

1 What is adult sexual exploitation (ASE)?

Adult sexual exploitation (ASE) is a form of sexual abuse that involves someone taking advantage of an adult, sexually, for their own benefit through threats, bribes, and violence.

Perpetrators usually hold power over their victims, due to age, gender, sexual identity, physical strength, or status.

Grooming often takes place, when the perpetrator befriends the adult, in order to lower their inhibitions in preparation for abuse or exploitation.

Adult sexual exploitation (ASE) can be a one - off situation, or it may include instances of organised crimes, where a number of adults are trafficked and sexually exploited.



2 Victims of adult sexual exploitation (ASE)

Anybody could be a victim of sexual exploitation, but the following are particularly vulnerable:

- Victims of domestic abuse.
- Substance misusers.
- Homeless adults and those with limited, or no immigration status.
- Nightlife or weekend party goers.
- Adults with physical or learning disabilities.
- Adults with mental health difficulties.
- Victims of forced marriage.



3 Perpetrators of adult sexual exploitation (ASE)

Anybody could be a perpetrator of sexual exploitation, rape, or sexual assault.

Commonly, perpetrators include:

- Intimate partners.
- Family members.
- Gang members such as organised traffickers or drug gangs.
- Substance misusers.
- Persons in positions of trust (PiPoT), including landlords.



7 Further information

For more information about safeguarding adults, please visit www.northlincsab.co.uk

[NLSAB Language guidance for professionals working with adults](#)

[RiPFA A brief guide to... sexual exploitation](#)

[Scunthorpe Sexual Health Clinic | Virgin Care \(thesexualhealthhub.co.uk\)](#)

[Karma Nirvana](#)



6 Questions to consider

Be curious... Do you know what to do if you suspected that someone was a victim of adult sexual exploitation (ASE)? Do you know where to get further help and advice? Are you clear about your responsibilities?

Remember, if there is an immediate risk of harm to the adult you are worried about, you must contact **the police via 999**.

To report a concern about an adult with care and support needs, who is experiencing, or at risk of criminal exploitation, please contact **the safeguarding adults team on 01724 297000, by email adultprotectionteam@northlincs.gov.uk**, or visit [North Lincs SAB | Reporting a Concern](#).



4 Common signs of adult sexual exploitation (ASE)

- Demonstrating signs of domestic abuse.
- Evidence / suspicion of sexual assault.
- Self - harm, significant changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Developing inappropriate / unusual relationships i.e., relationships with controlling or significantly older people.
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviours or language.
- Being isolated from family and social networks.
- Unexplained absence, going missing.
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes etc.
- Receiving an excessive number of phone calls or texts.
- Passport or ID documents taken away.



5 Effects of adult sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation has serious effects on a person's health and wellbeing.

Common mental health problems occurring in victims of adult sexual exploitation include post - traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety. Victims of ASE may develop [complex feelings about the perpetrator\(s\)](#), often making it hard to understand the harm they have experienced.

ASE can also impact on a person's physical health, including sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and poor reproductive health.

There is also a strong link between ASE and substance misuse. Victims may use substances to cope with the trauma they have experienced.

