*Sexual exploitation*

What is Sexual Exploitation?

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

It can occur through the use of technology without immediate understanding, e.g. being persuaded to post images on the internet or mobile phone without immediate payment or gain. Violence, being pressured and intimidation are common. Involvement in exploitative relationships is often where the child or young person has limited choice as a result of their social, economic or emotional vulnerability.

Often the child or young person does not recognise the danger of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation, as they consider they have acted voluntarily. The reality is they have not consented and their behaviour is not voluntary. A child cannot consent to their own abuse

It can be difficult to know what to do if you are being harmed by someone or you are worried about someone else. There are adults who can help so it is important to tell someone you trust so they can take steps to protect you or the person you are worried about. You can speak to a social worker who will listen to your concerns and work with other professionals to promote your safety.

Contact the MASH Team on tel: 020 8921 3172 or email: mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk to speak to a social worker.

Alternatively you can speak to a trusted adult such as a teacher, police officer or youth worker who will help you.

If you do not want to speak to someone you know, you can [contact ChildLine](http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx) for help.