



Information for parents/carers

County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons. The activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation have a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities across the UK.

This is not a new phenomenon and is not confined to Sussex. London affiliated gangs have been looking to establish drug distribution in Sussex and elsewhere in the South East for several years, although activity has increased in the past two or three years, sometimes involving the use or threat of violence.

These gangs use their power and position to groom, recruit and exploit children and young people for the purpose of criminal gain. This often involves high levels of violence, threat and force – and it is important to understand the grooming process, as this is evident within the recruitment of young people for criminal exploitation. 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 receive money, mobile phones, credit, expensive clothing, jewellery, new haircuts or other items and gifts in exchange for their activities.

There are a number of indicators listed below that could alert you that your son or daughter is being criminally exploited.

- Do they suddenly have lots of money/lots of new clothes/new mobile phones?
- Are they receiving more calls or texts than usual?
- Are they travelling alone to places far away from home?
- Are they carrying or selling drugs?
- Are they carrying weapons?
- Are they in a relationship with or hanging out with someone/people that are older and controlling?
- Do they have unexplained injuries?
- Do they seem very reserved or seem like they have something to hide?
- Are they going missing from school or their home?

If you are worried about your son or daughter and think they may be involved in County Lines please speak to the designated safeguarding lead Ms C Bessa safeguarding@arkwilliamparker.org

You can also contact the local Police Youth and Intervention Team on:

If you want to report any information anonymously please contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111