Ready2Comply
TOOLKITS FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

DIRECT WORK RESOURCE · EXPLOITATION AND SAFETY

Easy Money? Think Again

County lines and criminal exploitation

A colourful, ready-to-use direct work pack to help young people spot grooming, debts and 'easy money' traps – and to help you gauge, record and act on risk.

- Ages 11–17
- 1:1 or small groups
- 3–4 sessions
- Editable Word

Worker's guide

Session plans, signs to look for, disclosures, NRM and escalation, recording

Activity sheets

How exploitation works, too-good-to-be-true spotter, 12 scenario cards, know the tricks, safety plan, who to tell

Risk measure

Young person's quiz with scoring key, worker observation checklist, record sheet – plus a certificate

SAMPLE

For children's homes, supported accommodation and schools · British English · Version 1.0 · November 2026

Definitions, law and figures were checked against Home Office, police, legislation.gov.uk and NRM sources in November 2026 (see Sources, page 21). New exploitation offences in the Crime and Policing Act 2026 were not yet in force – check the current position.

Ready2Comply is independent and is not affiliated with, or endorsed by, the Home Office, the police or any charity named in this pack. Services are listed so young people and staff know where to get help.

How exploitation works

The tricks people use – and what to watch out for

County lines

Gangs use phone 'lines' to sell drugs in other towns – and use young people to do the risky jobs.

⚠ The people at the top stay safe. You don't.

Gifts first

Trainers, food, vapes, money or attention – for nothing.

⚠ Later, they'll want something back.

Made-up debts

You get 'robbed' or lose a package – and suddenly you 'owe' them.

⚠ It's often set up on purpose to trap you.

Online 'work'

Posts and Stories offering easy cash. 'DM for work.'

⚠ That's how they recruit.

Going missing

Being taken to another town for days to sell or hold drugs.

⚠ It's dangerous and you can get hurt.

Cuckooing

Taking over someone's home to deal from.

⚠ The person living there is being exploited too.

Threats

Threats to you, your family or friends – and weapons.

⚠ Fear is how they keep people quiet.

Holding & carrying

Being asked to keep or move bags, phones, cash or weapons.

⚠ You can't be sure what's inside.

You're a victim

If you're being used, it's not your fault. Adults should protect you.

⚠ You can always get help.

Did you know?

In 2025, **criminal exploitation** was the most common reason children in the UK were referred for help as possible victims of exploitation – **3,485 children** (Home Office figures).

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Real-life situations

Cut out the cards or pick one. What's going on? What would you do?

1 New trainers

An older lad from your area keeps buying you food and has just got you new trainers. "No worries, that's what friends are for." Today he says he needs a small favour.

🚩 Red flags? 🤔 What would you do? 🗣️ Who could you tell?

2 Easy money post

A Story pops up: "£500 a week, easy work, no experience needed. DM me." Loads of people from your area have viewed it.

🚩 Red flags? 🤔 What would you do? 🗣️ Who could you tell?

3 Just hold this

Someone you know asks you to keep a bag in your room for a few days. "Don't open it and don't tell anyone. I'll sort you out."

🚩 Red flags? 🤔 What would you do? 🗣️ Who could you tell?

4 You owe us

You were asked to drop off a package, but you got jumped and it was taken. Now they say you owe them £1,000 and you'll have to "work it off".

🚩 Red flags? 🤔 What would you do? 🗣️ Who could you tell?

5 A few days away

You're offered £200, a new phone and a train ticket to stay at the seaside for a few days. "You'll be back before anyone notices."

🚩 Red flags? 🤔 What would you do? 🗣️ Who could you tell?

6 Mate's flat

Your friend has been staying at an older man's flat. People come and go all night and he says the man "doesn't really have a choice".

🚩 Red flags? 🤔 What would you do? 🗣️ Who could you tell?

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