

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in Hotels

What is child sexual exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity

(a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or

(b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Any child can be exploited, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity or any other characteristic.

Why is it important you can recognise the signs?

Hotels are often used to exploit and abuse children, but you can help stop it. By learning to spot the signs and report concerns to the police, you can help protect children from unimaginable abuse and long-lasting trauma.

It is only by working together that we can prevent child exploitation. Police forces across England and Wales deliver awareness raising training to hotel staff and conduct other engagement activity under the banner of Operation Makesafe.

Turn over to find out what signs to look out for and what to do if you are concerned about a child...

It is not your responsibility to assess whether a child is being exploited.

It is your responsibility to report any concerns you may have.

If something doesn't feel right, it might not be. Don't wait, report it.

Indicators of child exploitation

- Children or young people who seem withdrawn, highly anxious or scared
- Last minute or walk-in bookings involving guests with little or no luggage
- Guests refusing to provide identification or card details, or insisting on paying in cash
- Guests arriving with large amounts of alcohol on their person, this may for example be concealed in shopping bags
- Guests requesting a room that is isolated, or near the rear exit of the premises, fire exits or car park entrances
- Bookings made in a different name to the person checking in without a valid reason, for example employers booking a room on behalf of an employee
- Guests arriving and asking for a specific room number, but they don't know the name in which the room is booked
- Guests who don't want rooms cleaned or use the 'do not disturb' sign for long periods – your company may well have policies around checking rooms after 24/48 hours please adhere to these guidelines
- Signs of sexual or criminal activity having taken place, such as evidence of alcohol or substance misuse and/or contraception wrappers in guest rooms where young people have been
- Alcohol orders to rooms where there are guests who appear to be underage – your company may promote Challenge 25 or similar schemes. You can use these schemes to legitimately seek age verification



What to do if you suspect child exploitation is taking place

Call the police on **101** or **999** in an emergency – if you are concerned a child is in the company of someone wishing to harm them you must always call 999.

If you have information on child exploitation and abuse or suspect it may be happening but want to remain completely anonymous, you can contact the [independent charity Crimestoppers online](#) or by calling **0800 555 111**.