

Child Criminal Exploitation

Teacher's resource



Section 1: Support for professionals

- **Toolkit for professionals:** Children and young people trafficked for the purpose of Criminal Exploitation in relation to County Lines.
- **Training videos produced by the University of Greenwich:** childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/tackling-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines/county-lines-resources
- **Child criminal exploitation and County Lines podcast, episode 1:** childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/campaign-change/talking-change-podcast
- **Intelligence Guidance:** Capturing intelligence to help disrupt exploitation and abuse.

Please be mindful that some young people may have experienced exploitation, abuse or trafficking themselves or know someone who has. When this information is known, it is important that careful consideration is given around the appropriateness of these activities.

Section 2: Support for parents

- **Parents' Guides:** Are you worried about your child being criminally exploited? Guidance is available in various languages, please see: childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/tackling-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines/county-lines-resources
- **Missing People have a free counselling helpline for parents of children who have been missing and are criminally exploited:** missingpeople.org.uk/how-we-can-help/families-and-friends/ways-we-can-help-you/877-our-helpline.html

Section 3: Post-show discussions points for classroom

- Post-show classroom ideas to explore the play further.

Discussion Point One: Grooming

Aim: For the young people to understand the grooming process involved in criminal exploitation.

Resources: Cut out the phases and definitions and mix them up.

Activity: Split young people into small groups and get them to match the phases to definition.

Teacher's notes:

Grooming definition

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of exploitation or trafficking. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know (for example a family member, friend or professional). Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse. (NSPCC)

In the play, Dex talks through his six stage approach to grooming Random and Jess.

Resource:

Phase 1 – Identification	This was the stage where Dex was hanging around anywhere that he thought young people might be (and that could include online) in order to spot people he thought might have a vulnerability that he could use. And, as he says, vulnerability can come in many different forms.
Phase 2 – Engagement	This is the stage that Dex engages with the young people, or starts a conversation with them. In this stage he wants to come across as really nice, helpful, as being able to offer them a solution to their problem. He offers them the chance to earn a lot of money.
Phase 3 – Building relationship	This is the stage that Dex makes sure that it's all good. Easy work, everyone's earning money, bonuses of drink and drugs etc. Quite an exciting lifestyle.
Phase 4 – Creating dependency	This is the stage that Dex wants to get the young person dependent on the things he supplies, whether it's drugs, drink, money, the lifestyle, the feeling of being important whatever.
Phase 5 – Entrapment	This is the stage that Dex does something that makes sure that the young people think that they now owe him. This can be a fake robbery or could be that they are made to pay for things that had been supplied for free such as drink/drugs.
Phase 6 – Checkmate	In this stage, Dex lets them know what will happen if they don't do as he says. The threats can involve physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

Follow up questions, with exploratory activities.

Phase	Explanation	Follow up questions	Exploratory activities
Phase 1 – Identification	This was the stage where Dex was hanging around anywhere that he thought young people might be (and that could include online) in order to spot people that he thought might have a vulnerability that he could use. And, as he says, vulnerability can come in many different forms.	<p>Where could be places someone like Dex would go to meet young people?</p> <p>How might someone like Dex use apps or websites to meet young people?</p> <p>What types of situations or characteristics make a young person vulnerable?</p>	Explore protected characteristics and ask students to think about how race, gender, age, sexuality, could change how people are groomed and make someone more vulnerable to grooming. Are there other vulnerabilities?
Phase 2 – Engagement	This is the stage that Dex engages with the young people, or starts a conversation with them. In this stage he wants to come across as really nice, as helpful, as being able to offer them a solution to their problem. He offers them the chance to earn a lot of money.	<p>What sort of things might someone say to make someone think they are helpful, nice etc?</p> <p>What else might someone like Dex offer other than money?</p>	Set up scenes where Dex is trying to talk to Random or Jess, explore different ways Dex could engage . Play back to the group and ask students to explore the engagement tactics.

<p>Phase 3 – Building relationship</p>	<p>This is the stage that Dex makes sure that it's all good. Easy work, everyone's earning money, bonuses of drink and drugs etc. Quite an exciting lifestyle.</p>	<p>What makes an exciting lifestyle for young people?</p> <p>Why might Dex make it ok/fun at first?</p> <p>Would there be any early warning signs?</p>	<p>There are different relationships that are created by gangs and organised criminals. In groups, explore the following relationships and how they might be fun/exciting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Older boys/girls ■ Boyfriend/girlfriend ■ Sports groups ■ Adults ■ Drinking/smoking peer groups <p>If you were worried a friend was in a similar situation, how might you help them to get support/see the reality of the exciting lifestyle?</p>
<p>Phase 4 – Creating dependency</p>	<p>This is the stage that Dex wants to get the young person dependent on the things he supplies, whether it's drugs, drink, money, the lifestyle, the feeling of being important whatever.</p>	<p>What sort of things would someone say to make a young person emotionally dependent on them?</p> <p>How might a young person be dependent on money? What for?</p>	<p>Explore all different ways people can be dependent on each other. In what relationship?</p> <p>What can be abused?</p> <p>What is a healthy dependency and what is a unhealthy dependency?</p> <p>How would you know?</p>

