



TAXI DRIVER WORKBOOK

Say something if you see something

- In Lancashire, we believe that local businesses can play a positive role in preventing Child Sexual Exploitation and human trafficking, which puts children (and your business) at risk!
- Taxi drivers can specifically form a crucial part of the fight against these issues and be the eyes and ears of the community, providing potentially important information to authorities.
- By working together we can play a positive role in protecting children and local businesses.

Introduction

This is a workbook aimed at taxi drivers, whether from the licenced taxi or private hire trade. The aim of it is to help educate taxi drivers about their responsibilities in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

It is possible that you have been in or observed situations which did not feel right or know people you are not comfortable with. (In one instance, where a taxi driver was convicted of offences against an adult, his colleagues knew him as 'touchy-feely' Bob). In another, a particular take-away was well known to taxi drivers for sexual exploitation of young people.

Current Government guidance states that child protection is everybody's business (not just Social Workers and Police Officers), so taxi drivers can also become involved in safeguarding children.

It is good practice for everybody who comes into contact with children and their families in their day to day work to know what to do if they have concerns about safeguarding. This workbook is a chance for taxi drivers to learn what they can do to help safeguard children and young people.

Abuse can happen to any child or young person, regardless of gender, age, race, ability or culture. Acting on concerns and sharing information is the first step in safeguarding children. It is also a duty.

This workbook is about Child sexual Exploitation (CSE), which is a form of sexual abuse.

What is Sexual exploitation (CSE)?

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse, in which a child or young person is manipulated, or forced into taking part in a sexual act. This could be as part of a seemingly consensual relationship, or in return for attention, affection, money, drugs, alcohol, somewhere to stay, or some other benefit (e.g. career opportunity).

The abuser may manipulate the child or young person to think that the abuser is their friend, or even a boyfriend or girlfriend. But they will put them into dangerous situations, forcing the young person to do things they don't want to do. The abuser may physically or verbally threaten the young person or be violent towards them. They will control and manipulate them, and try to isolate them from friends and family.

Grooming

In order to prepare children or young people for abuse and not get caught, most abusers groom their victims. Grooming happens both online and in person. Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time gaining a child or young person's trust. They may also try to gain the trust of the whole family so they can be alone with the child.



The grooming line



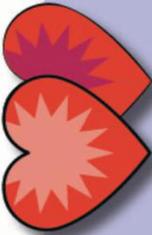
Targeting stage

- Observing the child/young person
- Selection of child/young person
- Befriending – being nice, giving gifts, caring, taking an interest, giving compliments, etc
- Gaining and developing trust
- Sharing information about young people between other abusive adults



Friendship forming stage

- Making young people feel special
- Giving gifts and rewards
- Spending time together
- Listening and remembering
- Keeping secrets
- Being there for them
- 'No-one understands you like I do'; being their best friend
- Testing out physical contact – accidental touching
- Offering protection



Loving relationship stage

- Being their boyfriend/girlfriend
- Establishing a sexual relationship
- Lowering their inhibitions – eg showing them pornography
- Engaging them in forbidden activities – eg going to clubs, drinking, taking drugs
- Being inconsistent – building up hope and then punishing them



Abusive relationship stage

- Becomes an 'unloving' sexual relationship
- Withdrawal of love and friendship
- Reinforcing dependency on them – stating young person is 'damaged goods'
- Isolation from family and friends
- Trickery and manipulation – 'you owe me'
- Threatening behaviour
- Physical violence
- Sexual assaults
- Making them have sex with other people
- Giving them drugs
- Playing on the young person's feeling of guilt, shame and fear

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 or young person attention
- Using their professional position or reputation
- Taking them on trips, outings or holidays.

Once they have established trust, groomers will exploit the relationship by isolating the child or young person from friends or family and making them feel dependent on them. They will use any means of power or control to make a child or young person believe they have no choice but to do what they want.

Groomers may introduce 'secrets' as a way to control or frighten the child or young person. Sometimes they will blackmail the child, or make them feel ashamed or guilty, to stop them telling anyone about the abuse.

