**Facilitators Notes:**

**A definition of child sexual exploitation**

**What is child sexual exploitation?**

Child sexual exploitation is when someone grooms and controls a child for a sexual purpose.

The terms 'child sexual exploitation' or the 'commercial sexual exploitation of children' are used to refer to a range of illegal and abusive activities.

These activities can be broadly separated into two areas:

* sexual exploitation through street grooming
* online sexual exploitation.

**Sexual exploitation through street grooming can include:**

* grooming a child for a sexual purpose. This might involve befriending the child, gaining their trust, giving them drugs, alcohol or gifts, asking them to perform sexual acts as a favour or in exchange for something
* the movement of children within the UK for the purpose of sexually abusing them (also referred to as internal trafficking)
* the trafficking of children into the UK from other countries for the purpose of sexually abusing them
* controlling a child through physical or psychological means or through the use of drugs for a sexual purpose
* receiving money or goods in payment for someone to have sex with a child (also referred to as child prostitution)
* paying or exchanging goods for sex with a child.

**Online sexual exploitation can include:**

* grooming children online for the purpose of sexually abusing them. This might involve an adult pretending to be a child, befriending the child through online chat rooms, social networking websites, email, mobile telephone messaging, gaining their trust, stalking their online activities
* asking children to participate in non-contact sexual activities such as engaging in sexual conversations online or via mobile telephone
* asking children to take and share indecent images of themselves online or through a mobile telephone
* asking children to display sexualised behaviours or perform sexual acts that are recorded or shared live via webcam
* the creation, storage and distribution of child abuse images (also referred to as child pornography or indecent images)
* arranging to meet a child in person for the purpose of sexually abusing them.

UK government definition

The definition of child sexual exploitation used by UK governments in their guidance and policy was developed by the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People:

"The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves **exploitative situations, contexts and relationships** where young people (or a third person or persons) **receive 'something'** (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources."