**Workshop – The gift**

The gift explores grooming and sexual exploitation. We want students to think about signs that might indicate someone is being exploited and what they could do if they are worried for themselves or someone they know.

**Questions to explore the topic:**

• Grooming and sexual exploitation – what does it mean?

• What are the signs of someone trying to groom or exploit you?

• What are the signs that might mean someone you know is being exploited?

• What can you do to stay safe?

• Would you know where to turn for help?

**Exercise – The gift**

In pairs or small groups, complete the Nest comic (draw or write) to see how the story might end. (20 minutes)

Share completed stories with the rest of the group.

**Factsheet**

**Grooming and sexual exploitation – what does it mean?**

Grooming usually starts out with someone befriending a young person, this can be face to face or online.

The friendship often intensifies quickly with the ultimate aim of taking advantage of the young person and exploiting them sexually. Abusers are very good at gaining trust and often use tactics such as buying gifts or supplying alcohol and drugs to manipulate victims into doing things for them over time.

Sexual exploitation includes any situation where someone is manipulating or forcing you into doing something sexual. This could be asking you to send semi-naked or naked pictures of yourself or to do something sexual with them or with another person. This person may be a friend, or they may be your boyfriend or girlfriend – it is still wrong for them to force you to behave in a certain way.

**What are the signs of someone trying to groom or exploit you?**

* Knowing the signs that can lead to someone taking advantage of you can help to keep you safe.
* This person might try to give you money, drugs, alcohol or gifts in return for something they want.
* They may flatter you, give you lots of attention and make you feel special but then ask you to do things which don’t seem right.
* They might start to make promises they can’t keep and try to control you, threaten you or become violent if you don’t do what they want.
* They might try to take you away from your family and friends.
* They may pressure you to have sex with them or someone else, do something sexual to them or look at images or films that make you feel uncomfortable.

**What are the signs that might mean someone you know is being exploited?**

These are some of the signs that may mean someone is in danger of being sexually exploited.

* Have they received unexplained gifts or money?
* Do they use their mobile phone secretively?
* Do they have significantly older friends?
* Have they been picked up from home or school by someone you don’t know?
* Are they associating with other young people who are already known to be vulnerable or involved in exploitation?
* Have they started playing truant from school or regularly going missing from home
* Have they suffered from a sexually-transmitted infection
* Are they self-harming?
* Has their appearance changed?

**What can you do to stay safe?**

It’s important to be aware of the risks of chatting to strangers online and that people you chat to may not always be who they say they are. You can be tempted to give out personal details but it’s really important that you’re careful about what details you give out online.

NEVER give out personal contact details online and NEVER meet up with someone you’ve met online unless an adult goes along with you.

Never send any pictures of yourself or your mates and family to anyone you’ve met online.

Don’t open links to other sites you might have been sent in a chat room and don’t open emails from anyone you don’t know.

If you’re being pestered in a chat room, block that person. Ask someone how to do this.

Tell your parents or your teachers straight away if you come across any info or pictures that make you feel awkward or embarrassed. If you don’t feel comfortable doing this you can contact us in confidence, we are here for help and support.

**Would you know where to turn for help?**

You may feel scared or embarrassed but the best thing you can do is to talk to an adult you can trust. This could be a parent, carer, relative, a teacher or a friend.

If you are unsure who to talk to you can contact Nest Lancashire. Nest has been set up to support young people who have been affected by crime or subjected to threats bullying or harassment. You can speak to Nest in confidence and their friendly advisers will help you find the best way forward. They can offer support in a way that suits you best and all services are free of charge. Find out more at [www.nestlancashire.org](http://www.nestlancashire.org).

If you are in immediate danger always call 999.