| Period of missing | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Absences/exclusion from school or not engaged in school / college / training / work | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Leaving their home after a phone call / text message | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Unexplained or secretive journeys or appearing in new towns and cities with no apparent connection to this area | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Unexplained contact with taxi companies | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Enters/leaves vehicles driven by unknown adults | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Frequents locations of concern (e.g local park used by local drug dealers) | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Staying in or seen in hotels or b&b’s | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Child received money that family cannot account for | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Suspicious bank account activity or creation of new bank or paypal account | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has unexplained expensive gifts such as clothes, jewellery, mobile phone | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has more than one mobile phone or sim card | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Regular/multiple contacts from unknown adults/young people including frequent callers to address or mobile phone | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has a relationship of concern with a controlling individual (child or adult) | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Being accompanied to appointments by an unknown person that causes concern | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has relationship of concern with a controlling peer group | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Associating with others considered to be suffering child exploitation | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Use of a mobile phone which causes concern – including sexting | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Use of pc or gaming device which causes concern – such as arranging to meet unknown persons | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Unsafe use of internet, accessing inappropriate websites for age | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Sending or receiving sexual images or performing sexual activity online; | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Disclosure of sexual assault even if followed by withdrawal of allegation | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Sexually transmitted infections / pregnancies / termination of pregnancies | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Seeking emergency hormonal contraception | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| A&E attendance because of alcohol/drug misuse | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has a drug debt | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Found with drugs in excess of personal use | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Found with scales and bags used for supply of drugs | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Found with cling film and vaseline. | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has been found/seen in cars with known drug dealer | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has been the victim of a violent assault | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has physical injuries without plausible explanation | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has been the perpetrator of a violent assault | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Found with / carrying a weapon | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Has been involved in stealing | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Recent change in language, using new words associated with gang/groups | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Recent change in use of graffiti/tags | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Recent change in style of clothing | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Change in behaviour and/or emotional state including becoming more withdrawn, changes in peer group or becoming more isolated | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Increased drug or alcohol misuse | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Change in behaviour - self-harming/ suicide attempts / eating disorders | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Change in behaviour - Challenging behaviours / aggression | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Learning disability or cognitive functioning difficulties | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Lack of awareness/understanding of being safe | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Expressions of invincibility or not caring what happens to them | Please select | Please select | Please select |
| Increased interest in making money | Please select | Please select | Please select |

**PART THREE – PERSONAL OPINION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement of vulnerability for the child** | **Please indicate:**  **Yes/Maybe/**  **No/Don’t Know** | **Rationale for your opinion** |
| **Vulnerable to exploitation or serious extra- familial harm** | Please select |  |
| **Being groomed or targeted for exploitation or serious extra-familial harm** | Please select |  |
| **Being actively exploited or involved in a serious extra-familial harmful incident** | Please select |  |

**PART FOUR – SCALING**

When considering all aspects of this form please scale the child’s current risk of exploitation, with 0 meaning there is no evidence of exploitation and 5 meaning there is clear evidence of exploitation.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

Please submit this form to the Integrated Front Door to be passed to the Exploitation Hub

[wschildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:wschildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk)

If you think the child is at immediate risk of immediate harm you should contact the Police via 999 and

the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub via mash@westsussex.gov.uk