

#LookCloser

Partnership Campaign

14th-20th September 2020

Intranet Slides



The
Children's
Society



Key Messages of the campaign

#LookCloser focuses on how **public spaces** like bus and train stations, fast food outlets, shopping centres and hotels may be places where victims of exploitation are visible.

Children and young people who are being exploited may not always appear vulnerable or act the way we may expect victims should. If something doesn't feel right, it may not be.

Those working in the service, retail or transport industry are in a position to spot signs of exploitation and abuse

We also know that bias can be a huge barrier in identifying young people who are being exploited. #LookCloser highlights that there is **'no perfect victim'** and any young person can be exploited.

Ensure public spaces are safe for all young people

Young people can be exploited and abused anywhere

Look beyond the obvious – trauma can manifest in many different behaviours!

Collectively we can safeguard more young people if we all know what to look out for and how to report concerns to the police

Its important to challenge stereotypes of what a 'typical victim' of exploitation looks or acts like

Reachable moments

For every young person at risk of or experiencing exploitation and abuse there are 'reachable moments' where an appropriate intervention could protect them from harm.

Some key examples include:

- Any police interaction
 - Attending A&E
- Facing school exclusion
 - Returning from a missing episode

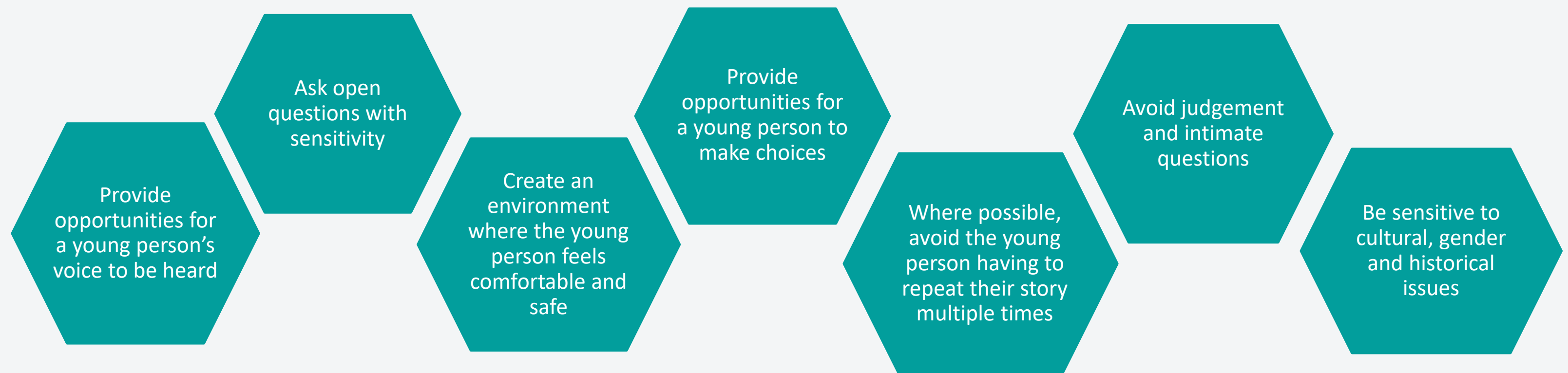
Reachable moments provide a crucial opportunity to safeguard young people from abuse

Positive Engagement with Young People

Because of the **complex nature of grooming and exploitation** it can sometimes be hard for professionals to see young people as victims, particularly older teens and young adults.

Anger and aggression are **common responses to trauma** and often surface when a young person feels scared or threatened. This includes encountering people in authority such as the police.

[Check out The Children's Society Big Up the Bill campaign and hear tips for police directly from young people](#)



It is important to **#LookCloser** for less obvious signs of grooming, exploitation and abuse. By recognising that there is no 'perfect victim' and any young person can be exploited, we can begin to understand their behaviours, improve engagement and ultimately safeguard more children.

Young people at The Childrens Society created this resource to describe the different stages of grooming. This line is not linear and young people can move between these stages.



Targeting stage

This is when a person or gang target a young person who is vulnerable, as this reduces their chances of getting caught. **Signs of this stage include a person or group:**

- * Observing you, finding out your vulnerabilities, needs and wants
- * Glamourising their lifestyle to you
- * Gaining and developing your trust
- * Sharing information about you with other members of their gang
- * Recruiting you to their gang or friendship group

Experience stage

This stage is where this person might try to get you used to their lifestyle, or train you up in what they're doing. **At this stage a person or gang might:**

- * Make you feel wanted
- * Give you gifts and rewards
- * Test out your loyalty
- * Offer you protection
- * Relate to you and offer you advice
- * Give you a sense of belonging
- * Give you a weapon
- * Introduce you to more established members of their gang

Hooked stage

This is the stage where people make you feel like you're a member of their gang, even though actually they're just exploiting you for their own gain. **Signs of this stage include:**

