



NWG Network

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation

Myth-Busting

Who needs to know?

This fact sheet will be relevant to all those working in the field of safeguarding children including frontline and strategic practitioners from both statutory and voluntary organisations. It is not however an exhaustive list.

Myth: The person did not take opportunities to escape so is not being coerced **X**

Reality: Remaining in an exploitative situation could indicate a willingness to remain there and an absence of coercion. But there are many reasons why someone may choose not to escape an exploitative situation. For example fear of reprisal, vulnerability, Stockholm Syndrome (psychological, depending on the person exploiting)

Myth: British nationals cannot be victims of human trafficking **X**

Reality: British nationals can and have been victims of human trafficking.

Myth: Crossing a border is required in order to be trafficked **X**

Reality: Trafficking does not have to occur across borders, it can occur within a country/city/town/county/village etc.

Child Trafficking Within the UK

Child Trafficking within the UK involves the movement of and intention to move children within England, Wales or Northern Ireland for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

Common Myths

Myth: It cannot be human trafficking when organiser and victim are related or in a relationship **X**

Reality: Close relationships are often used to exploit and control others. There have been numerous incidents where the partner has been the groomer or family members have colluded (intentionally or unintentionally) in the exploitation. Many of these relationships will have indicators of domestic abuse as well.

Myth: A person is not a victim of trafficking when he or she says that he or she has a better life than previously **X**

Reality: Some people are willing to tolerate their situation because they may perceive it as a 'stepping stone' to a better future and may also compare it more favorably to experiences at home. It doesn't mean that they are not a victim of trafficking.

Myth: A person cannot be a trafficked victim if they go home and sleep in their own bed at night **X**

Reality: The traffickers attempt to maintain a covert relationship with the victims. Much of this type of exploitation is committed during the children's free time in order to frustrate detection.

Myth: A person is not a victim of trafficking when he or she rejects offers of help **X**

Reality: It is not uncommon for victims to initially reject offers for assistance and help. This is not a situation that is unique to victims of these crimes but due to the nature of human trafficking victim self identification and early engagement with the authorities and other support organisations remain low.

For more information

www.NWGNetwork.org