Subject line: Let’s help the police to tackle child sexual exploitation

Hello Neighbours

I’m writing this email/post to alert you to a relatively new but very serious type of crime that could be happening in our own community. You may not be aware that it is happening, but the police tell us that it takes place EVERYWHERE – cities, towns, villages, rural areas – so our neighbourhood is definitely not immune.

The crime is Child Sexual Exploitation, and it is a form of child abuse that ruins the lives of thousands of young people and their families. The local police and Neighbourhood Watch are keen to raise public awareness of it so that more adults will start conversations about it with the children they know, so that those children learn to recognise the signs and protect themselves. Better awareness will also mean that more adults know what to look for and can report their suspicions to help the authorities rescue the victims and prosecute the perpetrators.

Once you know the signs to look for, it is relatively easy to spot that a child may be a victim of sexual exploitation. Armed with the right knowledge, you can play an important part in tackling this terrible crime.

Neighbourhood Watch has created an online information pack about Child Sexual Exploitation – what it is, how it happens, who is most at risk, what the signs are, and what to do if you suspect someone you know is a victim. You can find this pack here: https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/crimes-archive/child-sexual-exploitation/, and if you go to the Toolkit section here: https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/crimes-archive/toolkit-5/ you can find several more websites and resources that will help you understand and identify this awful activity and learn what you can do about it.

Here’s one of the films, about a girl who has been deceived and exploited by her ‘boyfriend’ Jay: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6vYbZSUL5U.

If you think you have seen evidence that a child is being exploited, report the abuse immediately, either to your [local council](https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council), the [NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/) or the [police](https://www.police.uk/contact/). You can remain anonymous when you report your concerns about a child or young person if you’d prefer.

Thank you,