



# A Professionals Guide to supporting parents whose children have been affected by Violence and Exploitation Bedfordshire 2020

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## Local Authority Offers

BBC children's services offer a range of services to support children, young people and their families. This includes a dedicated adolescent response team to both prevent and support families affected by violence and exploitation. All services can be accessed via the early help assessment. For support please Email [multi.agency@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:multi.agency@bedford.gov.uk) or call 01234 718700.

**Luton** In Luton there are specialised teams that work separately or together (known as multi-disciplinary teams) to ensure vulnerable families, adults and children in Luton receive the care and support they need. Protecting vulnerable children is everyone's business, and we all need to be alert, to know what to look out for and where to go for advice, as well as having the confidence to report any acts of abuse safe in the knowledge that they will be acted on.

In CBC, the Young People's Support Team offer support to young people and their families as part of their statutory support plans; where exploitation is identified that may lead to family breakdown. The support seeks to plan interventions that are offered weekly. Plans are created with families that seek to both understand the push and pull factors of exploitation and ways to deter and disrupt risk. These plans are part of the overall plan devised, delivered and planned with partners. Building Resilience in Families is held weekly in all 5 localities. Please contact [AccessReferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:AccessReferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) for more info.

## Support Services Bedfordshire

The following services provide support for parents in Bedfordshire whose children are being exploited. Exploitation can take place in many forms and can include: gang involvement, county lines, drugs, sexual violence and exploitation, trafficking, modern day slavery, weapons (including knives and firearms), cuckooing and more. Click on the support services logos to be taken to their websites and find out even more information. If there are safeguarding concerns contact the relevant MASH. Email: [mash@luton.gov.uk](mailto:mash@luton.gov.uk), [Multi.Agency@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:Multi.Agency@bedford.gov.uk) or [cs.accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cs.accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

**VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION REDUCTION UNIT** The Bedfordshire Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU) aims to tackle the root causes of things like gang membership and prevent young people becoming involved in all aspects of gang criminality and exploitation. We have specialist support and advice to help you, whether you are a young person directly involved, have concerns about a family member or friend, or work in this area and want to learn more about what we do.

**Link to Change** provide support programmes and training to young people and professionals. Their projects provide 1-2-1 support, outreach work and targeted group work programmes. From initial risk assessment and referral processes, they assess the children and young people using a contextual safeguarding framework, which is recognised as one of the most current and effective approaches.

**FACES** Family And Children's Early-help Services. FACES is an organisation that works in Bedford and Central Bedfordshire. The majority of their services are delivered by trained volunteers, who visit a family in their own home to offer both practical and emotional support for issues such as: Domestic Abuse, Support for young people and families experiencing Child Sexual Exploitation, Help with pregnancy and infants, Support with parenting issues, Depression, Isolation and Victim Support.

FACES is a Luton based Christian and Muslim partnership that's been working to strengthen resilience in faith communities and enhance child sexual exploitation awareness since 2016. They focus on training, running youth workshops and challenging damaging messages surrounding child sexual exploitation.

**Signpost** Whether it is you, a partner, friend, relative or colleague who has been the subject of a crime, Signpost to Support Bedfordshire is the way for you to find the help that meets your specific needs. The Signpost Hub offers free and confidential support to anyone affected by crime whether it has been reported to the police or not.

Youth offending services (YOS) also provide support to affected parents. In Bedfordshire YOS is split into two agencies, one covers Luton and the other covers Bedford and Central Bedfordshire. Click on the respective logo for more information.

**Stepping Stones** Stepping Stones (Luton) is a charity dedicated to empowering women who have suffered domestic abuse or are vulnerable due to substance misuse by providing hope and the skills and resources to make positive life choices. They also offer parent support groups.

There are 3 main drug and alcohol services in Bedfordshire: ResoLUTIONs Luton is a free and confidential drug and alcohol service for adults, young people and families. P2R Bedford and Central provides drug and alcohol advice, treatment and support to adults whose lives are affected, support can include the whole family. Aquarius supports anyone under 18 in Bedford and Central that is affected by substance misuse.

**CAMHS** Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services. We provide help to children and to the wider family, including those with living with foster parents, adopted children and young people living in children's homes. The service may see children and adolescents on their own, with their parents or with their family, and may also see parents on their own.

Our local to Luton team are dedicated to serving the emotional, social and spiritual development of all young people in our schools, churches and local community. We provide diverse services supporting youth work across the UK. You can explore our national Training courses – we cater to both professionals and youth workers, currently covering issues like self-harm, anxiety and emotional wellbeing.

**CHUMS CHARITY** Supporting Mental Health Improving Lives. Our services wherever possible support the family as a whole as we know that sometimes everyone in the family needs a little help, not just the child who has been referred. All our group workshops support parent/carers as well as their children. Some of our current service delivery is also directly accessible to adults. CHUMS currently delivers nine services across Bedfordshire, Luton, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough although not all services are available in all four regions.

## National Support Services

**relate** the relationship people. You might be a parent worried about your child's behaviour or how a divorce may impact on your family. You might be part of step-family and need help adjusting, or you may be arguing with parents or siblings and need support communicating with each other.

**Pace** Parents against child exploitation. Pace recognises and celebrates the lifelong commitment parents have for their child. We help parents fight to keep their children safe and we rely on your generosity to make our work possible.

**Barnardo's** GIVING CHILDREN BACK THEIR FUTURE. We provide a range of services to help and support families across the UK, working with organisations and professionals so that children get the best start in life.

**NSPCC** Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP. Parenting can be rewarding, but it can also be challenging. We've got parenting tips for all stages of your life, as well as advice on how to deal with difficult situations.

**The Children's Society** We empower young people to make positive changes and rediscover their hope. They want a future they can look forward to and we're here to make sure they get it. Working alongside young people, their families and community, we will not rest until together, step-by-step, we've created a society built for all children.

**THINK U KNOW** Think U know is an organisation that provides advice and support to parents that may have concerns about their child. They can also provide advice around online safety.

**SPACE** Suspecting or learning that your child has been exploited into County Lines as a drug runner is a shocking and concerning revelation for any parent. SPACE offers free support to parents whose children are being exploited.

**St Giles** ST GILES is a charity using expertise and real-life past experiences to empower people who are not getting the help they need. People held back by poverty, exploited, abused, dealing with addiction or mental health problems, caught up in crime or a combination of these issues and others.

**VICTIM SUPPORT** Just like young people, it's important for parents to be able to share their concerns and fears too. If you suffer from similar experiences which can be a great support. You might also be able to get help and support from your child's school, from your GP, from religious leaders and communities, from your local authority family services team, and also from victims' organisations such as Victim Support.

Being a parent to a child of the digital generation can be challenging. We work with parents and carers to educate them about the dangers of online grooming to help them educate and empower their children to make better decisions to stay safer online.

