

# Are you a parent or carer worried about the **sexual exploitation** of a young person?



## What is child sexual exploitation?

- A child or young person, under the age of 18, being coerced into engaging in sexual activities with one or more adults.
- This can often include a 'grooming' stage where the young person may receive certain things (e.g. mobile phone, alcohol, drugs, attention or gifts) in exchange for sexual activities. This can happen prior to or after the sexual activity taking place.
- The young person may be tricked into believing that they are in a loving, consensual relationship with their abuser, and often will not recognise the abuse taking place.
- Sexual exploitation can take place both over the internet and face-to-face.

## What is grooming?

Grooming is where an adult builds up an emotional connection and relationship with a child in order to gain their trust for the purpose of sexually exploiting them. Often because a relationship has been established the child will not recognise this as a form of sexual abuse.

The MASH consists of the agencies who are involved in both tackling and supporting children and young people affected by Child Sexual Exploitation in Norfolk and is made up of Police, Children's Services, Health and specialist Voluntary sector agencies.

If you have any concerns call the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

**0344 800 8020**

# Look out for the signs

- Staying out late or period of going missing overnight or longer
- Older 'boyfriend/girlfriend' or relationship with a controlling adult
- Physical injury without plausible explanation
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothing or other items
- Disclosure of sexual/physical assault followed by withdrawal of allegation
- Expressions of despair (e.g. self-harm, overdose, eating disorder, challenging behaviour, aggression)
- Lack of engagement with education
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Peers involved in sexual exploitation
- Drugs or alcohol misuse
- Unusual or increased use of mobile phone that causes concern
- Unusual or increased use of the internet that causes concern

**These could be signs that your child is being groomed and sexually exploited.**

“I thought they were safe in their room on the computer. I wish I'd known the signs and the dangers, I wish I had kept her safe”

Parent

## What to do if you're worried about a child or young person

- Contact the MASH on **0344 800 8020** and ask to speak to someone in the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Team (MASE)
- If it's an emergency situation then call the Police on **999**
- Talk to your child's school about your concerns.
- Contact Parents against Child Sexual Exploitation (Pace) helpline **0113 240 3040**
- A young person who is at risk of, or is being sexually exploited can call the ROSE Project helpline **0808 800 1037** or live chat [magdalenegroup.org/rose-project](http://magdalenegroup.org/rose-project)

