

Modern Slavery awareness raising course for young people

Facilitator's notes

Introduction

This course is designed to raise awareness amongst young people about the risks of being caught up in various forms of modern slavery. The course seeks to give a clear understanding of modern slavery, how the exploitation can take place and what to do if a young person is feeling unsafe and concerned for themselves or a friend.

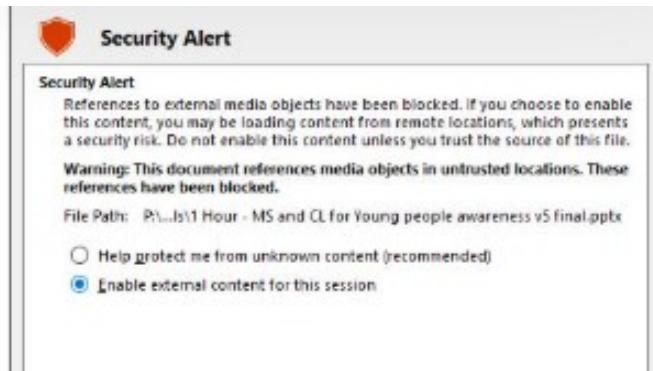
Before delivering the course to a group of young people, please consider the following:

1. Read through all the materials and view the films, so you are familiar with what is in the course and how it is delivered.
2. Check the age and nature of audience of the young people to see if the materials are appropriate to their context and make changes as necessary.
3. The course is designed for a one-hour delivery, but this may vary depending on the size of the group and the amount of time that is made available by the school. It may be necessary to reduce the materials to fit a shorter time frame or for a school assembly.
4. Some of the content of the course may trigger strong emotions amongst the young people and they may need to leave the session and seek support. It is important to establish before delivering the training, that this support is in place.
5. The group work on assessing young people's opinions will require space to move around, so check this is possible in the venue where you are conducting the training.

Specific notes for delivering the course

The Film: Invisible (Slide 5)

To be able to access this and the county lines video later on in the slide pack on YouTube, as you start the slide show on your screen you will need to click on 'enable external content for this session' in the pop up box that comes up – please see below.



Ask the class to make note of the different forms of exploitation they see in the film. If they seem shy or reluctant, an option is to ask them to talk in pairs/groups and then invite them to feedback from the pair/group. Once all the feedback is in, highlight the following points from the film:

- Recap the main forms of slavery described in the film.
- Highlight how traffickers deceive people, by giving false promises to lure them into being exploited for little or no pay.
- Once people are caught in a system of modern slavery, they can be 'hidden away' so they become 'invisible' and out of sight from anyone that could help them.
- Because they are kept from contacting friends or relatives, they become depressed, ashamed and isolated and have little or no way of expressing or being themselves. This is how traffickers control and manipulate those they are exploiting.

Forms of modern slavery (Slides 8, 10, 12, 13)

Domestic Servitude

Domestic servitude in the UK is a form of modern slavery where individuals, often women and children, are forced to work in private households under coercive conditions. Many victims experience exploitation, including long hours, minimal or no pay, and lack of freedom. Children are particularly vulnerable, sometimes subjected to physical and emotional abuse, with little access to education or social services. The National Referral Mechanism reported hundreds of potential victims of domestic servitude annually, highlighting the urgent need for stronger protections, awareness campaigns, and support systems to address this hidden crime and safeguard the rights of affected individuals.

Labour exploitation

Labour exploitation is a serious issue in the UK, where individuals, including children, are subjected to unfair working conditions, low wages, and excessive hours. Many victims are trapped in sectors such as agriculture, construction, the care sector and hospitality, often facing threats or coercion that prevent them from leaving. Children can be at risk, as they may be forced into work instead of attending school, depriving them of their education and future opportunities. The Modern Slavery Act has raised awareness of these issues, but continued efforts are needed to protect vulnerable workers and ensure that their rights are upheld.

Sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) in the UK remains a significant concern, with thousands of children affected each year. According to the National Crime Agency, in 2020, over 4,000 children were identified as potential victims of CSE, with a notable increase in reported cases. Victims often face manipulation and coercion, leading to devastating long-term effects on their mental and emotional well-being. Efforts to combat CSE involve collaboration between law enforcement, social services, and non-governmental organizations, emphasizing the need for increased awareness, prevention strategies, and support for victims.

