

## **Guidance on completing N E Lincolnshire's Exploitation Risk Assessment Matrix and Risk Reduction Plan tool**

A plan to reduce the risk of exploitation should be completed for all children who are assessed as medium and high risk of becoming criminally and/or sexually exploited or who are suspected of currently being exploited;

The plan should be completed within OVM which is a multi-agency setting and should seek to address the 4 P's:

- Prepare – what can be put into place to prepare the young person and family to manage the effects of exploitation suffered/experienced;
- Prevent – what can be put into place to prevent further exploitation;
- Protect – what external safeguards can be put into place;
- Pursue (prosecute) – What action can be taken against the perpetrators.

If an existing plan already exists, the plan to reduce the risk of exploitation can be incorporated into this plan. For example, a Child in Need, Child Protection, YOS Risk Management or Early Help Plan;

All agencies involved with the family and child/young person should attend this meeting and if they are unable to, they should at least forward any steps they feel are necessary to reduce the risk;

Family and caregivers are a protective factor for children at risk of exploitation. It is therefore important that they are included in the process, contribute to and are incorporated within the plan;

Consideration should also be given to including contribution from the child in this process and to the plan. Given the nature of exploitation, the child may not recognise that they are being exploited and therefore may not wish to be involved. However, they should at least be made aware that caregivers and professionals are concerned about their wellbeing and are taking steps to keep them safe from harm.

### **Safety and reducing the risk**

The completed Exploitation Risk Reduction Plan should be used to help guide where intervention is to be targeted, with the most significant risks being addressed first. However the plan should not be exclusively based on the Risk Assessment tool - it will be helpful to think about the 'push' and 'pull' factors and to target intervention in both these areas;

In relation to CCE the focus of the steps should be on preventing and protecting the child as a victim rather than criminalising or pursuing them as a perpetrator;

All agencies and the caregivers need to consider how they can help protect and reduce the risk to the child. It is likely that involvement in crime is lucrative for the child and that they are fearful and/or protective of the exploiters. It is therefore unlikely that they will engage in interventions that aim to reduce their involvement. A plan which mostly relies on the engagement of the child will not be robust enough to keep them safe;

Evidence shows positive change can be driven by a good relationship between the child and professionals. As described, these children may not consider themselves as exploited, may enjoy the lifestyle they are undertaking or may be fearful of repercussions from exploiters if they were to stop.

It is therefore important that professionals take a proactive approach to engaging with these children;

Within the plan, consideration should also be given to the safety of the family as a whole;

The plan should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely and should clearly state who is responsible for which action;

The plan should be reviewed at least every 3 months. Therefore, it is not necessary to try and address every risk factor within one plan. It is likely that the first plan will include initial safety steps (to protect) whereas subsequent plans will include steps to reduce risk (prevent);

The plan should be reviewed at least every 3 months. There should always be an up to date plan if the child is assessed as high or is suspected of being currently exploited. New risks may transpire within multi agency meetings and the case should be brought back to OVM for review of the plan. However, it may be that if there are already ongoing CP Conferences and/or Core Group Meetings in place and agreements can be made for the plan to be reviewed within these to avoid duplication.

Once completed, the plan should be uploaded onto Liquid Logic and be distributed to the relevant professionals within 72hours.

If a case is brought back to OVM for review and is failing to protect a child/young person it may be that a decision is made to escalate this to the Multi Agency Child Exploitation Meetings (MACE) process where strategic management meet to discuss key issues and themes regarding exploitation for the area.