

# TACKLING CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION: DISRUPTING COUNTY LINES AND ASSOCIATED VIOLENCE



Live Webinar

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020



## Overview

With most schools closed for almost half a year and in-person social care provision compromised due to COVID-19, many vulnerable children and young people have lost the vital support systems provided by teachers, children's centres, youth clubs, and social workers, therefore becoming increasingly at risk of neglect, abuse and being drawn into drugs and criminal exploitation. Furthermore, as lockdown restrictions are gradually eased, a difficult economic outlook and rising unemployment provides fertile ground for county lines gangs to groom and recruit vulnerable children and young people.

Recognising the challenges ahead, the Government has pledged more than £34m in emergency support to help troubled families, safeguard vulnerable children and enhance support. Additionally, the Department for Education announced that the Innovation Programme will provide £12m in funding for 14 projects to tackle the increased risks faced by children and young people. Funding alone, however, will not solve this problem. Now more than ever, it is vital for local agencies to work together to focus on implementing preventative measures which effectively identify, support and re-engage these children.

This timely Policy Foresight live webinar brings together key partners from local authorities, police, education, child protection, looked-after / children in care, health, youth services, housing, third sector and other statutory agencies to examine the key issues at this difficult time, and explore innovative solutions to disrupt county lines gangs, reduce associated violence and protect children and young people from exploitation and harm.



## Key Discussion Themes

- Understanding the current scale of county lines and how they have adapted during the COVID-19 crisis
- Bolstering early intervention strategies to prevent young people from becoming the hidden casualties of the pandemic
- Safeguarding those most 'at risk' of being targeted by county lines gangs: children in care, those at-risk of exclusion or in alternative provision or Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)
- Understanding how best to protect young people with adverse childhood experiences (ACES)
- Utilising data to identify those who have gone missing during lockdown
- Using contextual safeguarding and community-based approaches to protect children and young people
- Delivering culturally competent services that steer children and young people away from exploitation
- Exploring the role of Violence Reduction Units and Partnerships (VRUs and VRPs) in providing comprehensive, inter-agency 'public health approaches' locally
- Improving coordination and intelligence sharing between police forces, health, education and local authorities
- Utilising current legislation and legal frameworks more effectively, including the Modern Slavery Act and National Referral Mechanism (NRM) to protect young people and disrupt county lines gangs
- Explore best practice and innovative solutions to disrupt county lines gangs and reduce associated violence



## Who Should Attend?

- Local Authority Officers & Councillors
- Central Government Departments & Agencies
- Directors of Children's Services
- Local Safeguarding Children Boards
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Teams
- Children & Family Services
- NHS Health Workers
- Family & Parental Support Workers
- Domestic Violence Co-ordinators
- Troubled Families Teams
- Community Safety Teams
- YOS/YOT Managers & Members
- Police Authorities
- Police & Crime Commissioners
- Police Youth Engagement Officers
- Neighbourhood Policing Officers & Practitioners
- Organised Crime Police Teams
- Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)
- Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinators
- NHS Health Workers
- Drug & Alcohol Action Teams
- Youth & Community Workers
- Youth Inclusion Officers
- Community Safety Officers & Managers
- Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships
- YOI Governors & Managers
- Probation Officers & Managers
- Offender Managers
- Local Criminal Justice Boards
- Criminal Justice Liaison Teams
- Youth Inclusion & Support Panel Members
- Chairs & Chiefs of Probation Boards
- Social Workers
- Head Teachers, Deputy Heads & Assistant Heads
- Pupil Referral Units
- Education Welfare Services
- Local Education Authorities
- Community Psychology & Mentoring Services
- Court Service, Judges & Magistrates
- Criminologists
- Diversity & Equality Officers
- Voluntary & Community Organisations
- Academics & Researchers