Barnardo's have developed resources focused on sexual exploitation for those working in schools that can be downloaded here: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/resources-help-identify-and-engage-young-people-risk-sexual-abuse-and-exploitation>

Criminal exploitation

Criminal exploitation involves the manipulation of individuals, including children, to engage in illegal activities, often for the benefit of organized crime groups. Victims may be coerced into drug trafficking, theft, or sexual exploitation, frequently facing threats and violence that trap them in a cycle of abuse. Children are lured with promises of money, friendship, or a sense of belonging. Reports from law enforcement indicate a troubling rise in cases of child criminal exploitation, underscoring the urgent need for targeted interventions, support services, and community awareness to protect at-risk youth and dismantle these exploitative networks.

Clothing exercise – for slide 9

Q) Who has bought items of clothing online?

Q) Did you stop and think about where the items had come from, who had made them, in what conditions or why they were being sold so cheaply?

Trainers can ask pupils to look up 'Boohoo and modern slavery' in Google and see what comes up.

Boohoo facing modern slavery investigation after reports are revealed where workers in Leicester were paid as little as £3.50 an hour.

Narrative:

This was a headline from a story back in 2020 where the fashion company Boohoo was investigated after workers in Leicester making clothes linked to the brand, were found to be paid £3.50 an hour, far below the national minimum wage (£7.55 for under 18s, £10 for 18-20 year olds and £12.21 or 21+ as of September 2025) and also facing unacceptable and dangerous working conditions.

Q) What can we as buyers do differently?

Exercise - Too Good To Be True (please see handout) (Slide 11)



Q) What would you do if someone said you could earn £5000 for a day's work? Would you simply say 'yes' and agree or would you ask more details about how and what this would involve you doing?

As humans we sometimes want the maximum amount for the minimum effort, is that not just good business? The lower your outgoings, the higher your earnings?

Pupils can be asked to work out what this would rate would be for a Monday to Friday working week (£25k) or a 22 day average working day month (£110k) or a 260 working day year (£1.3million) to utilize numeracy skills.

If someone told you to make that kind of money you would be abusing and enslaving people, how would you feel then? How important is human life compared to making profit and money?

Q) What questions would you ask if you were offered work that seemed too good to be true?

Possible answers include:

What would I be doing?

Is what I am being asked to do illegal?

Why have you asked me to do this and not someone else?

What would you want from me? What is the catch?

Spotting the Signs (Slide 14)

Causeway Exploitation Risk Checker

Here is a useful checklist for young people to raise their own awareness of understanding if they are at risk of being exploited and manipulated. This is available as a hand-out.

1. Do you feel unsafe right now? Are you afraid something bad is going to happen very soon?
2. Have you been asked to do something illegal, or that seems wrong, but you feel you can't say no to?
3. Do you feel like you have no choice but to keep doing something you don't want to do, due to pressure or threats?
4. Has anyone promised you something (like money, a job, or gifts) in exchange for doing something that makes you uncomfortable?
5. Have you been feeling unusually stressed, anxious or scared about someone's expectations of you?
6. Do you feel trapped in a relationship or situation that makes you uncomfortable, which you can't leave or tell others about?
7. Have you noticed yourself doing things you wouldn't usually do, like skipping school or work, or spending time in places you wouldn't normally go to?
8. Do you feel unable to leave a situation because you owe someone money, favours, or something they gave you?
9. Has someone made it difficult for you to stay in contact with friends and family, or pressured you to lie or keep secrets?

For further details see the link: [Exploitation Risk Checker | Causeway Charity](#)

Exercise - How does it feel? (please see handout) (Slide 15)

Ask participants to close their eyes, take some deep breaths, attempt to clear their minds.

Narrative:

I will be reading statements out and asking you to think about how you feel as I do so. If you need to take time out or open your eyes, then please do so.

Start to imagine you could be a young person wanting a better life, wanting and needing to get money to your family back home.

Statements:

- 1) You have no connection to family, friends or anyone who you feel can help you.
- 2) You are forced to work long hours, every day, with no break and little or no pay.
- 3) You are forced to do hard and dangerous work that hurts your body.
- 4) You are threatened hit and yelled at.
- 5) All your personal possessions and legal documents have been taken away.
- 6) You are hungry, thirsty, tired and sick.
- 7) You are living like a slave.

