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BACKGROUND

This briefing highlights key points from Working Together to Safeguard People Volume 7 (Safeguarding Children from Child Sexual Exploitation), Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

This replaces Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual exploitation - supplementary guidance to safeguarding children: Working Together under The Children Act 2004 (Welsh Government, 2011).



Working Together to Safeguard People Volume 7: Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation

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IDENTIFYING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The identification of child sexual exploitation should be based on the knowledge and understanding of practitioners, rather than on risk assessment tools. Assessment tools such as the Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (SERAF), which should only be used as part of a wider assessment of care and support needs.

Research suggests CSE is hidden, misunderstood and under identified for some groups of children. Media representations and reporting, has reinforced certain misconceptions.

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FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For full guidance, please click [link](#)

For the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board's resource hub dashboard, please click [link](#).

For Wales Safeguarding procedures and links to exploitation practice guides please click [link](#)

For further information and resources in relation to CSE and sexual abuse, please click [link](#) - (Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse).



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IDENTIFYING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Although statistics indicate more girls are exploited than boys, practitioners may be influenced by stereotypes, which impact on their ability to see boys as equally vulnerable, leading to under identification of abuse. Research suggests children with a disability are 3 times more likely to be abused than those without a disability. Young people with learning difficulties are particularly vulnerable due to many factors including social isolation. A lack of support and information for LGBT children also puts them at an increased risk.

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Regional Safeguarding Boards

Relevant partners of the safeguarding boards must:

- Agree regional arrangements, to bring together agencies in regular partnership meetings to consider CSE and related safeguarding issues, such as children going missing, child trafficking and child criminal exploitation.
- Ensure practitioners are aware of the signs and indicators of CSE
- Ensure relevant CSE training is available to practitioners
- Have access to information about responding to disclosures of abuse
- LA's must ensure Corporate Parenting Policies and arrangements along with partner agencies, work together to promote safe communities and protect children from perpetrators

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PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Prevention via support from universal services is vital to the long-term prevention of CSE. School curriculums that promote a whole school approach to addressing gender inequality, sexual consent and relationships along with policies, pastoral support and school ethos all contribute to environments that challenge exploitative practices. Health practitioners delivering routine health support to children are well placed to identify early signs of trauma, abuse and neglect.

Arrangements should be made, if needed, for the referral of children to the appropriate adult services as they approach their 18th birthday. To include consideration of a referral for an adult at risk under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

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IDENTIFYING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

CSE may be perpetrated by individuals, groups or gangs and is not solely associated with large organised groups and evidence suggests perpetrators come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Although the majority of perpetrators are male, women can and do sexually exploit children. The fact that most CSE is extra-familial does not mean that CSE cannot take place within families.

Contextual Safeguarding recognises relationships young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Public spaces should feature in safeguarding framework interventions e.g. shopping centres and transport hubs. Associated business's and those operating in the night-time economy have a role to play in identifying and sharing information to identify vulnerable children.