

"If it's not better, it's not the end"

# Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups: One year on

Children and young people's version

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Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups: One year on.

This report looks at the progress that has been made in trying to stop child sexual exploitation in England since our Inquiry in 2011-2013.

## Useful definitions



What is child sexual exploitation?

This is a type of **child sexual abuse**. It happens when someone makes a child take part in sexual activities when they don't want to for their enjoyment. It can happen **online** and also in **real life**. Children often do not realise that what they are doing is **wrong** because the person abusing the child seems very kind and makes them feel special. The person abusing the child always **gains power and control**.



What is consent?

Nobody has the right to force you to have sex whether you are a child or an adult. You can say no to sex at any age. The **age of consent** is the age you are legally allowed to have sex. In England, you have to be **16 to consent**, or agree to have sex. Anyone who has sex with someone under the age of 16 is **breaking the law**, even if they say the young person says it was OK. Sex with any child **under the age of 13 is rape**.



What are children's rights?

All children have rights under the [United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child](#).

Governments must **protect children** from sexual abuse and exploitation. We make sure the rights of children in England are **promoted and protected**.



# What happened in the Inquiry?

1

We launched an **inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups** looking at organised gangs and groups of males.

2

We looked at **places** which were **good at protecting children** and ones which needed to **improve**.

3

We published **six reports** which included **37 recommendations** to the Government, the police, the health service and local areas about what they need to do to **protect children better**.

## What did we find?



**2,409 children and young people** were victims of sexual exploitation by groups and gangs from August 2010 to October 2011.

**16,500 children and young people** might be in danger of being sexually exploited during the period April 2010 to March 2011.

Too many children and young people had been **let down by services and people who should be protecting them**.

We found **13 different patterns of abuse**, such as within schools, and within gangs by older men pretending to be boyfriends.

## What did we do in this report?

1

We went back to the organisations to see whether they had made **any changes** based on the recommendations we made.

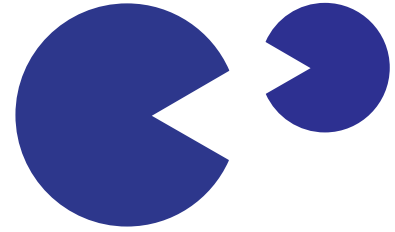
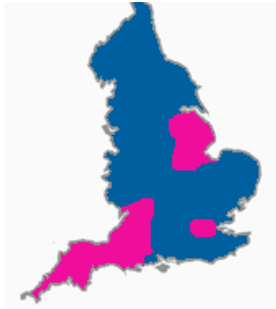
2

We asked them to **complete a questionnaire** to tell us what they had done to make sure children and young people were kept safe from harm.

3

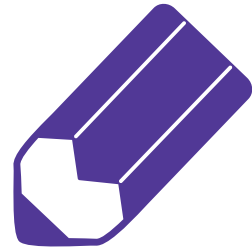
We spoke to lots of **different people** who work with children such as police forces, local areas and specialist organisations.

# What did we find?



There is a **big difference** between areas of England in **how quickly they recognise** child victims of sexual exploitation. Some areas are **good at recognising victims**, but there are still too many areas where children are not being recognised.

We think everyone should **work together** to tackle child sexual exploitation in their **local area** including the police and schools. We found that while many places had **made plans** to do this, it **didn't mean they were all doing it well**.



We have made a new way to help **identify children** who are victims of sexual exploitation which makes sure they get the right help. This is called **See Me, Hear Me**. **Lots of organisations** have started using it.

Children and young people told us that they wanted **good quality relationships and sex education** to help them understand issues around consent, respect for each other and what abuse and exploitation means. We recommended that relationship and sex education is **taught in every school in England**.

# What are we doing now?

We have made a project to test out **See Me, Hear Me** in different areas across England.

We have told other people and organisations about what **we found in our Inquiry** and continue to talk to them to try and make things better for children.

We made **recommendations to the Government** about how to improve the situation for children who are victims and who are at risk of becoming victims of child sexual exploitation.

We have launched another Inquiry which looks at **sexual abuse within the family environment**.

# Conclusion



More people now **know about child sexual exploitation.**



Lots of organisations have taken **good steps towards protecting children** and stopping exploitation from happening.



There are still **too many children at risk of sexual exploitation** and some children are more at risk than others.



People need to do more to **share information** with each other so they can learn and work together



We are still worried that **Relationship and Sex Education** is not being taught in every school and that even when it is taught, it might not be done very well.



We think children and young people should be involved in **making plans on how to tackle sexual exploitation.**

If you are worried about yourself, another child or someone you know you can contact ChildLine on 0800 1111 or visit [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk).

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