

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS BREAK THE CSE CYCLE

Everyone needs strong, positive relationships in order to thrive. For young people this could be a parent or guardian, but for many the professionals they come into contact with are equally important.

If young people trust the right adults around them, CSE can be stopped at an early stage.

If some or all of these tricks sound familiar to you, please contact your local CSE support service.



YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS ARE MOST AT RISK

Perpetrators tend to target young people who might be a bit low. This could be for many reasons including: poor mental health, learning difficulties, dysfunctional family relationships, recent bereavement, recent house or school move and social isolation amongst others.

We all need extra support sometimes. If a young person is getting the help they need they're less likely to be targeted.



PERPETRATORS USE FALSE SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES

It is easy for a perpetrator to hide their true identity and age by creating a false social media profile and posting a few attractive-looking photos. Often they add a few friends of the target young person to make it look like they are part of the same friendship circle.

If a young person has an adult they trust around them, they're more likely to open up about a new person they've met online.



THEY USE INFORMATION ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIAL MEDIA TO ESTABLISH COMMON GROUND WITH THEM

Perpetrators often trick young people into feeling that they have found someone who is really on their wavelength, with similar likes and interests as themselves. This can mean they are more likely to accept the offer of a face-to-face meeting.

When a young person already has strong bonds in their life, they're less likely to feel the need to meet up face to face. Even if they do, they are more likely to tell someone.



THEY SHOWER YOUNG PEOPLE WITH GIFTS

Groomers often give young people gifts they could not otherwise afford or have access to like: trainers and clothing, new devices, alcohol and drugs, jewellery. Sometimes, it isn't even material possessions; it can also be things like time, attention or affection.

If a young person already has a trusted adult to talk to, it can stop gifts and attention from an abuser having the desired impact.



THEY MAKE YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL THAT NOBODY ELSE REALLY UNDERSTANDS OR CARES FOR THEM

The perpetrator's goal is to isolate the young person and make them dependent on them. Whilst on the one hand, young people are made to feel loved, respected and accepted by the perpetrator, they are also made to feel that their other friends are disloyal or jealous or that their family are controlling and treat them like a kid.

Feeling that nobody understands you is common for young people. Having a positive connection with an adult can help people work through this.



THEY DESENSITIZE YOUNG PEOPLE, AND GET THEM TO SHARE INAPPROPRIATE IMAGES

Perpetrators of CSE often attempt to desensitise young people and normalise inappropriate behaviour- sometimes using pornography. A groomer may also try to persuade a young person to share sexually explicit images, which can be used against the young person.

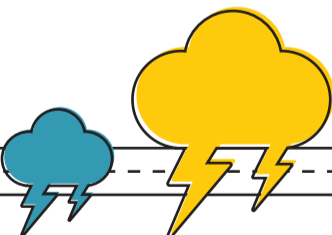
CSE workers train young people about the dangers of sharing explicit images online. If they understand the implications of this, they're less likely to be coerced into sharing them.



THEY MAKE YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL THAT THEY OWE THEM SOMETHING, AND SOMETIMES RESORT TO THREATS AND BLACKMAIL

Having accepted gifts and treats from a perpetrator, young people are then usually made to feel that they are indebted and that they owe something in return for what they have received.

If exploitation reaches this stage, it's vital the young person has access to specialist support to help them through the experience and to recover from it.



Catch22 provide services in many areas of the UK. Visit www.catch-22.org.uk/offers/missing-and-cse to find out more.