

# Safeguarding Children – Update for Primary Care

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# Agenda

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- » Harm
- » Confidentiality
- » Record keeping
- » Referrals and capacity
- » Grooming
- » Trafficking
- » The internet, social media and signs that Primary Care should recognise
- » How to differentiate from 'normal' behaviour'
- » Case Studies
- » Questions

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## Aims and objectives of today

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- » Increase/refresh knowledge
- » Look at role and expectations for GP's in this area
- » Referral pathways

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## Introduction

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- » My role as a solicitor in Safeguarding Children

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## Significant Harm

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- » Harm
- » Significant harm
- » Physical, sexual, emotional, neglect
- » Have we moved on since Baby P – do we intervene earlier?
- » Current issues include:
  - » Human trafficking,
  - » CSE, grooming,
  - » Radicalisation and removal from the UK – Shamima Begum

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# Confidentiality

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## » Confidentiality

- » Children are owed the same duty of confidentiality as adults;
- » parental consent and parental responsibility;
- » the child with capacity;
- » protecting the child from significant harm;
- » safeguarding is a proportionate exception;
- » distinguish a child in need from safeguarding.



- » Record Keeping
  - » Evidence;
  - » Production of records in a variety of scenarios:
    - » Child protection
    - » Family Court
    - » Criminal Court
    - » Serious Case Review
    - » Child Death Overview Panel
    - » Coroner
    - » Regulatory



- » Referrals and capacity
  - » exercising professional judgment upon making a referral;
  - » Social Care single referral portal;
  - » Social Care are the investigating body;
  - » Children and young people with capacity;





## » Risk Management

- » Know your role and the limits of it;
- » Don't be afraid to disagree;
- » Keep good records;
- » Audit and review
- » Multi agency working – Police, Social Care, Health

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## Background

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- » Ore, Yewtree, Rochdale, Rotherham
- » Operation Sanctuary
- » What happened to the agenda of change for children?
- » Austerity Britain – Care Crisis Review
- » Social Care and Health – budgets and resources
- » Increase in Care Proceedings
- » Decrease in pre-proceedings services and intervention

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## Forthcoming Changes – by September 2019

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- » LSCB – will be Local Safeguarding Partnerships (LSP)
- » SCR – will be National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
- » CDOP – Child Death Review Partners

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## Grooming

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- » Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking
- » Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional.
- » Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age.
- » Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abuse
- » Normalised behaviour – peer pressure

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## What is Grooming?

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- » Secrets and intimidation to control children
- » Once they have established trust, groomers will exploit the relationship by isolating the child from friends or family and making the child feel dependent on them. They will use any means of power or control to make a child believe they have no choice but to do what they want.
- » Groomers may introduce 'secrets' as a way to control or frighten the child. Sometimes they will blackmail the child, or make them feel ashamed or guilty, to stop them telling anyone about the abuse

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## What is Grooming?

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- » Groomers may look for:
  - » usernames or comments that are flirtatious or have a sexual meaning;
  - » public comments that suggest a child has low self-esteem or is vulnerable;
  - » Groomers don't always target a particular child. Sometimes they will send messages to hundreds of young people and wait to see who responds;
  - » Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity.

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## Signs of Grooming

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- » The signs of grooming aren't always obvious and groomers will often go to great lengths not to be identified.
- » If a child is being groomed they may:
  - » be very secretive, including about what they are doing online
  - » have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
  - » go to unusual places to meet friends;
  - » have new things such as clothes or mobile phones that they can't or won't explain;
  - » have access to drugs and alcohol;
  - » In older children, signs of grooming can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour, but you may notice unexplained changes in behaviour or personality, or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age

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## How common is Grooming?

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- » We don't know how common grooming is because often children don't tell anyone what is happening to them.
- » Children may not speak out because they are:
  - » ashamed;
  - » feeling guilty;
  - » unaware that they're being abused;
  - » believe they are in a relationship with a 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend'.



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## What is Grooming?

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- » Grooming happens both online and in person. Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time gaining a child's trust. Groomers may try to gain the trust of a whole family to allow them to be left alone with a child and if they work with children they may use similar tactics with their colleagues.
- » Groomers do this by:
  - » pretending to be someone they are not, for example saying they are the same age online;
  - » offering advice or understanding;
  - » buying gifts;
  - » giving the child attention;
  - » using their professional position or reputation;
  - » taking them on trips, outings or holidays.

