

**SOMETHING'S  
NOT RIGHT**

## **Child Exploitation**

is happening in Warwickshire

**Don't ignore it**



**INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WORKING  
AT LICENSED PREMISES IN WARWICKSHIRE**

## What is Child Exploitation (CE)?

Child exploitation is when an abuser takes advantage of a young person for their own personal gain. This can take many forms, including sexual exploitation or encouraging or coercing the child to commit crime. It often comes with the promise of something they desire as a reward and without knowing they are being exploited.

All children and young people have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse.

## How does Child Exploitation affect licensed premises?

Licensed Premises can be used as locations to exploit and abuse vulnerable children. A premise is particularly vulnerable if it is a location where children congregate, or where children can be easily accessed by offenders. Locations of concern include takeaways and food outlets, alcohol outlets, shopping centres, parks and areas with no parental supervision.

As part of the grooming process, adults may meet young people, or take them to licensed premises to develop a relationship of trust and make them feel special by giving them 'treats' such as meals or alcohol. A premise could be misused for this kind of activity by the people who are socialising or working there.

Under the Licensing Act 2003, premises licence holders and designated premises supervisors have a legal responsibility to make sure that children and young people are protected from harm at their premises. The guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act requires that children must be protected from 'physical, psychological and moral harm', so premises allowing persons under the age of 18 are expected to have systems in place to safeguard children and young people.

To minimise the risk to children and young people, premises need to have preventive systems in place. There may also be a financial and reputational risk, particularly if legal action is taken against a premise, which can result in the suspension or revocation of the licence. It is important that the risk of child exploitation is managed at your premises, to protect children and young people from harm - and to protect your business.

**Even if you don't work with children directly, whatever business or organisation you work in, you still have a responsibility to help protect children from exploitation and report it.**

Hoteliers, taxi drivers, bar tenders and retail workers (amongst others) may hold vital information about the movement of victims and perpetrators. Raising awareness of CE amongst people who work in local services and businesses is crucial in preventing exploitation and protecting the community.

## How to spot the signs of child exploitation in your premises

- Adults befriending young people and buying them food, drinks and cigarettes
- Young people under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Girls or boys with older people who they are behaving in an intimate way with
- Child being taken to areas of licensed premises that are not supervised or security checked
- A customer of the premises seen with different children
- Same child/children being seen at the premises with different adults
- Young person who appears under the control or instruction of others
- Young person shoplifting, potentially for exploiters
- Young people that look distressed, intimidated, frightened, dishevelled or disorientated
- Men requesting regular taxi rides to and from locations with young people
- Adults who appear edgy in the company of young people
- Young people in the premise at unsocial hours
- You may overhear conversations or witness concerning activity within the premises

## EXAMPLES

- **Licensed premises may attract groomers if the premises are frequented by children or young people.**
- **Where underage drinking takes place, children and young people are at risk as their judgement could be impaired.**
- **Offenders may use shops and food outlets to purchase gifts that can be offered to children in exchange for exploitative acts, including alcohol to intoxicate children and make them more vulnerable to abuse.**
- **Premises providing facilities for private parties, private dancing/entertainment booths or overnight accommodation, may be vulnerable to the risk of child sexual exploitation in particular.**
- **Children and young people are vulnerable in areas of premises that are not supervised or security checked (for example, toilets, beer gardens, play zones).**
- **Risk may be present at premises where technology is used (for example, internet access, mobile phones) as social media can be used to groom vulnerable young people; cameras may be used in order to record or distribute indecent images of children.**
- **Premises providing goods or services that can be offered to children as gifts in exchange for exploitative acts (for example, free food, drinks or cigarettes free transport, free access to a venue) present risk if a groomer is employed there (or works voluntarily) and has regular or private contact with children.**

## Risk management and due diligence

Under the Licensing Act 2003, the 'due diligence' defence can be used to protect your business, if you can demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken to manage risk. Here are some suggested safeguarding measures to help evidence 'due diligence' and keep children safe.

- Undertake a written children and young people's risk assessment and use it to inform your operating policy and staff training.
- Staff should be trained to recognise indicators of child sexual exploitation and know how to report concerns.
- Staff should be trained to operate an age verification scheme, know what types of identification are acceptable and to recognise signs of proxy purchase of alcohol.
- Staff training records should be maintained.
- Activity at the premises should be monitored (for example using CCTV or by regular patrols. Patrol records should be maintained.)
- Suspicious activity should be reported to the police (including details such as vehicle registration numbers, description of individuals) and should be recorded in your incident log.
- If you, or your staff, are in a situation involving the supervision of a vulnerable young person at your premises, it is important to follow a consistent and auditable protocol - for further advice about this contact the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board on 01926 742510.
- If you have a delivery service (for example hot food) enforce a Code of Conduct to promote good safeguarding when deliveries are made to unaccompanied children.

## What to do if you have concerns about child exploitation

Support and advice is always available. You can use any of the ways below to get help:

- If you think a child or young person is being exploited, you can contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub between 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, on 01926 414144.
- You can also make a report to Warwickshire Police via [www.warwickshire.police.uk](http://www.warwickshire.police.uk) or by calling 101, or you can contact your local Children and Family Centre.
- Contact Crimestoppers confidentially and anonymously on 0800 555 111.

**If you think a child or young person is at immediate risk contact the police on 999.**

## REMEMBER...

**Child exploitation is happening in Warwickshire. If something's not right, report it.**

**Under the Licensing Act 2003 your premises licence may be at risk if you do not take action to protect children.**