<p>Phase 5 – Entrapment</p>	<p>This is the stage that Dex does something that makes sure that the young people think that they now owe him. This can be a fake robbery or could be that they are made to pay for things that had been supplied for free such as drink/drugs</p>	<p>What other ways could someone like Dex make the young person feel like they owe him. What might they say?</p>	<p>Act out the scene where Random comes back from a fake robbery and tells Dex that he has had all the drugs stolen.</p>
<p>Phase 6 – Checkmate</p>	<p>In this stage, Dex lets them know what will happen if they don't do as he says. The threats can involve physical, sexual or emotional abuse.</p>	<p>Who else in Random or Jess' family might someone like Dex threaten, and what with?</p>	<p>Give as many examples of physical, sexual and emotional abuse as you can.</p>

Discussion Point Two: Choice

Aim:

- For the young people to understand that coercion and force impact on a young person having **free choice** to make decisions.
- For young people to begin to understand victim blaming.

Resources: Cut out **True** and **False**, clear room so young people can move around.

Activity: Get the young people to stand up, read each statement and ask the young people to move to true or false. Ask the young people to explain why they are where they are.

Teacher's notes:

Young people involved in criminal exploitation often have little or no choice to commit crimes. Serious threats of violence are often used to control a child or prevent them reaching out for help and support. Often people think that young people should just tell someone they are in trouble, but there are often reasons why a young person would not be able to tell someone when it comes to criminal exploitation. It may be because the young person is scared about what will happen, or thinks they are in control. Each character in the play has been coerced and is being used to commit crime for those higher up.

TRUE

FALSE

Statements:

Dex is in full control of the criminal operation and could walk away tomorrow if he wanted.

FALSE: Although Dex seems to have power in the play, he will also be being controlled by criminals higher up than him. Often criminals will use people like Dex to recruit others to avoid detection from the police themselves.

If Jess hadn't put pressure on Random for £20 at the start, then they wouldn't have ended up being forced to do criminal acts.

FALSE: Dex is the one to blame, as he would have found any way to target and engage Jess and Random. It's important to remember with exploitation, it is never the victim's fault.

Random was stupid for falling for what Dex was offering.

FALSE: Often people like Dex are very clever, and good at making a young person feel that they are a 'safe' person and that they are 'friends'. This is part of the grooming process.

Jess didn't tell anyone because she was scared.

TRUE: It was clear that Jess was scared of Dex and could see what he was doing, but was worried something would happen or they would get in trouble if she said anything.

Random didn't tell anyone because he was scared.

TRUE: Boys can also feel worried about what might happen to them if they were to tell someone. Random thought he was in control but actually Dex was controlling him, and Random was at risk of being harmed.

Discussion Point Three:

Where can you get help/support?

Aim: For young people to offer each character advice around **safe people** or **safe organisations** that can or could have supported them.

Resources: Each character's name.

Activity:

- Get a small group of young people who might like to consider this activity from the perspective of Dex, Jess and Random. Ask this group to work together for 15 minutes to consider barriers to reporting concerns to anyone.
- Split the rest of the class in small groups for 15 minutes to think of a piece of advice to give each character – ask them to include services that could support them or **safe people**.
- Get the group to sit in a circle with the barrier group who have considered the activity from Dex, Random and Jess's perspective in the middle.
- Taking each character one at a time, get the outer circle to offer the advice and allow the inner circle to return a barrier if they have one. At each point when a barrier is given, pause the activity and see if the group can come up with a solution to the barrier.

Teacher's notes:

Often young people are scared or unable to access help, sometimes there are barriers for young people trusting services, sometimes it relies on others to spot the signs and report concerns. It is important for young people to know that police and other support services can support them, and there is a way out. It is also important for young people to know that the police will take any concerns seriously, and will ensure they are kept safe from harm.

It is also important to remember that some young people do not have 'safe people' in their network, and therefore important for the focus of the discussion to be open to services as well as specific people.

Right now in Britain there are children and young people who feel scared, unloved and unable to cope. The Children's Society works with these young people, step by step, for as long as it takes.

We listen. We support. We act.

There are no simple answers so we work with others to tackle complex problems. Only together can we make a difference to the lives of children now and in the future.

Because no child should feel alone.