**CSE Warning Signs**

Often children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation do not recognise that

they are being abused. There are a number of warning signs that can indicate a child may be being groomed for sexual exploitation and behaviours that can indicate that a child is being sexually exploited. To assist you in remembering and assessing these signs and

behaviours we have created the mnemonic ‘SAFEGUARD’.

**S exual health and behaviour**

Evidence of sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy and termination;

inappropriate sexualised behaviour

**A bsent from school or repeatedly running away**

Evidence of truancy or periods of being missing from home or care

**F amilial abuse and/or problems at home**

Familial sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, as well as risk of

forced marriage or honour-based violence; domestic violence; substance misuse; parental mental health concerns; parental criminality; experience of homelessness; living in a care home or temporary accommodation

**E motional and physical condition**

Thoughts of, or attempted, suicide or self-harming; low self-esteem or self-confidence; problems relating to sexual orientation; learning difficulties or poor mental health; unexplained injuries or changes in physical appearance identify

**G angs, older age groups and involvement in crime**

Involvement in crime; direct involvement with gang members or living in a gang afflicted community; involvement with older individuals or lacking friends from the same age group; contact with other individuals who are sexually exploited

**U se of technology and sexual bullying**

Evidence of ‘sexting’, sexualised communication on-line or problematic use of the

internet and social networking sites

**A lcohol and drug misuse**

Problematic substance use

**R eceipt of unexplained gifts or money**

Unexplained finances, including phone credit, clothes and money

**D istrust of authority figures**

Resistance to communicating with parents, carers, teachers, social services, health, police and others