

Positive Engagement with Young People



Because of the **complex nature of grooming and exploitation** it can sometimes be hard for professionals to see young people as victims, particularly older teens and young adults. Anger and aggression are **common responses to trauma** and often surface when a young person feels scared or threatened. This includes encountering people in authority such as the police.

1. Provide opportunities for a young person's voice to be heard.
2. Ask open questions with sensitivity.
3. Create an environment where the young person feels comfortable and safe.
4. Provide opportunities for a young person to make choices.
5. Where possible, avoid the young person having to repeat their story multiple times.
6. Avoid judgement and intimate questions.
7. Be sensitive to cultural, gender and historical issues.
8. Move at the young persons pace so that they can process what is being said and have time to form their responses

It is important to **#LookCloser** for less obvious signs of grooming, exploitation and abuse. By recognising that there is no 'perfect victim' and any young person can be exploited, we can begin to understand their behaviours, improve engagement and ultimately safeguard more children.