

Community Care Live

Risk in the Community; learning from young people and families about exploitation

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Agenda

- 1 Parent/professional scenario
- 2 How we work in Essex
- 3 Feedback from RIC Chats/focus groups
- 4 Young people's stories and feedback

Scenario

Imagine you are a parent of a teenager

Your child has had a new group of friends lately, they are spending lots of time going out with their new friends

When they are home they are frequently looking at their phone, they are secretive about who they receive messages from, when they get a message they leave home and appear scared

Neighbours have told you your child has been seen with this group of friends at the local park, nearby shops and getting into cars with older and unknown people

There are rumours that some of these people have been aggressive and threatening in the local area, are dealing and taking drugs, some people have had their property damaged and everyone feels scared of this group

Some neighbours and parents of your child's school friends are worried their children will be harmed by this group, they are now blaming your child for being part of this group and causing fear in the local area

Imagine...

Imagine when you are tidying your child's room you find a large bag of weed and a knife under their bed, they walk in the room and see you holding the drugs and weapon

What would you do?

What would be your fears?

What do you need?

Stand up if you would tell your family – sit down

Stand up if you would tell your friends – sit down

Think carefully about whether you would tell the Police and Social Care and why

Imagine...

Imagine its 11 pm, your child is still not home, you ring friends and no-one has seen them since they left home earlier that evening. You see on the local community Facebook page that a local person was recently threatened by a group of young people at knife point at a nearby block of flats. Some people comment on the post saying your child is to blame and they are a “*&@£ing shit who needs dealing with” another person puts up a reward for anyone who picks up your child and brings them to them.

What would you do?

What do you need?

What would be your fears?

Stand up if you would tell your family – sit down

Stand up if you would tell your friends – sit down

Imagine...

Imagine its 2 am, your child comes home and appears very withdrawn and scared, you ask what's happened and they get very aggressive. You notice they have bruises and scratches on their face, their coat is torn. They tell you in a panic they owe someone £200 and if they don't pay it tomorrow then someone will find them and they will be "dealt with" including their little brother and sister

What would you do?

What do you need?

What would be your fears?

Stand up if you would tell your family – sit down

Stand up if you would tell your friends – sit down

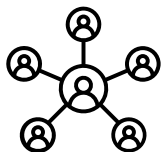
Think about whether you would call the Police and Social Care?

What we need to consider



Exploitation always has a ripple effect

As well as the young person, their parent/carer, siblings and local community is also harmed, consider secondary trauma



Families need to know about the professional network

Prevention and disruption of exploitation comes from professionals. Unless young people and their families know whose role this is they will blame themselves or keep this secret



Young people and families need to know what will happen next

Unless you know the implications of speaking out then you will never trust in professionals and share your experiences, including not criminalising their child and making sure their family are kept safe



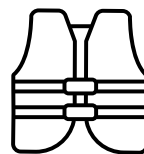
How we describe people and situations impacts on the response

If a person does not understand constrained choices and survival responses then a young person and their family are likely to feel blamed and unable to trust others



We should not expect young people and families to tell us everything

We need to be mindful that oversharing can place some people at further risk, we need to report intel so this needs careful handling and our support should not be dependent on how much they share



We need to recognise young people and families as experts

Be guided by the level of threat they feel they are under, what they need and what safety measures are most effective for them

