

#LookCloser

Programme of learning 3–7 October 2022

Hi!

We're delighted to invite you to join us for our latest **#LookCloser** programme of learning. We have developed our sessions based on learning from the work of The Children's Society and wider partners to tackle child exploitation and abuse.

All sessions are free of charge and delivered via Microsoft Teams. The timetable below has links to the Eventbrite booking pages for each event. There are limited spaces for each sessions, so please sign up at your earliest opportunity to guarantee your place.

Feel free to join as many of these sessions as you like throughout the week. Unless otherwise stated, all our sessions have been designed to be relevant to multiple professional audiences and stakeholders.

Contact The Children's Society's Prevention team at Prevention@childrenssociety.org.uk with any questions.

Mon 3 October	Tues 4 October	Weds 5 October	Thurs 6 October	Fri 7 October
AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
	10:00-12:00 Making the most of the National Referral Mechanism	10:00-12:00 Effective engagement with children and young people	11:00-13:00 Child Financial Exploitation	11:00-13:00 No perfect victim: challenging stereotypes, bias, and adultification
PM	PM	PM	PM	PM
14:00-16:00 Gender and exploitation		14:00-16:00 Exploring the digital lives of children and young people	14:00-16:00 Collaboration is key: developing multi-agency approaches to tackling exploitation	

Session descriptions:

Gender and exploitation

This session will explore how gendered assumptions and their practical implications can fail children and young people at every part of the system that is set up to protect them from harm. Gender norms impact young people's experiences of exploitation; shape the way professionals perceive and interact with young people; and influence the support they receive and the way that services are commissioned and designed. They are fundamental to the way that young people think about themselves, their identities, and their experiences of exploitation and abuse.

This session will focus in particular on boys experience of sexual abuse and girls experience of criminal exploitation, alongside considering the experiences of transgender, non-binary and gender diverse young people. It is informed by findings from the Prevention Programme, external research, and insights from frontline practice.

The session is designed for professionals who work face to face with children and young people and those who work strategically, including those responsible for designing and commissioning services.

The session aims to:

- explore understandings of exploitation and how these may be influenced by gendered assumptions
- challenge gender-based assumptions about young people's experiences of child exploitation
- create opportunities to consider alternative ways to identify, assess, and support children and young people
- demonstrate the value of a person-centred, holistic approach to understanding and responding to exploitation and abuse.

Making the most of the National Referral Mechanism

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of trafficking and modern slavery. When used effectively, it can

help these victims receive appropriate support and assist modern slavery prosecutions of those exploiting them.

This session is for professionals to better understand the role of a first responder and consider how they can become ambassadors for using the NRM effectively.

This session will also encourage professionals to consider how the NRM sits alongside disruption tools and safeguarding processes to both protect children and young people and target those abusing them.

During this session we will seek to:

- increase awareness of the NRM referral process and the role of first responders
- explore how to advocate for or make an NRM referral
- explore how the NRM sits within wider safeguarding and disruption processes
- increase knowledge of when an NRM referral should be submitted, which young people should be referred, and how to identify them
- increase confidence in knowing how to challenge a decision or escalate a concern.

Effective engagement with children and young people

Effective engagement with young people can make the difference that changes a young person's life. As professionals, how can we better engage with young people and make sure we respond to the whole child rather than just one



aspect of their identity? How can understanding the systems around a child help us dismantle barriers to engagement?

During this session, we will explore barriers to disclosure and engagement at a personal, professional and societal level and consider promising practice on how to build strong and effective relationships.

We will focus on:

- barriers children and young people may experience including their own and their communities' experience of trauma, discrimination and prior engagement with services, and the important role of intersectionality
- barriers experienced by professionals including expectations of victims, understanding of trauma, practice assumptions, and the limitations of professional roles
- barriers created by structural and societal norms with a particular focus on gendered assumptions around exploitation and abuse and the impact these can have on the support children and young people receive
- effective approaches to engaging young people and making every interaction count, no matter how brief
- holistic approaches to engaging and working with 'the whole child'.

This session will also discuss young people's participation and the importance of hearing their voice in service design and delivery.

Exploring the digital lives of children and young people

In this session, we aim to share our learning on the digital lives of young people and how they may be exposed to new and emerging areas of online exploitation.

We will also explore how to best engage with young people regarding their digital lives and through doing so better protect them from harm. The session is based on both The Children's Society's learning around online harms and professionals' responses to these for young people.

The session is designed for professionals who work with children and young people, parents and carers, and those who work strategically.

This session aims to:

- increase the confidence of professionals, parents, carers, and families to engage in conversations with children and young people about their online lives
- explore supporting conversations with parents and carers around digital lives and online exploitation risks
- build understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities of children and young people online, including the dark web
- increase awareness of new and emerging online exploitation concerns beyond child sexual abuse.

Child Financial Exploitation

Child Financial Exploitation is emerging as a growing concern in which children and young people experience abuse or exploitation relating to finances. This includes being targeted by Organised Crime Groups, which use children to commit fraud and launder criminal funds.

Financial exploitation can cause significant harm to a young person and have long lasting effects on their life. It can also be connected to other harms including sexual abuse and criminal exploitation within county lines operations. Yet despite this, child financial exploitation is not well understood and can often be overlooked.

At The Children's Society, we are developing our understanding of financial exploitation and advocating for professionals to view it as a specific harm type unto itself, as well as understanding its context within and connection to other forms of exploitation and abuse.

In this session for all professionals interacting with children and young people we will:

- explore recent learning and emerging insights on the financial exploitation of children and young people
- share our experiences from within The Children's Society's Prevention Programme alongside those of partners including law enforcement, social care, and the banking and finance sector
- consider the implications of our findings with regards to safeguarding young people from harm and preventing their exploitation

- create an interactive opportunity to hear about how other professionals are responding to this emerging area
- provide a space to consider your own ability to identify and respond to Child Financial Exploitation and contribute to The Children's Society's evidence gathering and research on this topic.

Collaboration is key: developing multi-agency approaches to tackling exploitation

Preventing exploitation and safeguarding victims can be seen as a complex puzzle involving many different stakeholders. No single agency will ever hold all the information needed to solve it, so it is vital we work together. This session is for anyone supporting children and young people who wants to make sure they are working effectively and innovatively with other agencies.

Within this session we will:

- draw the links between multi-agency working and contextual safeguarding
- discuss the importance of reachable moments and methods of intervention to better protect young people
- share best practice examples and innovative ideas for professionals to consider within their own multi-agency working
- consider the important role that businesses can play in protecting children
- recognise the importance of engaging with and listening to minoritised and marginalised communities, groups, and organisations
- explore the complexities of multi-agency working and potential barriers
- hold space for professionals to reflect on what is working well for them in multi-agency settings and what could be improved.

No perfect victim: challenging stereotypes, bias, and adultification

Any child can be a victim of exploitation, and children experiencing exploitation may not look or behave as we might expect.

The session will explore how our assumptions and biases can impact our ability to tackle child exploitation.

This session is for professionals working directly with children and young people, especially those who are interested in expanding their knowledge of adultification and anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices.

Throughout this session we will:

- consider common perspectives on victimhood and offending and how these may fail to protect children from harm
- explore how we can improve practices to better protect and respect young people, making sure all children and young people receive the support they need
- understand the voice of the child and how our assumptions can impede the development of trusting relationships
- explore issues and positive approaches with regards to adultification and anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices
- reflect on and understand how our own perceptions and biases are formed, and how we can transcend them.

