



Child Sexual Exploitation

(**Reference:** Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation Supplementary guidance to Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under The Children Act 2004

[gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/policy/110107guidanceen.pdf](https://www.gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/policy/110107guidanceen.pdf))

Definition:

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is the coercion or manipulation of children and young people into taking part in sexual activities. It is a form of sexual abuse involving an exchange of some form of payment which can include money, mobile phones and other items, drugs, alcohol, a place to stay, 'protection' or affection. The vulnerability of the young person and grooming process employed by perpetrators renders them powerless to recognise the exploitative nature of relationships and unable to give informed consent.

Children are not criminals

Children and young people who are sexually exploited should not be regarded as being bad or committing a criminal act: they are the victims of sexual abuse. The responsibility for the sexual exploitation of children or young people lies with the abuser: either the person who pays for sex, in some way, or the person who grooms the child and/or organises the exploitation.

The focus of police investigations and of prosecutions should be on those who coerce, exploit, and abuse children and young people.

A multi-agency response should ensure that barriers such as differences in agency roles, cultures and perspectives do not impact on specialist safeguarding knowledge and practice in a way that is detrimental to children and young people.

The guidance is aimed primarily at Safeguarding Board partners, managers and practitioners, but it is relevant for all professionals working with children, young people and families. The guidance is advisory for those private and voluntary organisations that come into contact with, or offer services to, children. However, voluntary and community sector agencies often have a close relationship with their local communities and can develop trusting relationship and maintain a link to the children or young person if they become 'lost' to statutory services.

The guidance applies to male and female children up to the age of 18 years irrespective of whether they are living independently, at home, with carers, or in a residential setting.

Frontline workers should be familiar with vulnerabilities and common risk factors that may indicate CSE and have access to the sexual exploitation risk assessment framework (SERAF).

www.barnardos.org.uk/serafservice.htm

The Serious Crimes Act (2015), Part 5 refers to the protection of children and clarifies the law on the use of social media in sexually exploiting children.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is recognised as an offence by this Act and a mandatory duty to report is placed upon a person who works in a regulated profession in England and Wales. They must make a notification under section 5B (an 'FGM notification') if, in the course of his or her work in the profession, the person discovers that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18.

For the purposes of this section, a person works in a 'regulated profession' if the person is:

- a healthcare professional
- a teacher, or
- a social care worker in Wales (registered position with Social Care Wales).



Reporting in Wales

Professionals in Wales will need to report to both the police and the local authority.

The all-Wales child protection procedures, adopted by all safeguarding boards in Wales, provide a consistent framework for referral, consideration and determining action by all safeguarding partners in Wales, including a dedicated protocol on FGM. This requires individuals to report known cases of FGM to the local authority.

Domestic abuse

The Act criminalises controlling or coercive behaviour in family relationships, the effect of which is to leave an individual in fear of violence or have an adverse effect upon their day-to-day activities.

In Wales the *Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) 2015 Act* focuses on the prevention of these issues, the protection of victims and support for those affected by such issues.

The Act will require the development of a national strategy and local authorities will have to report on how they are addressing gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence in their areas.

Guidance will also be provided to establish a National Training Framework to ensure key groups of workers receive training to identify and combat gender-based, domestic and sexual violence.

Ask and act is a process of targeted enquiry to be practised across the public service to identify violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. It will provide training (under part two of the National Training Framework) in the delivery of a consistent step-by-step approach to making enquiries.