In parallel, offenders also need to groom protective adults and the environment. This can mean credible explanations given to others in the environment, such as taxi drivers.

Some locations (e.g. park/arcade/shopping centre) become hotspots for grooming children and young people. As a taxi driver, you may start noticing these places.





Offenders

Abusers often make use of certain businesses and premises when carrying out child sexual exploitation. For example, they:

- Use places where people socialise and relax to befriend and 'groom' victims
- Buy their victims 'treats' such as food, alcohol, cigarettes or gifts
- Help their victims gain access to over-18 establishments and parties
- Frequent venues known to be regularly visited by children or young people, e.g. shopping centres and entertainment complexes
- Take advantage of young people drinking alcohol (underage), whose judgement is impaired
- Provide victims with free transport using taxis
- Use their place of work to 'groom' children or young people – for example by giving them free or 'VIP' access
- Groom victims left unsupervised in areas such as toilets, entertainment booths, beer gardens or 'play zones'
- Use information technology to record and distribute images of children and young people
- Use those venues that provide private areas or overnight accommodation to take advantage of vulnerable victims

Definition of Human Trafficking

Children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation are also vulnerable to human trafficking across towns and cities.

Human trafficking can involve transporting a child or young person from one location to another for the purpose of exploitation or abuse. Trafficking within the UK is an offence irrespective of distance travelled and can be applied to movements within the same street.

Most children and young people are trafficked for financial gain. Trafficking is carried out by organised gangs and individuals. As children cannot consent to be exploited, Human Trafficking is an offence under the:

Sexual Offences Act (2003) - for sexual exploitation,
Asylum and Immigration Act (2004) - for exploitation
Coroners & Justice Act (2009) – for slavery servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

If a taxi driver transports a child knowing or believing that child will be sexually exploited during or after the journey the driver will commit an offence of Human Trafficking.



Vulnerabilities

Certain groups of people are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Whilst all children can be vulnerable at different times, some factors make them particularly vulnerable.

Children who may be at risk are:

- Unaccompanied children under the age of 10 years
- Children who have a learning difficulty or disability
- Children whose parent have a mental health issues, use substances or are in a domestic violence relationship
- Children who travel with adults who do not appear to be their parents; carers or relatives to hotels, party houses
- Young people who appear distressed or frightened

As a taxi driver, you will be aware of the issues which can make passengers vulnerable. These can also mean that exploitation or trafficking is more likely:

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Age
- Separated from friends
- Communication issues (deaf/blind/language barrier)
- No means of payment
- Disability (physical/learning)
- Stranger to area
- Illness (Mental or physical)



Responsibilities of taxi drivers

- You have a duty of care whilst you have passengers
- You have a moral/social responsibility to report a concern about a vulnerable person
- Reporting a concern could save a life
- As a public service you are the eyes and ears of the community

If you have any concerns about :

- Young people in your vehicle because they may be injured or distressed
- The location you drop off or pick up- be aware of addresses you take young people to. You may get the same job regularly!
- The adults paying the fares
- A conversation you can hear

Then you should pass on any information you have to the Police on 101 or Crimestoppers on

0800 555 111



Information to share

- Names of your passengers if known
- Locations and addresses of the places you are concerned about – such as where you picked up and dropped off at
- Description of the people in your cab if you can see them clearly
- If there are cars you think are suspicious or you pick a young person up and they get out of a car- share the license plate number and car description
- Share what is concerning you about the activity



Good safeguarding tips

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you have a concern about a child, a family or another taxi driver:

Share information-don't sit on it

Never follow a passenger into a house unless previously agreed

Keep yourself safe-don't intervene IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 999

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.childrensociety.org.uk/CSE

www.stopitnow.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk/.../child.../child-sexual-exploitation/what-is-child-sexual-exploitation/

<https://www.lancashire.police.uk/help-advice/child-safety/child-sexual-exploitation.aspx>

www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/sexual_exploitation.htm

NSPCC ChildLine 08001111

National working group <http://www.nwgnetwork.org/>

CEOP <https://www.ceop.police.uk/>

