

Breaking the Cycle

Thomas Buxton Primary School

SESSION OBJECTIVES

Most children in Tower Hamlets have a safe and enjoyable childhood.

- Understand the **reality** of risks faced by **some** children in Tower Hamlets
- To be able to **identify signs** which may indicate a child is at **risk**
- To know where to **seek help** from, **before** things get out of hand

The reality of the risks to children

National Data :

- **4%** of children aged 10-14 were victims of **violent crime** in 2018
- The peak time of **risk** is **3pm-5pm** on **weekdays** and **4-6pm** on **weekends**

In Tower Hamlets (2018) **99** young people under 18 came into the **justice system**. 24 had a period in custody

GROOMING & EXPLOITATION



Grooming is when someone builds an **emotional connection** with a child/young person to **gain trust** for the purpose of **exploitation** or trafficking

**EVERY
CHANCE
for EVERY
CHILD**

Exploitation: treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work

HOW?

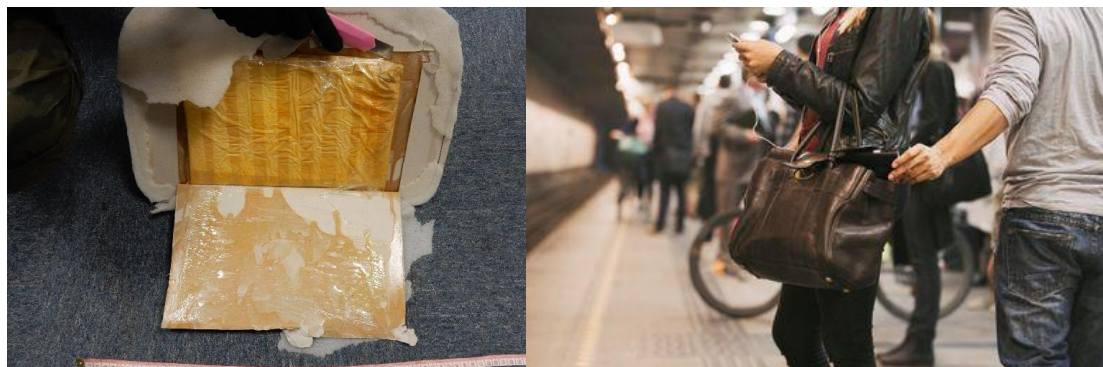


1. Form an **emotional relationship**

- Giving and promising **money**
- Giving advice
- Providing **friendship**
- Providing '**protection**' and '**security**'
- Giving **gifts** (clothes, trainers, mobile phones, food, etc.)
- Taking them on trips and outings
- Offering status

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HOW?



2. Establish control

- Give them small tasks to complete: steal items from the shop, hold drugs at home, etc.
- **Loyalty** is tested
- Create **mistrust** with family members, authorities, social workers etc.
- Enforce **debts**

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HOW?

3. Exploitation

- Holding **drugs on themselves** (even storing at home)
- Holding **weapons** and **firearms** at home
- Selling drugs (going “**county lines**”, “going cunch”)
- Forcing them to be involved in **violent crime** (knife crime, gang warfare, acid attacks, etc.)
- Work in ‘**trap houses**’



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WHO IS AT **RISK** OF GROOMING?

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Higher risk:

- Those experiencing family breakdowns
- Those struggling at school
- Those effected by poverty



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WHO IS AT RISK OF GROOMING?

ALL young people!

Case Study

- 'C' was a good 14 year old boy: he enjoyed reading, and was doing well at school
- Targeted in school by an older boy: told to stay good and not raise any suspicion
- Was told to hold onto drugs and occasionally pick up drugs and deliver money
- Gang came back to him and said drugs had gone missing...
- "You now owe us £20,000"
- Wider family was targeted

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF RISK

- Possessing unusual amounts of **money**
- Possessing unexplained items: new **clothes**, trainers, mobile phones, etc.
- Spending more time on their **mobile phones**: excessive receipt of texts or calls, being **secretive** about phone calls/texts
- Persistently going **missing from school** or home, or being found **out-of-area**
- Significant **decline in school performance** (attendance, punctuality)
- Struggling with **relationships**, especially with family members
- Parental concerns
- Suspicion of **self-harm**, physical assault, or sexual injuries

Prevention – what contributes?

1. Strong, consistent home and community support
2. Good education engagement and support for achievement
3. Young people with good social and emotional skills to manage risks and problems
4. Positive peer relationships

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- **Healthy relationships:**
 - Keep communications open and honest
 - Focus on positives and possibilities
- **Reach Out**
 - Family and friends may be able to help you and your child
 - Others will have practical suggestions of what parents can do

ORGANISATIONS WHICH CAN HELP

- Children's centre
- Staff at your child's school
- Youth workers
- Tower Hamlets Early Help Hub
- Breaking the cycle partners

Breaking the Cycle

- Holistic approach
- Early intervention
- Family support
- Mentoring
- Workshops (for parents and young people)
- Home visits
- Family group conferencing

Contact Details : Breaking the Cycle Partners

Queries/Question/Referrals

- Tower Hamlets Early Help
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/earlyhelp
0207 364 5006 (select option 2)
- **Osmani Trust 58 Underwood Rd E1 5AW**
 - www.osmanitrust.org
 - 0207 247 8080
- Streets of Growth 30 Marsh Wall E14 9TP
 - www.streetsofgrowth.org
 - 0207 515 7356