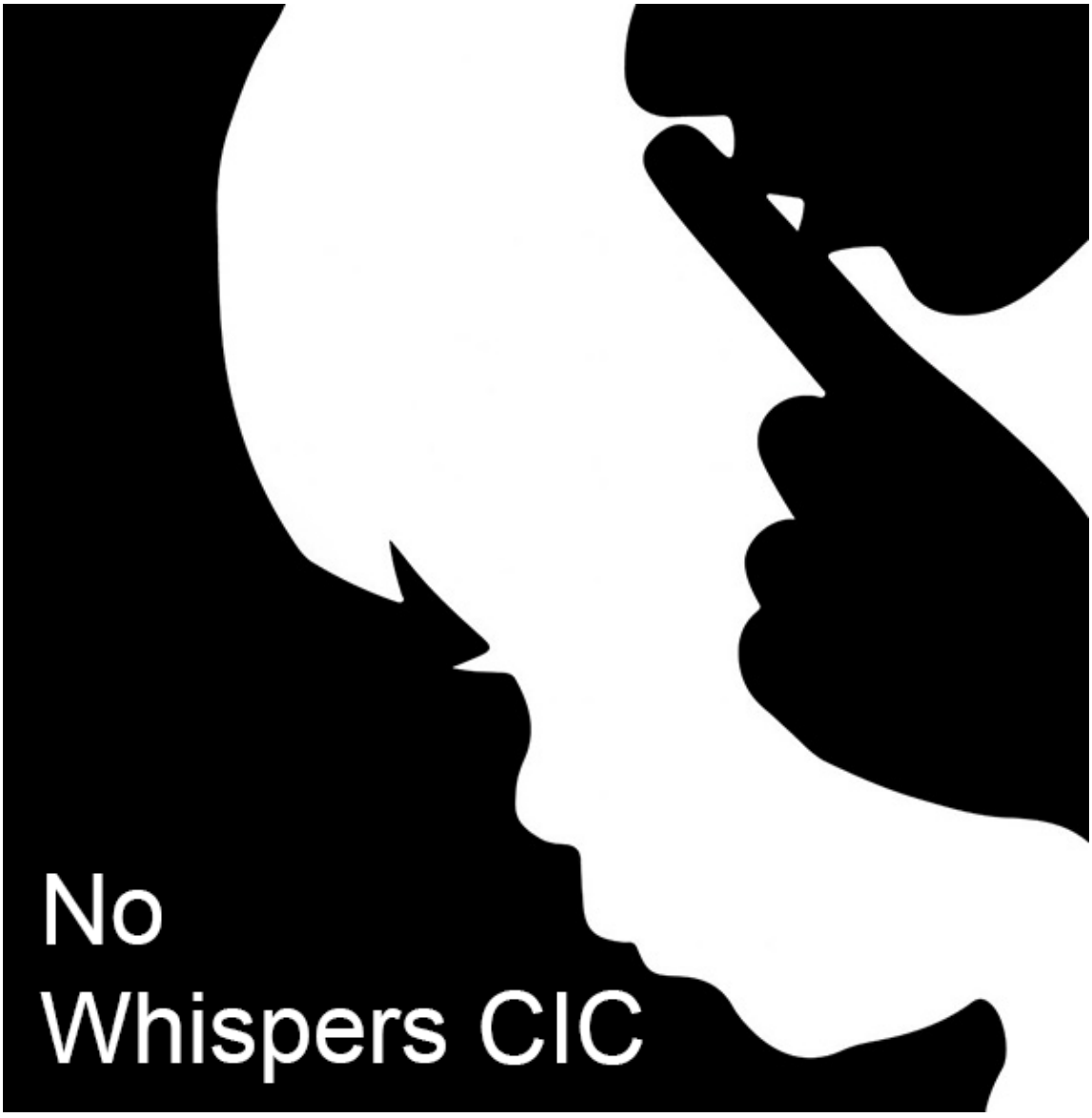
Child criminal exploitation & County lines

Training Day



CLIVE GRUNSHAW
LANCASHIRE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Safer preston

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No Whispers Community Interest Company was the training provider funded by Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Safety Partnership Fund and Safer Preston to deliver this Child criminal exploitation and County lines training day in partnership with Chief Inspector Helen Bevan from Preston Local Policing & Partnerships and Detective Constable Ceri Blakeley from NWROCU – Northwest Regional Organised Crime Unit.

Additional presenters and contributors included

- Sergeant Heather Barnes from Safer Neighbourhoods Team, Lancashire Police
- Dave Suffield from Cyber Crime Unit Lancashire Constabulary Protect
- Sarah Howley from Missing People's Child Criminal Exploitation Support Service
- Lee Cromwell from Missing People's Child Criminal Exploitation Support Service
- Detective Constable Anna Lunt and Ellie Beardsworth from Lancashire police South Exploitation Team

Special thanks to

- Chief Inspector Helen Bevan from Preston Local Policing & Partnerships
- DC Ceri Blakeley from Northwest Regional Organised Crime Unit
- Alison Hatton Preston Community Safety Partnership Manager
- Christina Gabittas writer and storyteller for graphic MISSING story
- Gary Murray from Crimestoppers for resources
- Sam Cooper from Northwest Regional Organised Crime Unit
- The Children's Society for resources
- Ria Nayee – Events Co-ordinator from Preston North End Football Club
- Megan Harper-Bates, Rebecca Porter and Sushma Dhakal team member volunteers from No Whispers Community Interest Company

NORTH WEST ROCU REGIONAL ORGANISED CRIME UNIT

Safer preston

missing people

Registered charity in England and Wales (1020419) and in Scotland (SC047419)

A lifeline when someone disappears

LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY

Child criminal exploitation & County lines

23rd June 9.30 – 4.30 p.m.