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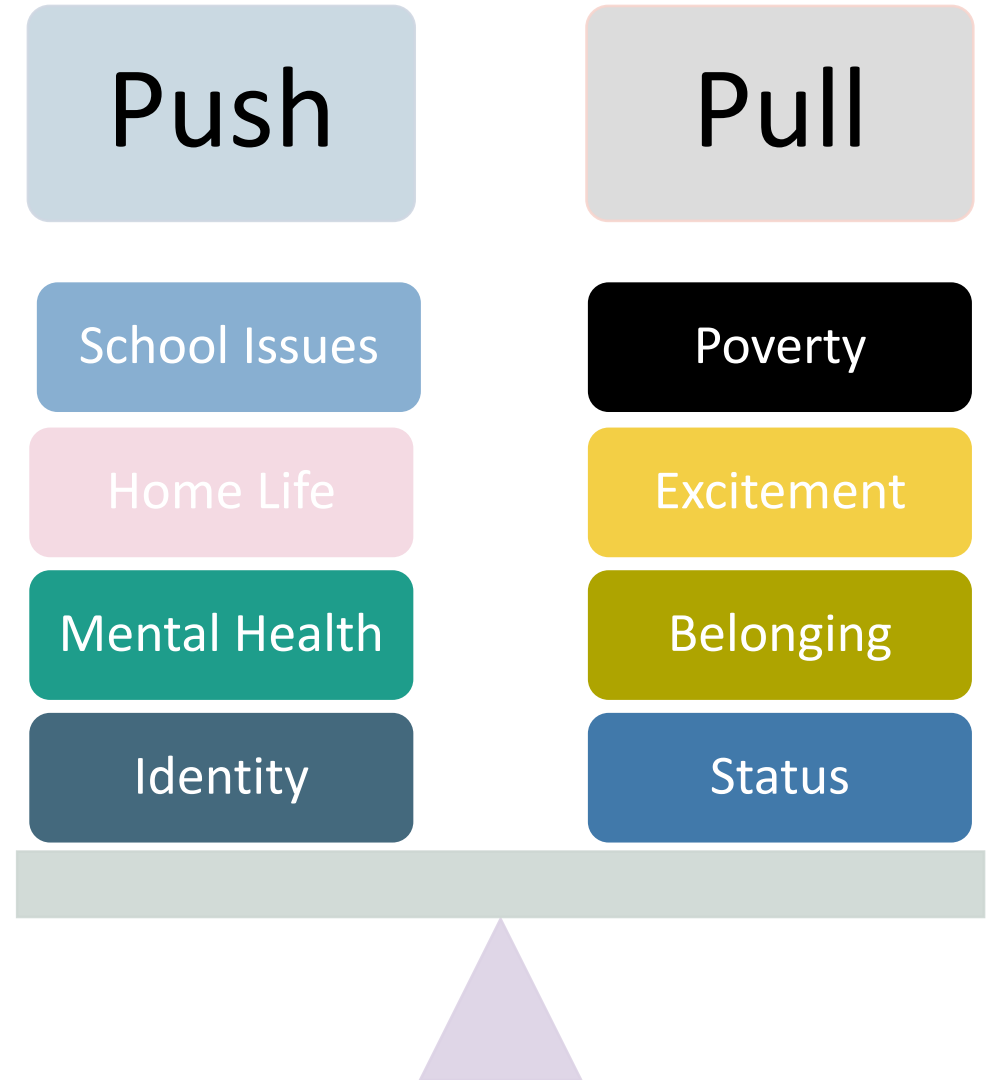


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Push & Pull Factors from RIC Chats

- Push and Pull factors are the people and experiences that are either pushing or pulling a child from what is a perceived place of safety
- Push factors are often experiences at home pushing them out, pull factors are often from within the community pulling them out



“It was nice to have someone
to talk *to* me and not *about*
me when I am in the room”

- Young Person

**RISK in THE
COMMUNITY**

Listening to children and young people



“You took the time to listen
to me”

- *Young Person*

**RISK IN THE
COMMUNITY**

Listening to children and young people



“The RIC Meeting was good as I was supported to explore education and get into boxing”

- Young Person

**RISK IN THE
COMMUNITY**

Listening to children and young people



What increases safety for young people?

In an audit of young people closed to MACE 1, we identified four key factors which were frequently cited as reasons for reduced risks and increased safety for young people previously at high risk of exploitation:

- **Re-integration into school/college/employment/training**
- **Improved relationships with key family members**
- **Gaining a trusted adult to talk openly and share feelings**
- **Developing a new and positive peer group**
- **Achieving resilient emotional wellbeing**

“I was impressed with how quickly a meeting was held and a plan was put in place”

- Parent of a Young Person

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“It feels good that I am not
being judged”

- Parent of a Young Person

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COMMUNITY**

Listening to children and young people



“It’s really nice to speak to someone who understands what life is like as a parent of a young person involved in this stuff, and not expecting them to openly talk about things but understanding that it has happened”

- Parent of a Young Person



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COMMUNITY**



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“Thank you for your support, we will feel much safer now”

- Parent of a Young Person

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