

## **ON LINE EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones.

Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online).

Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers.

Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

Children and young people may experience **Cyberbullying**, Cyberbullying includes:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm

Children and young people may experience **Grooming**, grooming includes:

- Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual 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

Children and young people may experience **Sexual abuse, Sexual exploitation or Emotional abuse**. When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded, or forced, to:

- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- have sexual conversations by text or online
- abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity
- Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped.

Please find below the links to the Safeguarding Board websites for children and adults:

<http://www.sewsc.org.uk>

<http://www.gwasb.org.uk>