

BRIEFING PAPER

SUPPORTING PARENTS TO SHARE INFORMATION ON CSE

BACKGROUND



Why

The information which parents and carers hold can be essential in keeping their child safe

- We need parents' help to keep their child safe
- Parents know their child and recognise when things are not right

What is information?

Information is used by the police to either build a picture in relation to a person(s) or location(s). The information can be used as evidence to prove or disprove an allegation of a crime. If parents collect physical items or pass information to the police that may become evidence, the police may want to take a witness statement explaining how that information or evidence was collected.

KEY POINTS



- Parents will need to obtain the details (name, direct phone number, email address) of the investigating officer or point of contact in the police, so that they can provide them with ongoing relevant information
- The police cannot ask parents to collect information but can explain what sort of information may be helpful for them when investigating
- It is the Crown Prosecution Service that decide whether a case goes to court. Even with the most compelling evidence this does not mean that there will be a successful prosecution
- The lead investigator should communicate with parents about the progress of the investigation and that evidence has been submitted but may not be able to give details of the investigation as this may jeopardise the case

WHAT IS EVIDENCE?



Evidence can be information or a physical object which the police can use to investigate a crime.

Types of evidence

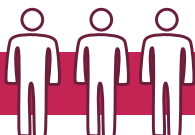
- Mobile phone text messages, answer-phone messages and images.
- Social media conversations and photographs.
- There can be evidence on a child's clothing including underwear. This should be done with the consent and knowledge of the child explaining why it is being removed. If a child doesn't give consent or if notifying a child could lead to any possible evidence being hidden or destroyed, then the single point of contact should advise parents as to what to do next.
- Photographs of physical injuries to a child.
- Conversations heard directly by parents relating to offences.
- Receipts and tickets linked to a child such as hotel door cards and train tickets.
- Unexplained gifts such as phones, makeup, alcohol, money, clothing, online gaming extras.
- Bank statements with unexplained amounts and payees.

TYPES OF INFORMATION THAT WILL BE OF USE TO THE POLICE



- **Child's behaviour:** change of mood that is out of character and unusual for developmental age. Is there something that can be identified that may have triggered that change?
- **Suspects:** as full a description as possible including names, addresses, accents, tattoos, phones.
- **Other young people:** names or nicknames, descriptions, phone numbers and people they have contact with.
- **Vehicles:** make, model, colour, registration (whether full or part of) and any other identifying features.
- **Transport:** trains, buses, taxis, license number, description of vehicle and driver, dates and times of journey, transport routes and stops.
- **Premises and location:** concerns about a location or addresses that a child has been to, private houses, flats, hotels, clubs or associations, fast food outlets, areas of concern, parks, estates, resorts, towns etc.
- **Technology** – social media sites, usernames, log in and password details, gaming information, apps, laptops text messages, mobile phone. (Find the phones IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity) number typically found behind the battery. Parents can also go into the keypad as if you were dialling a number and put in *#06#. The IMSI (International Mobile Subscriber identification) identifies a SIM card and is the long 15 digits on the card).
- **Non-Urgent Information** – Record information (date and time) which may be helpful to understand any concerns relating to a child. Negotiate between the police and parents how regular this information should be shared with them and who will be a key point of contact to receive it.
- **Urgent Information** - **Call 999 when someone is in danger when violence is being used or threatened, a crime is in progress or a suspect is nearby.**

WHO?



A range of people can help build a picture of what is happening to a child;

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- ✓ A child's wider family.
- ✓ School and college, staff and other pupils.
- ✓ A child's friends and online friends and networks.
- ✓ Neighbours and community/local groups, faith groups, extra-curricular groups, sports clubs, music teacher etc.

Further Reading:

PACE (Parents Against Sexual Exploitation) have a useful guide for parents on working with the police. <http://www.paceuk.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Working-with-the-Police-final.pdf>

College of Policing briefing on CSE and Victims Families. www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/child-sexual-exploitation/#victims-families

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?



Keep records in diary, logbook, or laptop with dates and times.

Parents may need help to understand that with all evidence it needs to be clear where it was found, the date and time found, who found it and what was done with it after it was found. This is called the chain of evidence and it must be maintained; from when it was first collected, through to it being produced in court without any breaks in history.

Parents could be mindful of their child's phone activity and learn how to take screenshots of their child's social media, texts and email these to themselves. In the internet browser type in "How do I screenshot on a ... (make and model of phone)." Parents can also photograph the screen.

What happens if the police want to take their child's phone? The police have the power to seize property including phones, tablets which may be used as evidence. There could be a significant delay in returning it, so parents may need to contact their mobile phone provider around any ongoing contracts.



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