



county lines exploitation

and where to go for help

A guide for parents, carers
and people working with children

unseen



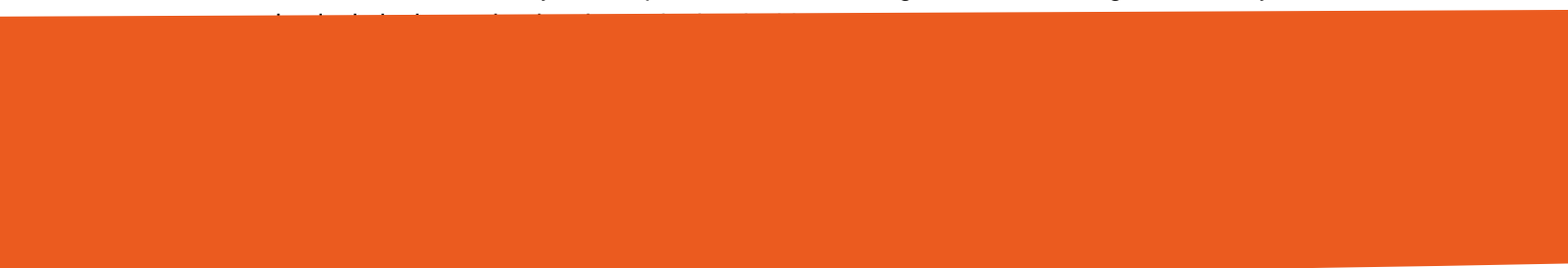


...drugs. They are recruited by gang members who... young people into a terrifying cycle of violence, exploitation and abuse.

... caught up in County Lines are not criminals – they are victims of exploitation at the hands of organised criminal gangs.

2. county lines is big business

The criminals who run County Lines operations turn over huge amounts of drugs and money. The



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Once trust is achieved, a common recruitment tactic involves a staged mugging. The victim will be entrusted with something of value, for example a watch, belonging to the gang member. They will then watch has been “stolen”. They will then tell the victim they need to pay back the value of the watch, and give them packages to deliver.

These packages will usually contain drugs and the child will become trapped in a cycle of forced criminal exploitation. This often begins by being told to deliver packages, and often extends into selling the drugs contained in the packages, travelling across the UK on public transport at all times of day and night.

how to spot the signs

something to be concerned about.

The list of signs below gives an indication of what to look out for. No single item on the list necessarily suggests there is a problem. You might not observe every single item either.

seeking help.

More than one phone

Large amounts of cash

New, expensive belongings

Staying out regularly with “friends”

Unexplained absences at school

Presence of

how to talk to a child/young person who you think may be at risk of county lines

- **Try taking an indirect approach to raise your concerns.**

You could say a friend at work was talking about child exploitation/County Lines/gangs and give a few details – for example you could describe what County Lines is, or talk about the ways gangs groom children and make it hard for them to walk away. You could ask whether your child knows about it. Do they think any of their friends or school mates might be involved and need help?

- **Alternatively, you could choose a quiet time and ask directly.**

Ask them if you can talk. Tell them that you care about them and you are worried that they are showing signs of being caught up in some activity that might not be safe.

Let them know that you can help them, that you understand they might be frightened but that you are there to help them make different choices if they want to and you will help them, and the rest of your family, to stay safe, no matter what is going on.

Remember, your child may be being coerced into doing things they feel embarrassed or

9. how to get help

call the modern slavery & exploitation helpline on

08000 121 700

you can also report online at

www.modernslaveryhelpline.org