

# ENTRY INTO SEXPLOITATION

## HOW DO WOMEN & GIRLS GET DRAWN INTO PROSTITUTION & OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (SEXPLOITATION)?

### VULNERABILITIES & TRIGGERS



#### CHILDHOOD ABUSE

Studies of prostituted women find a very high proportion had been abused as children.



#### CHILDHOOD IN CARE

Similarly, a significant proportion had been in local authority care as children.



#### MIGRATION

Recent migrants & women of marginalised ethnicities are at increased risk of sexual exploitation.



#### MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Poor mental health & the resulting social isolation can increase the risk of sexploitation.



#### POVERTY HOMELESSNESS

Many women enter sexploitation under the coercion of extreme poverty &/or imminent homelessness. A history of poverty or homelessness & the resulting social isolation increase the risk of sexploitation.



#### DOMESTIC ABUSE

Escaping domestic abuse & consequent poverty & homelessness can trigger entry into sexploitation. Partners often coerce women into sexploitation.



#### SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Women can enter sexploitation to fund their or their partner's drug use. But it's more common to develop substance misuse as a way of bearing sexploitation.



#### MISINFORMATION

Cultural messages (such as "sex work is real work!") trivialise prostitution, & normalise violent & dangerous practices found in porn & obfuscate the harms.



#### HYPERSEXUALISATION

Cultural messages groom girls to believe a woman's worth is dependent on how she looks and having the right accessories, etc.



#### PORNIFICATION

Cultural messages groom girls to accept a life of objectification & service to men's needs rather than their own.



#### SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media amplifies these cultural messages & gives pimps & punters access to girls & women, & facilitates entry into sexploitation.

### CULTURAL GROOMING



#### HUSBANDS & PARTNERS

Women's husbands & partners often coerce them into sexploitation. This is not uncommon & is also a form of domestic abuse & coercive control.



#### LOVERBOYS

Loverboy pimps look for marginalised girls, shower them with affection & then coerce them into sexploitation.



#### DRUG DEALERS

Drug dealers are known to deliberately get girls & women addicted to drugs & then coerce them into prostitution to pay for them.



#### ORGANISED CRIME GANGS

Organised crime gangs control much of the sex trade & use all means to coerce girls & women into it & maintain control of them.



#### CORPORATE PIMPS

The corporate pimps are the businessmen who own and operate the big porn, webcamming, & prostitution advertising sites & sites like OnlyFans through which many girls & young women enter the industry.

### PIMPS AND PREDATORS



#### ONLYFANS

OnlyFans has lowered the bar to entry into the sex industry because setting up an account is only a small leap from running an Instagram or TikTok account. It also leads to 'full service' prostitution because of the difficulty of making much money & men hassling women to meet in person.



#### WEBCAMMING

Webcamming involves live streaming sexual acts on specialist sites. Like, OnlyFans, it often leads to 'full service' prostitution. There is a high cost to being dependent for an income on entitled & often sexist men.



#### 'SUGAR DATING'

'Sugar dating' is an arrangement whereby a younger person provides companionship and usually sex to an older person for gifts or money. As such it is a form of prostitution & often leads to further involvement in the industry.



#### PORNOGRAPHY

While some porn is produced in studios, much is 'user generated', meaning recordings of sexual assaults & other sexual activity that has been made at home or in hotels & uploaded, often without permission.



#### LAPDANCING/STRIPPING

Stripping & lap dancing are precarious & exploitative workplaces, providing no job or income security. Women have to pay a house fee & only make money by providing lap 'dances' to individual punters. Again this often leads women to enter prostitution.



#### PROSTITUTION

Most prostitution in the UK now takes place indoors & much is mediated through the internet. Men typically pay by the hour or half hour, which can make it harder to bear than street prostitution where they typically pay for the act. Men often want to act out painful & abusive acts they've seen in porn.

### SEXPLOITATION

# THE GROOMING PROCESS

In this context, grooming is the process by which someone with more power (usually a man or older boy) manipulates a child or young or marginalised woman to participate in prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation for his financial gain or other benefit. As a result it might seem from the outside that she is participating of her own volition. This can lead to the misconception that she is freely 'consenting' rather than acquiescing because she cannot see an alternative. Often the perpetrator poses as a boyfriend, which has led to this form of grooming being known as 'loverboy' pimping.

## The loverboy grooming process



### INITIAL CONTACT

This can take place in person or online. The perpetrator may make the initial contact himself or he may get someone else (often a younger brother or cousin) to make the initial contact and then introduce her to the perpetrator.



### LOVE BOMBING

He showers her with gifts & attention so she becomes infatuated with him & regards him as a boyfriend. The more marginalised she is, the more likely she is to respond to this.



### ISOLATION

He isolates her. He may try to convince her that her family & friends don't care about her. He may give her cigarettes, alcohol or drugs with the aim of encouraging addictions. He may use pornography to soften her up to exploitative sex.



### SEXUALISING THE RELATIONSHIP

He initiates sexual contact & if she resists, tells her that no one cares for her as much as he does, & reminds her that she owes him for all the gifts he has given her.



### CONTROL & EXPLOITATION

He demands she has sex with others. He tells her that other girls do this for their boyfriends. If she resists, he threatens her or her family members. She may not be aware that money changes hands for the sexual acts.

By the end of this, she is likely to be caught in a cycle of abuse, where the perpetrator alternates between abusive behaviour and remorse, typical of domestic abuse and relationships based on coercive control. This makes it extremely difficult to escape.

There are many other variations of the grooming process. Drug dealers might use a similar process with the aim of getting a girl or young woman addicted to drugs. Once she is addicted, he coerces her into prostitution to pay for the drugs, and, again, she ends up trapped.

Men in existing relationships sometimes coerce their wives and partners into prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation. While the initial stages of the process may differ from the typical loverboy method, the end result can be much the same.

The police and other authorities often do not recognise that it is commonplace for husbands and partners to pimp women they are in relationships with, and that this makes it even harder for the woman to leave both the relationship and the sexploitation. It is of grave concern that the UK police are often blind to this dynamic and seldom enforce the pimping legislation.

Other factors that lead to women's entry into prostitution also help to trap her there - particularly poverty, homelessness, isolation and lack of family support, lack of education and skills, lack of confidence, and substance misuse - all exacerbated by the damage that prostitution causes to her physical and mental health.

All of the above is made easier by social, cultural and technological developments over the past two decades that have led to the sex industry becoming normalised and legitimised and the culture ever more hyper-sexualised and pornified. As a result the values of the sex industry are now mainstream with children inevitably soaking them in.

This grooms the entire cohort of girls to believe that women's worth revolves around their appearance, looking and acting sexy, and having the right clothing and accessories, and that their main role in life is to please men and service their needs rather than their own. This makes them easy targets for predatory men. At the same time, the culture grooms boys to be sexual predators, pimps and pornography makers.

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