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## Who is affected by Grooming?

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- » Grooming can affect any child. However, some children may be more at risk than others such as children who are disabled or in care.
- » Groomers will exploit any vulnerability to increase the child or young person's dependence on them, and reduce the likelihood of the child speaking out.

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## What is child trafficking?

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- » Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.
- » Children are trafficked for:
  - » child sexual exploitation
  - » benefit fraud
  - » forced marriage
  - » domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
  - » forced labour in factories or agriculture
  - » criminal activity such as pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.
- » Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

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## Abuse and neglect of trafficked children

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- » Trafficked children experience multiple forms of abuse and neglect.
- » Physical, sexual and emotional violence are often used to control victims of trafficking. Children are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected

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## Trafficking and child slavery

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- » Children are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes. Traffickers use grooming techniques to gain the trust of a child, family or community.
- » They may threaten families, but this isn't always the case
- » Traffickers may promise children education or persuade parents their child can have a better future in another place.
- » Sometimes families will be asked for payment towards the 'service' a trafficker is providing – for example sorting out the child's documentation prior to travel or organising transportation.
- » Traffickers make a profit from the money a child earns through exploitation, forced labour or crime. Often this is explained as a way for a child to pay off a debt they or their family 'owe' to the traffickers.
- » Although these are methods used by traffickers, coercion, violence or threats do not need to be proven in cases of child trafficking - a child cannot legally consent so child trafficking only requires evidence of movement and exploitation



- » Online social networks
- » Groomers can use social media sites, instant messaging apps including teen dating apps, or online gaming platforms to connect with a young person or child – Xbox live, WhatsApp, messaging, Face Book, twitter, online dating
- » They can spend time learning about a young person’s interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship.
- » It’s easy for groomers to hide their identity online - they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become ‘friends’ with children they are targeting.
- » Fortnite and other MMORPG



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## Signs of Grooming

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- » If you're worried that a child is being abused, watch out for any unusual behaviour.
- » NSPCC signs to look out for:
- » *Withdrawn - suddenly behaves differently – anxious – clingy – depressed – aggressive - problems sleeping - eating disorder - wets the bed - soils clothes - takes risks - misses school - changes in eating habits - obsessive behaviour –nightmares – drugs – alcohol - self-harm - thoughts about suicide*

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## Signs of trafficking

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- » Appearing malnourished.
- » Showing signs of physical injuries and abuse.
- » Avoiding eye contact, social interaction, and authority figures/law enforcement.
- » Seeming to adhere to scripted or rehearsed responses in social interaction.
- » Lacking official identification documents.
- » Appearing destitute/lacking personal possessions.
- » Absence from school, social isolation
- » Gang affiliation, tattoos
- » Less appropriately dressed than before
- » Sexualized behaviour
- » Overly tired in class
- » Withdrawn, depressed, distracted



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## How to distinguish from normal behaviour?

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- » What is normal behaviour – subjective, holistic and contextual
- » Legal - s.31(10) Children Act 1989
  - » *Where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child*
- » Practical
  - » Very difficult – signs of grooming and trafficking don't mean that they are being groomed and/or trafficked
  - » Can't expect children to speak about their problems – may not think they have them
  - » Referrals
  - » Support
  - » Training – professional judgement

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## Case Studies

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- » 14 year old boy – presented for medical treatment by someone who cannot not prove they are a parent – possible fracture to leg – bruising - boy looks much older than 15 – speaks some English but appears withdrawn
- » 16 year old British Indian Muslim girl – raises issues of HBV, return to India against her will for marriage, assaulted by parents, forced to drink bleach and vinegar
- » 14 year old girl – presents with her mother who is concerned as to emotional health – self harm – girl very quiet – mother leaves the room to take a phone call – girl says she needs to tell you something about her boyfriend Paul, she wants contraception, mother can't know, she will kill her if she finds out

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## Conclusions

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- » 3 key areas
- » Take safeguarding seriously, key safeguarding roles and networks
- » Training – keep up to date
- » Record keeping – keep records up to date with all key facts and data

Any questions?



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## Your speaker

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