- * You getting more responsibilities within the group eg more money
- * You might be asked to commit low level crimes
- * You getting involved with trap houses
- * Asking you to recruit others to the gang
- * Engaging in activities such as drugs, alcohol and sexual behaviour

Trapped stage

Now you feel dependant on the group, the relationship with the person or group exploiting you may start to become unpleasant, as they reveal their true intents or character. **At this stage you may experience:**

- * Threatening behaviour and physical violence
- * People playing on your guilt, shame and fear
- * Attempts to isolate you from your family, friends and society
- * People forcing you to abuse others, assault or even shoot people
- * Involvement in Class A drugs (cooking or running)

Access the National
County Lines Co-
ordination Centre
video on the NRM
here:

[Via YouTube](#)

[Via Police Knowledge
Hub](#)

If you cannot access
the video, please
speak to your
National County
Lines Co-ordinator.

The National Referral Mechanism

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the framework for identifying victims of trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour and ensuring they receive the right support.

All police and local authority staff have a legal duty to refer anyone they think MAY potentially be a victim. They are not expected to be sure.

It is **best practice to submit an NRM in partnership with other agencies** as they may have valuable information to include.

If a child is being used for the benefit of others including to commit any crime, to work inappropriately, or take part in any sexual activity and they are being **moved or kept anywhere** for that purpose, they are being **trafficked** and an NRM ***must*** be completed

NRM Myth Busting!

It doesn't matter what I write on the NRM as long as it's completed and submitted	FALSE: It is vital to think about the language you include. A child who has been exploited is a <u>victim</u> . Words like 'prostitute' 'gang member' and 'streetwise', for example, suggest compliance rather than victimisation. Keep your submissions <u>factual and focused on exploitation indicators only</u> .
If a young person appears to be acting in knowledge and 'consent' of their actions an NRM can't be completed	FALSE: Groomed and exploited children cannot consent to their exploitation. It is our duty to look beyond the obvious to understand what may really be going on.
NRMs can help the pursuit and conviction of Organised Crime Groups and exploiters	TRUE: Police have a duty to raise a crime report and investigate for every NRM submission. Successful modern slavery charges act as a far stronger deterrent than drugs charges, including longer sentencing.
Young people are using the NRM to escape criminal convictions	FALSE: The NRM is NOT a 'get out of jail free' card and there is no guarantee that a positive NRM decision will see a young person 'let off'. Every case must be treated individually and we cannot allow professional bias to risk failing to protect children.

NRM Myth Busting!

Exploiters are abusing the system and telling young people to say they are a victim of trafficking to avoid criminal charges.	FALSE: A young person simply saying they are a victim doesn't mean they will be recognised as one by the NRM. However any young person under the influence of an exploiter is a victim and should be treated as such.
If a young person appears to be acting in knowledge and 'consent' of their actions an NRM can't be completed	FALSE: If you have grounds to SUSPECT that a young person may have been exploited, it is your legal duty to make a referral. State any signs and indicators you or other key professionals have observed including behaviour. The Home Office then makes the final decision.
If a young person's solicitor uses a Section 45 Modern Slavery defence later in the process, then this must be a false defence and trafficking has not occurred	FALSE: Young people who are being exploited will often give false accounts initially, due to fear and mistrust of professionals. Traffickers often coach young people to give false accounts and solicitors often advise them to plead guilty to get a shorter sentence. If there is a disclosure later in the process, or if professionals share information which identifies the young person is being exploited, then an NRM should be submitted.
The NRM should not be used for CCE and CSE cases	FALSE: ANY time where a young person has moved location or has been held for the purposes of exploitation, has been trafficked and this is grounds for an NRM.

[Access The Children's
Society's NRM
Guidance here](#)

[Access the Home
Office Disruption
Toolkit here](#)

IDENTIFYING VICTIMS: The NRM can be valuable as a framework for identifying potential victims and then advocating for appropriate interventions and support to prevent further exploitation and offending.

BUILDS THE INTELLIGENCE PICTURE: It is the main data source in understanding the scale of modern slavery in the UK.

DISRUPTION POWERS: The Modern Slavery Act offers a number of disruption powers, including Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders (STROs) and Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders (STPOs) as further deterrents.

INITIATES MODERN SLAVERY INVESTIGATIONS: Successful Modern Slavery charges act as a far stronger deterrent than drugs charges, including longer sentences.

Look beyond the obvious, young people:

May not
understand or
recognise they
are being
exploited

Need to feel
safe and heard,
in order to talk

Can be scared
about what
might happen
to them next



Don't always look
vulnerable or act
like we may
expect a victim
should



Will often
distrust the
police and other
adults in
authority

May have
committed
offences as part of
their exploitation

Need you to look
beyond the
obvious to
protect them
from harm

May behave
aggressively as
this is a common
response to
trauma