

saferlondon

Could you spot if a young person is being sexually exploited?

Sexual exploitation is when a person under 18 is pressured into performing sexual acts. This often involves a stage of 'grooming', in which the young person might receive something such as protection, affection, money, a mobile phone, drugs, alcohol or clothes.

Knowing the signs of sexual exploitation and what support is available can help equip parents, carers and the wider community with the tools they need to respond to concerns they may have about a child or young person.

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24/7, FREE,
ANONYMOUS, CALL OR TXT
116 000

[#SaySomething](https://www.samaritans.org/campaigns/say-something)

Typical vulnerabilities in young people prior to abuse

Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer

Low self-esteem or self-confidence

They are a young carer

Recent bereavement or loss

Gang association through relatives/peers or intimate relationships

Learning disabilities

Unsure of their sexual orientation or unable to disclose to family

Friends with, or attending school with, young people who are sexually exploited

Homelessness

Lacking friends from the same age group

Living in a gang-affected area

Living in residential care

Signs and behaviours generally seen in sexually exploited young people

Missing from home or care

Physical injuries

Drug or alcohol misuse

Thoughts of, or attempts at, suicide

Involvement in offending

Repeat sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy or terminations

Absent from school

Change in their physical appearance

Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability online

Mental health issues

In receipt of gifts from unknown sources

Self-harming

Please note: these indicators should be regarded as a guide and may not apply in all cases.