

7 Minute Briefing Child Sexual Abuse

RNOH Safeguarding Children Team



Background

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Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The acts can be physical contacts, penetrative or non-penetrative. The child may not understand that they are being abused and may not recognise it's wrong.

CSA can also include non-contact abuse such as involving a child or young person in looking at or being part of sexual online images, watching sexual acts or encouraging them to act sexually inappropriately. This also includes child sexual exploitation and grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)

Why it Matters

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Our childhood matters – it is important in its own right but it also shapes every aspect of our future lives. Child sexual abuse is one of the adverse childhood experiences, the impact can last a life time. A report reveals the vast majority of child sexual abuse (66%) takes place within the family or its trusted circle. There are additional barriers to children reporting this type of abuse resulting in most going unreported

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Protecting-children-from-harm-full-report.pdf>



Questions to consider:

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How might you observe any of the warning signs?

What sort of issues might make some young people more vulnerable to CSA?

Have you thought the unthinkable? Remember most CSA is perpetrated by family or close relatives.



Children and young people who have disabilities are at an increased risk of being abused compared with their non-disabled peers. Sometimes there is a power imbalance. Peers can abuse each other too. Look out for Disabled Children – they are more vulnerable to every form of abuse! Find out more here:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2019/november/podcast-preventing-the-sexual-abuse-of-disabled-children>



Learning Disability information here:

<https://www.csacentre.org.uk/documents/effectiveness-learning-difficulties-care/>



What to do:

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If you are worried about a child suffering from child sexual abuse please initially consult with the Safeguarding Children Team to discuss what action and procedure you should follow. Contact us on: 020 8909 5337

Gain advice if you receive a disclosure or if you have concerns before you speak with family members, or people may be placed at risk.

Perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse are not easy to spot! They take advantage of any opportunity and they can take a lot of time to groom a child or family. 5-10% of all CSE is carried out by women.

Find out more here:

<https://www.csacentre.org.uk/our-research/perpetration/a-typology-of-csa-offending/>



Online abuse is prevalent - Child Pornography is not a term we use – it's Child Sexual Abuse and it's a crime. Pornography is a term used for adults engaging in consensual sexual acts. When children are involved, it is not pornography. Using the incorrect terminology can trivialise sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

