

#LookCloser

Programme of learning 27 February to 3 March 2023

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 live via Microsoft Teams. The timetable below has links to the Eventbrite booking pages for each event. There are limited spaces for each session, 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 27 Feb	Tues 28 Feb	Weds 1 Mar	Thurs 2 Mar	Fri 3 Mar
AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
	10:00-11:30 Disrupting exploitation	10:00-11:30 Making the most of the National Referral Mechanism	10:00-11:30 Protecting all young people: why equity and inclusion are essential in our fight against child exploitation and abuse	10:00-11:30 Effective engagement with young people
PM	PM	PM	PM	PM
14:00-15:30 Exploring the digital lives of young people	14:00-15:30 The financial exploitation of children and young people		14:00-15:30 Transitions to adulthood: preventing the exploitation of older children and young adults	

Session descriptions:

Disrupting exploitation

Do you work with children and young adults who are experiencing or are at risk of exploitation and abuse? If the answer is yes, then you have a crucial role to play in disrupting their exploitation and stopping the perpetrators who are ultimately responsible. It is only by everyone playing their part in disruption that we will be able to keep all children and young adults safe, while targeting those who profit from their abuse.

This session is brought to you by The Children's Society and NWG. It aims to:

- explore what disruption means, the tools available and their crucial role within safeguarding and protection plans for children and young adults
- discuss the importance of taking a multi-agency approach to disruption
- evidence best practice through learning from real life case studies
- consider the application of disruption measures for those transitioning from childhood into adulthood.

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 an ambassador 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

- consider the benefits of a multi-agency approach to submitting an NRM
- 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 to submit an NRM, which young people should be referred and how to identify them
- increase confidence in knowing how to challenge a decision or escalate a concern
- explore the implications of gaining consent for an NRM during the transition from childhood to adulthood and best practice relating to this.

Protecting all young people: why equity and inclusion are essential in our fight against child abuse and exploitation

While progress has been made in our fight against exploitation, it is clear that recognition and outcomes are not the same for all children and young people. Our assumptions and biases alongside siloed working, exclusionary practice, and wider social inequalities are leading to failures in making sure that all young people are protected from harm.

In this session we will explore how taking a proactive approach to equity and inclusion and a holistic approach to preventing child exploitation are both essential in order to reach and support every young victim.



In this session we will:

- consider how our assumptions and biases can influence our efforts to identify, prevent, and disrupt the exploitation of children and young people
- take an intersectional approach to considering how race, gender, and other aspects of identity may impact a young person's risk and experience of exploitation
- explore the importance of recognising victimhood in older children and young adults
- explore how we can improve practices to protect and respect young people, to make sure that all children and young people receive the support they need
- demonstrate the value of equity and inclusion in the fight against child exploitation and abuse and the importance of taking a person-centred, holistic approach.

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 personal, professional, and societal levels and consider promising practice on how to build strong and effective relationships. We will focus on:

- overcoming 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
- overcoming barriers experienced by professionals, including expectations of victims, understanding of trauma, practice assumptions, and the limitations of professional roles

- overcoming barriers created by structural and societal norms and the impact these can have on the support 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 young person'.

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 designed for professionals who work with children and young people and/or their 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 how professionals can support conversations with parents and carers around young people's 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 including and beyond child sexual abuse.

The financial exploitation of children and young people

The financial exploitation of children and young people is emerging as a growing concern and involves a number of different forms of abuse or

exploitation relating to finances. This includes being targeted by organised crime groups, which use young people to commit fraud and launder criminal funds.

Financial exploitation can cause significant harm to a young person and have long lasting effects. It can also be connected to other harms including sexual abuse and criminal exploitation within county lines operations. Yet despite this, the financial exploitation of children and young people 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 experiences from The Children's Society's national Prevention programme's work alongside learning from 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 financial exploitation and contribute to The Children's Society's evidence gathering and research on this topic.

Transitions to adulthood: preventing the exploitation of older children and young adults

The transition to adulthood is an extremely important stage in the life of a young person, as they explore choices around identity,

relationships, rights, and responsibilities and navigate finding their place in the adult world. But for young people harmed through exploitation and abuse, the transitional stage from 16 to 18+ can all too often seem like a "cliff edge" (Holmes and Smith 2022), when the support and protection afforded to younger children can often disappear at the same time that risks of harm and abuse from perpetrators is increasing.

What can we do to make sure that we afford older children their rights as victims of exploitation? How can we work together to ensure that young victims of exploitation are effectively identified, safeguarded, and supported across their transition to adulthood in a holistic, young person-centred way?

In this session, we will:

- introduce the key principles of a transitional safeguarding approach and why this is so important for preventing and tackling exploitation in older children and young adults
- explore the exploitation risks and harms that can impact older children across the transition to adulthood
- seek to reframe narratives and approaches to victimhood in relation to older children and young adults who experience exploitation – and to overcome bias, discrimination, and siloed working to ensure all victims are recognised and receive appropriate support
- reflect on practice and experiences of working with young people transitioning from childhood to adulthood.