Please open your eyes.

Q) How did it feel to think about the experience of someone who has been trafficked?

Q) How do you think a victim of trafficking might be impacted physically, emotionally, mentally, financially?

Discussion points can include for example the 5th statement – discuss the significance of our passports, we may rarely think about them until we go on holiday, but they are very important in terms of our identity. They state our name, our DOB, where we were born. If that is taken away or we are given a new one stating what is to be our new name, our new age etc, how would that make the participants feel?

Case Study – county lines (please see handout) (Slide 19)



Narrative: I would like you to imagine that you are sitting on a train, it's 8am and you have a backpack, you are wearing your school uniform and you are scrolling through TikTok on your phone. The ticket collector comes around to check your ticket, you pass it to him, he looks it over and moves on. To him you are just on your way to school, that's what they were meant to think. You have missed weeks of schools this year already. They do not notice that you are tense, or that you are going a lot further on the train, past where you would get off to go to school. You have already been working for the last few hours. Soon you will arrive at your destination.



Inside your bag are not books or your sports kit. Your bag is full of class A drugs (those considered most harmful). Your boss has told you the address of the drugs den you have to go to. The amount of drugs you are carrying puts you in danger, you were told to carry a knife for protection. The fear of being arrested is a distant thought, as you walk to the house you've been told to go to. You must sell these drugs, if you do not make what you need, then you do not feel you can return home. Your boss threatened you, he knows where your family lives, so you do not argue. You met him on social media, he has bought you a lot of things, he promised to make you money, but now you feel like you owe him. Yes, you do make some money, but your life is now full of fear. You do not know who to trust or whether you will be believed, should you say what has been happening.

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL?

Impacts of modern slavery on children and young people (Slides 21-22)

Modern slavery has severe and lasting impacts on children in the UK, affecting their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. Some of the key impacts include:

1. Physical and Psychological Harm

- Children subjected to modern slavery often face violence, abuse, and neglect.
- They may suffer from malnutrition, exhaustion, and physical injuries due to harsh working conditions.
- Many develop long-term psychological issues, including PTSD, anxiety, and depression.

2. Education Disruption

- Many trafficked children are denied access to education, limiting their future opportunities.
- Some are forced to work in illegal trades, such as drug trafficking or forced labour, keeping them out of school.

3. Criminal Exploitation

- Children are often forced into criminal activities, such as drug running (county lines), theft, or forced begging.
- They may be manipulated and controlled by gangs, making it difficult for them to escape exploitation.

4. Sexual Exploitation

- Some children are trafficked for sexual exploitation, leading to severe physical and emotional trauma.
- This can result in STIs, unwanted pregnancies, and long-term mental health struggles.

5. Social Isolation and Stigma

- Many children in modern slavery are cut off from their families and communities.
- If they manage to escape, they may struggle with trust issues and reintegration into society.

6. Legal and Immigration Challenges

- Some children are trafficked into the UK and may lack legal status, making it harder

to access support.

- They may face deportation or difficulty in proving their identity and securing protection.

7. Long-Term Impact on Future Prospects

- Survivors of modern slavery often struggle with employment and independent living due to a lack of education and trauma.
- The psychological scars can persist into adulthood, affecting relationships and mental well-being.

Key stages of recruitment (Slide 23-27)

All models are fallible, and not all children will go through all the stages, but it is useful nevertheless to see how the manipulation can trap a young person. Below we have added some additional details to support your presentation.

Targeting – signs of this stage

At this stage an exploiter is:

- Observing a young person
- Finding out a young person's vulnerabilities, needs and wants
- Glamourising their lifestyle
- Gaining and developing a young person's trust

The way children are targeted is changing all the time, in line with advances in technology.

Key places where gangs target, approach and manipulate vulnerable young people include schools and social care spaces, street grooming and increasingly digital channels including social media, private chat apps and online gaming. Research has shown that the majority of targeting and grooming is on Snapchat.

Online gaming platforms are used, children are offered gaming credits to put them into debt bondage. County lines activity has been glamorised in a game called Cunch Line Chronicles, which sees players rewarded for drug dealing. Apple have eventually taken the game off the platform. The increasing use of AI bots could see targeting on an industrial scale.

