

# Working Together with Residential Homes

## TO COMBAT CHILD EXPLOITATION

TIPS FOR POLICE OFFICERS

### MISSING EPISODES



Frequent missing episodes may indicate possible CSE. Return Home Interviews are vitally important, and should always be attempted. Where a young person refuses to engage, encourage staff to establish facts at the next possible opportunity, and ensure this can be shared with the police if relevant.

### WHO TO TURN TO



The pathways of reporting concerns and/or intelligence can seem daunting to professionals, and they may need support to do this. Help combat exploitation by ensuring that residential homes know how to contact the police, when to do so, and who they can call. Explain your role and how that differs from other officers.

### RECOGNITION



Residential homes may not feel listened to, and yet they hold vital information to protect young people and aid criminal investigations. Take time to reassure staff, and value them as partners. Every professional in the Highlands must take exploitation seriously and recognise the potential for harm.

### FEEDING BACK



Ensure that the CSE marker is checked on concern forms, or reference CSE/Operation Portrait when submitting SID logs, so that follow-up can be discussed at the CERAG. Residential staff value feedback - where possible, explain your actions and expectations, and any outcomes where appropriate.

RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE VIA THE OPERATION PORTRAIT BRIEFING SLIDES, INCLUDING A 'HOTSPOT' LIST AND DETAILS OF PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE/SUSPECTED PERPETRATORS IN THE LOCAL AREA.

### WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE TELL US...

Language and actions should acknowledge the young person as a victim or survivor, rather than a consenting party - even if they do not recognise they are being exploited.

- Young people told us that they would like police to tell them *why* they shouldn't do something, and what the possible repercussions and legal outcomes might be
- They spoke about needing to know if police officers could *help* - even if they were doing something "wrong" like taking drugs
- Residential homes can let you know "what works" for a specific young person - some may prefer to speak to a female officer, or have difficulties sitting still whilst talking
- Young people wanted officers to recognise that they may have a distrust of police from early childhood experiences

