


The Prevention Programme's Covid- 19 Guidance for Partners.

Guidance, support and resources for partners working with children, young people and their families who may be at risk of harm during the Covid-19 Lockdown.

As we return back into a national lockdown the Prevention Programme have put together some useful information and resources for supporting children, young people and their families.



If you believe there may be immediate risk to a Child or Young Person call 999 (or 101 if not urgent) and follow your organisation's safeguarding procedures.

Spotting and reporting abuse concerns in the family home

During lockdown we are concerned that children experiencing abuse within the home may be shut in with their abusers and feel unable to ask for help. It is therefore vital that key workers, delivery drivers, neighbours and others entering the family home at this time are able to spot the signs of child abuse and report any concerns. We developed a [poster](#) in partnership with the National Police Chief's Council. Please circulate this to the public, key workers and others.

Alongside the National Police Chief's Council, we also developed a [briefing guide](#) and a [poster](#) for the police on responding to child sexual abuse during Covid-19.

Online Harm and Abuse

The National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children has experienced a global increase in reports of Child Sexual Exploitation to CyberTipLine compared to 2019. The National Crime Agency suggested in April 2020 that there are a minimum of 300,000 individuals in the UK posing a sexual threat to children either through physical contact abuse of online. The Internet Watch Foundation also saw a 50% increase in reports of child sexual abuse material members of the public during the first national lockdown.

We have also seen an increase in online grooming into child criminal exploitation during Covid-19 including grooming through social media and online gaming.

Due to increased online time, children and young people's risk of harm may be increased. The content they are able to access, individuals they are communicating with and isolation from their social network groups could all have a negative impact on young people.

- Accessing explicit material such as pornography and violent content is easier than ever and can negatively impact young people.
- Offenders may find it easier to communicate with young people to facilitate harm or exploitation through use of social media, chat groups in apps, phishing email attempts or online gaming.
- Offenders may encourage young people to create explicit content that can then be shared further than expected. This could be through peers or through a new contact online.
- Sometimes young people may feel isolated from their social network and offenders can try to exploit this to arrange meeting in real life.
- The risk of financial harm online is also present due to children and young people not being aware of in-game costs or being able to access gambling websites.

[Click here to access a Z-Card](#) resource we created to help professionals, parents and carers learn more about specific online exploitation and abuse risks to children and young people.


The **Home Office** and **Department for Education** have developed guidance, resources and support contacts for parents and carers to keep children safe online during Covid-19. These cover topics including Child Sexual Abuse, Cyberbullying, Sexting, Suicide content and Radicalising content. [Click here to access them.](#)

Think U Know and the **NSPCC** have advice to encourage safe use of the internet and can support professionals, parents or carers with facilitating conversations with young people.

- [Click here for NSPCC Online Safety Advice](#) to support your conversations with keeping young people safe online, knowing about parental controls and the risks associated with harmful content and [Click here for NSPCC Coronavirus Advice and Support for Families and Parents.](#)
- [Click here to access Think U Know's Resource for understanding online safety for all ages.](#)
- [Click here for Child Exploitation and Online Protection \(CEOP\) Reporting Process and Advice](#) if you have concerns about a child or young person who may be experiencing exploitation online.

The Marie Collins Foundation and NWG created leaflets for Parents, Carers and Professionals for supporting young people who have experienced sexual exploitation or abuse online. Access the [parent and carer guide here](#) and the [professionals guide here](#).

The Marie Collins Foundation also provide an online Portal "[Click: Path to Protection](#)".



Children's Wellbeing

Fear and stress are common reactions to potential threats and with the uncertainty that comes from Covid-19, more young people are likely to struggle with their mental health and wellbeing. Fear of contracting the virus may be very present for young people and the disruption to the normalcy they have always known life to be are added pressures on top of the common issues we know are ever present in children and young people's lives.

At the Children's Society, we have developed a resource to help Children and Young People work through stressful situations. [Click here for The Children's Society 'Guide to Stressful Situations'](#) which has useful tools young people can use for a whole host of potentially difficult situations or emotions they may be feeling due to Covid-19.

If you are a professional working with Children and Young People needing practical support with mental health and wellbeing, The Children's Society and Deepr have created a resource pack of activities you can use together with young people. This pack has many types of activities, using different methods to relax, reset and work through a range of emotions and can be used to build Human Connection online. Read about our journey with Deepr to design for remote interactions with young people and access the cards [here](#).

Young Minds have a Coronavirus and Mental Health page which includes tips, advice and guidance for young people. [Click here to access the hub](#).

Domestic Violence

Levels of domestic violence notably increased during phase one of Covid-19 with domestic abuse services reporting a huge increase in calls. For example domestic violence support charity Refuge reported a 700% increase in calls to their helpline in a single day when tighter Lockdown levels were introduced in the first Lockdown.

We know that many individuals are now in the same situation and feeling unsafe in their home. Though Domestic Abuse and Violence is often experienced by a spouse or partner, Children and Young people often witness this with 950,000 children affected by Domestic Violence each year. We want to ensure that individuals experiencing Domestic Violence are able to access support.

For Social Workers supporting individuals experiencing domestic abuse or violence:

- The Social Care Institute for Excellence have produced [guidance on safeguarding during Covid-19](#) regarding all forms of harm that could be experienced.

For adults experiencing domestic abuse:

- Refuge offer support for individuals experiencing Domestic Abuse or Violence. [Click here for the Refuge National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) or call directly on 0808 2000 247
- Women's Aid have a [resource hub](#) which includes support and advice for survivors.
- Safe Lives have created a [Covid-19 guide](#) for victims of Domestic Abuse.

For Children and Young People experiencing domestic abuse:

- If a child or young person needs support from witnessing abuse or violence [Child Line have a 1-2-1 counsellor Online Chat function](#) or children and young people can call directly on 0800 1111.
- The NSPCC also have a function to report children and young people who may be experiencing abuse or violence. [Click here for NSPCC Reporting Child Abuse Online Form](#) or call 0808 800 5000 anytime for support with how to proceed.

Supporting Perpetrators

At The Children's Society we focus on supporting child and young adult victims of abuse and exploitation. However we recognise the value of work with perpetrators of harmful behaviour. The Lucy Faithfull Foundation offer support for individuals evidencing harmful sexual behaviour to Children and Young people, whilst Respect and Drive offer support for individuals showing behaviour linked with Domestic Abuse or Violence.

[The Lucy Faithfull Foundation "Stop It Now" Helpline](#) can offer support to adults concerned about other adults or their own, potentially harmful sexual behaviour to children. They support adult male and female abusers, children and young people with harmful or concerning sexual behaviour, victims of abuse and families. [Click here to access the Stop It Now Campaign](#) to find out about the support they offer and to understand harmful behaviour and its implications.

[The Respect: Confidential Helpline for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence](#) is another way to access support for if you have concerns about an adult's behaviour with children and young people. [Respect](#) offer advice for recognising a person's own harmful behaviour within a domestic setting.

[The Drive Project](#) work alongside Respect and offer advice for professionals working with Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse or Violence.