Further reading/resources

New videos which have been added to the National County Lines Coordination Centre's YouTube channel:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLPTnOBOIBBuydzgBai4r6JP3SRfa8RIMd&si=dX4W8xVVsRvwoJwu>

[County lines gangs use Snapchat as their main tool to lure teenagers | The Standard](#)

[How social media is being used by county lines gangs to exploit children](#)

Taster – Signs of this stage

At this stage an exploiter might:

- Give a young person gifts and rewards.
- Include them in their activities.
- Offer a young person protection.
- Give them a sense of belonging.



- Introduce a young person to more established members of their gang.

Hooked - Signs of this stage

At this stage a young person might:

- Be given a bigger role in the group (e.g. people running for them).
- Get more responsibilities within the group e.g. more money.
- Engage in activities such as drugs, alcohol and sexual behaviour
- Be asked for favours/to keep secrets/to recruit others to the gang

Trapped – signs of this stage

At this stage an exploiter might use:

- Blackmail – include ‘fake’ mugging, organised to create a debt, or videoing of sexual acts.
- Physical violence and sexual assaults.
- Shaming, guilt and fear in an attempt to isolate the young person from their family, friends and society.
- Humiliation, either sexually or by exposing their mistakes to others.
- Coercion or manipulation into drug addiction.

Further reading:

Crest Advisory [Five things you need to know about new tech and county lines](#)

Extra video clips

Gemma’s story [The Clewer Initiative | Gemma's story](#)

Emma’s Story [Emma | Journeys - YouTube](#)

Domestic servitude [Domestic Servitude Animation - English](#)

Mo Farah Story [Sir Mo Farah reveals he was trafficked to the UK as a child - BBC News](#)

Act or Ignore (slides 30-32)

Choose one side of the room to move to in each scenario.
You're welcome to change sides at any point.
Be honest.

Group 1:

You notice one of your friendship group has a new mobile phone, that they have not given you the number for. They seem a lot busier and have much less time to see you. You notice they hang out with different people.

Group 2.

Recently, a girl in your friendship group has been missing quite a bit of school. When they are at school, they are sometimes collected by a man, driving a car who you know is not a family member.

Group 3.

A friend of yours had a message on Insta asking them to hold on to a bag. The person messaging said they would give your friend some cash once they get it back as long as this is kept secret.

Discuss with those around you

Act

Why would you act?
responsibility?
What will you do?
you?

Ignore

Why would you ignore this? Why is it your
Whose responsibility is it? What worries

For pupils with mobility issues or areas with a lack of space you can ask pupils to hold up cards for 'act' or ignore' or just simply to put their hands up for each.

Additional information to support a response (Slide 35)

What to do and where to go

IF YOU OR A FRIEND ARE IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION

- TELL AN ADULT that you trust. If you feel they do not believe you, find someone who does. Adults are often so shocked by this crime, they struggle to understand it is happening.
- DO NOT BLAME YOURSELF. THIS NOT YOUR FAULT even if you agreed at first.
- GROOMERS or TRAFFICKERS will change facts and give the impression that you were responsible, that you wanted this happen. This is not true, it is part of the grooming process.
- THIS IS A CRIME. Victims may be embarrassed to talk about this crime, but it is not their fault.
- CALL THE MODERN SLAVERY HELPLINE and explain the situation.

IMPORTANT!

- Both men and women can target, groom, and exploit victims.
- Victims can be of any age.
- A romantic connection and promises of 'being in a relationship' is often used to groom people.
- Exploiters might be family members or people in positions of trust and authority.
- Exploiters might target the whole family, with promises of: 'Trust me, I will look after your son. Don't worry!'
- Secrecy and isolation are part of the grooming process, 'Let's keep this our secret. Let's meet privately. Don't tell your friends or family. They won't understand.'
- Grooming happens on social media accounts. Watch out for FAKE friends with FAKE accounts. Often FAKE accounts have been created recently. They might have very few but very similar photos, have few friends, or have many photos that all look the same.
- DO NOT give personal information on social media, such as your home location, phone number, work or school location.
- DO NOT tell anyone you don't know about your family, their names, their ages, their jobs.
- DO NOT send photos of your personal life. Be suspicious if they never want to talk face to face online.
- DO NOT MEET UP in person. If you do this, make sure you tell a parent, an adult or several friends where you are. DO NOT GO ALONE

Additional material

The No Project has a range of resources and case studies, which you can use as standalone material or you can blend it with resources in the PowerPoint from MSOIC . Here is the link:

[Lesson Plans: The NO Project](#)

3 key areas for you to think about in order to be safe (slide 36)

Some of these suggestions are on the young people's handouts, but you can mention a few ideas. Choose from those listed below.

