

All children and young people who are identified as having been trafficked, should be subject to local child protection procedures.

A photograph of the child must be taken immediately. Sometimes this is the only evidence of a child's existence and it is often the only possibility of recovering that child if he/she subsequently go missing.

When accommodating children who have been trafficked, the location must be kept strictly confidential. Failure to do so will put both the child and other members of that household at risk.

These children will need additional support with regard to family tracing and voluntary repatriation, including specific risk assessment and independent legal advice with regard to their rights, immigration status and support.

NEVER CHALLENGE SOMEONE YOU SUSPECT MAY BE INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING CHILDREN – ANY SUCH CONCERNS SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE PROMPTLY.

NSPCC Child Trafficking Advice Line

0800 107 7057

(lines open during office hours)

Child Trafficking Guidance

General Overview

Child trafficking is defined as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.” Exploitation purposes include: sexual exploitation; forced labour; domestic servitude; drug trafficking; benefit fraud; criminal activities.

Girls and boys of all ages are trafficked in many areas of the UK, including Scotland. It is difficult to obtain accurate figures due to the clandestine nature of this crime but current estimates suggest that it may be several hundred per year and all indications are that this is a growing problem.

The UK is primarily a destination country for children trafficked from elsewhere, though it is also a transit country (where children are routed through the UK on their way to other countries) and possibly also a source country.



Child Trafficking Guidance

Guiding Principles

All practitioners working with families need to be alert to the possibility of child trafficking.

Possible indicators include:

- children arriving and leaving families;
- a number of unrelated children living at the same address;
- children not enrolled in education or health services;
- children who have money or goods that cannot be accounted for;
- children whose whereabouts are unknown for regular periods of time;
- children who rarely leave the house;
- child cannot confirm which particular adult has responsibility for them
- children dressing or behaving in ways that seem incongruent with their circumstances or stage of development.

Commonly children do not recognise that they are being exploited, therefore are unlikely to seek help themselves.

Traffickers control children using deception, violence, threats and debt bondage. The effectiveness of this control should not be underestimated.

Children are trafficked from many different countries including China, Africa, Afghanistan, Vietnam and Eastern European countries.

Children are also trafficked between different areas of the UK. This is known as internal trafficking.

Child trafficking is a Serious Organised Crime and is usually linked to other such crimes like drug trafficking, prostitution rings and money laundering.

Children arrive in Scotland by air, sea or land. When arriving by air, children are processed through immigration control; when arriving overland children are often brought in undetected. Even when children proceed through immigration and therefore become known to authorities, they usually go missing within 48 hours because their trafficker locates them.

Traffickers will go to any length to recapture individuals, including use of lethal force.

Further reading:

UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking, Home Office and Scottish Executive, 2007

A Scoping Project on Child Trafficking in the UK, CEOP, 2007

Please visit www.childprotectionnorthayrshire.info for updated guidance as it becomes available.