Online activity

Create strong passwords

Use a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters. Don't use personal information like your birthday or best friend's name. Use a different password for each website or app.

Be careful what you share

Don't share personal information like your email address, phone number, or password. Be careful about what pictures you share online.

Be skeptical of what you see online

There is a lot of false information online. You can check information by talking to a trusted adult or looking it up on another website.

Be careful about who you meet online

Meeting someone you have only met online can be dangerous. Only meet up with someone you know you can trust, and have your parents, carer or other trusted adult present.

Tell someone if you feel uncomfortable

If someone makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you are being bullied, tell a parent, carer, or trusted adult.

Your friendships

Some ideas for forming healthy relationships.

Meet other people

Joining a club, youth group, online forum or getting involved in an activity you enjoy is a great way of meeting new people. It can also be a boost to your confidence to do something you enjoy. Do some research about what is available in your area and choose something that interests you. If you are unsure of where to start, ask someone to help you, or ask others for ideas.

Help other people

Volunteering in your local community can be a great way to meet other people. It also feels good, knowing you are helping others and making a difference.

Be a great listener

Introduce yourself to new people, ask questions about them, really listen to their answers and look for common ground.

Be a good friend

Be a good friend to your new friends. Be trustworthy, listen to them, be respectful and supportive.

Choose good friends

You deserve good friends. Surround yourself with people who make you feel good, do not pursue friendships with people just because you think you should, if others are or if they do not bring anything positive to your life.

Your wellbeing

Focus on the things you enjoy

This could be an existing hobby, sports or something brand new that you wanted to have a go at. Try creating things (e.g. drawing, painting, writing, crafting), playing games or puzzles, decorating, or spending time watching or creating safe and appropriate content on social media or streaming sites.

Set limits on the news and social media

While it is good to stay informed, media coverage of world and UK events can also be overwhelming and make us anxious and worried. Experiment to find the balance of news and media coverage that works for you. YoungMinds has information on [how to have a more positive experience online](#).

Connect with others

Find time regularly to connect with friends, family, classmates, co-workers or others. It can help you all feel more connected.

Try different ways of keeping in touch to find the ones that work best (e.g. video calls, quizzes or games with friends).

Find your routine

Try to find a routine that is realistic, flexible, and includes some fun. There are many ways to do this, so experiment with what works best for you. The proper routine for you might look different from someone else's, and that's okay!

Extra Exercises – how this relates to our everyday lives (please see handout) (Slide 33, 34)



Narrative:

How many people go themselves or know someone that gets their nails done in a nail bar?

The people working in those nail bars are sometimes trafficked from countries such as Vietnam or Thailand with a dream to work in a nail bar or open their own bar one day. Instead, they find themselves and their families threatened if they do not do as they are told.

They may be sitting very quietly, not speaking, scared that they will get into trouble and thinking that no-one will believe them, should they speak out and say how they are being treated. Their reality may be very different to what was promised to them. Their wages may be much lower, well below the legal limit, they may be forced to live in cramped, damp and dirty living conditions, those exploiting them may be controlling them through debt they say they owe for the journey to the UK and they may be threatened with violence should they leave.



Narrative:

Take a moment to think about the person working in a house such as these above, not allowed to leave on their own accord. You have seen her looking out the window as you walk past, but you have never seen her leave. You are not sure how old she is; she may be quite young. She seems to always be in the house. Her reality is again, very different to what she was promised. She thought she was coming to the UK for a good job – to look after children as an au pair. Instead, she is forced to work long hours, cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children in the household. She is not allowed to eat with the family but instead is given scraps of food after they have finished eating. She must sleep on the floor in the kitchen. She is beaten if she complains. She did not think she would be treated like this, but this was always the plan for her according to her exploiters.

Q) How would you feel?

Q) How do you think people are tricked into this kind of work?

Finally

If you need any further assistance please contact our unit:

Modern Slavery and Organised Crime Unit

MSOICU Team: MSOIC@dc.police.uk