Preston North End Football Club, PR1 6RU

A free training day for community groups and organisations who want to understand the issues of child criminal exploitation and county lines.

This training day was funded by the Police & Crime Commissioner for Lancashire 's Community Safety Partnership Fund with an aim to strengthen community safeguarding by improving knowledge, confidence and clarity regarding:

- Understanding child criminal exploitation, county lines & child financial exploitation
- Identifying signs and indicators of child exploitation and abuse
- Identifying vulnerabilities of children and young people
- Recognising the grooming process and exploitation tactics
- Understanding illegal financial activity and money laundering
- Improving early identification, intervention, disruption and reporting
- Building trust and confidence between communities and policing
- Gaining knowledge of SafeCall and support from Missing People

Toolkit Resource pack, Information pack & safeguarding zines were given to each participant



Pictured: Megan Harper-Bates, Sarah Howley, Police Sergeant Heather Barnes, Detective Constable Ceri Blakeley, Karen Livesey, Chief Inspector Helen Bevan, Lee Cromwell, Sushma Dhakal and Rebecca Porter.

Beneficiaries

This Child criminal exploitation and County lines training day attracted a diverse mix of participants from different organisations, charities and community groups with 63% from Lancashire, including 44% from Preston and 37% from other areas including Manchester, Wigan and Newcastle upon Tyne. 4 people registered from Liverpool, London and Essex but they withdrew partly due to illness and other commitments.

Thirty-six people attended from different organisations including Red Rose Recovery, Places for People, Inspiring me to dream, First kick Foundation, Larches Pupil Referral Unit, Lancashire Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust, Neighbourhood Watch Police from Preston and Blackpool, Lancashire Fire and Rescue, Home Start, Hope Prevails Preston, Lancashire County Council Police and Preston Licencing Technician and Supporting Better Lives Care Services.

Project delivery and impact

This training day comprised of a series of presentations from specialist professionals from No Whispers Community Interest Company, NW ROCU – Regional Organised Crime Unit, Preston Safer Neighbourhood Police Team, South Lancashire Exploitation team, Cyber Crime Unit Lancashire Constabulary Project and Missing & Exploited Services from Missing People.



"The community training day was a successful initiative, raising awareness of exploitation and county lines and helping communities better understand the signs of exploitation and how to report concerns.

The partnership approach was a key strength, bringing together professional expertise and community knowledge to help strengthen relationships and confidence between communities, police and partners.

While it would not be possible to attribute any changes in crime reporting or statistics to this one event, the level of engagement and feedback on the day demonstrates its value. Increasing knowledge and confidence is an important part of prevention and early intervention, particularly for hidden harms such as exploitation."

Chief Inspector Helen Bevan

Each presentation gave information, resources and strategies to educate and empower participants in their respective roles when working with children and young people.

Presentations referenced documents and links included in the Toolkit Resource Pack which was available to each participant as a hard copy and digital copy.

Presentations included;

- Child criminal exploitation & county lines led by Karen Livesey from No Whispers Community Interest Company.

- Child financial exploitation & money laundering led by Detective Constable Ceri Blakeley from NW Regional Organised Crime Unit

- Cyber-Crime led by Dave Suffield from Cyber Crime Unit Lancashire Constabulary Protect

- Police response and disruption regarding exploitation led by Police Sergeant Heather Barnes and South Exploitation team members Ellie Beardsworth and Detective Constable Anna Lunt.

- Child criminal exploitation support and SafeCall confidential helpline for young people led by Sarah Howley and Lee Cromwell from Missing & Exploited Services from Missing People & SafeCall.







Pictured Dave Suffield, Karen Livesey and Detective Constable Ceri Blakeley

Summary Feedback

Diverse Multi-Agency Perspectives

Gained a better understanding of the different professional roles, services, and approaches involved in tackling child criminal exploitation.

Found it useful to hear directly from a range of external speakers and professionals from different sectors.

Knowledge and Skills

Developed a better understanding of cyber-crime links, signs of exploitation, and the correct terminology to use.

Learned about practical support available to children, families, and frontline workers.

Networking and Collaboration

Met colleagues from different agCncies and developed stronger working relationships.

Gained a clearer understanding of how different roles fit within the wider safeguarding network and how agencies can work together.

Quality of Delivery

Found the presentations engaging, informative, and professional.

Appreciated the clear introductions, strong opening remarks, and opportunities for the audience to ask questions and share views.

"This training was the best I have experienced in years.

The content was varied, informative and professional and passionately delivered"

"Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; knowledge is power the more our communities are educated the better"

"Makes you see the bigger picture of this topic and understand every child is vulnerable; every family and every service can support this. All services, organisations and professionals should be here"

"Please include BAME communities & minoritised communities & the additional challenges they may face"

GROUP DISCUSSION

Small group discussions took place focused on four key headings;
Local barriers to reporting, Knowledge gaps, Community challenges and Future needs.

Feedback included

Local Barriers to Reporting

System and process issues: Broken IT systems, confusing reporting routes, uncertainty about who to contact, and slow or bureaucratic processes.

Fear and safety concerns: Fear of violence, intimidation, and reprisals against individuals or their families.

Distrust and culture: Mistrust of authorities, concerns about not being believed, victim-blaming attitudes, and poor information sharing between organisations.

Knowledge Gaps

Unclear referral routes: Confusion about how, where, and who to report concerns to or refer people to.

Identifying emerging risks: Limited confidence in recognising early signs of CCE, particularly online and financial exploitation.

Uncertainty around legal requirements and thresholds: Limited understanding of policies, reporting thresholds, confidentiality, and the needs of specific groups such as SEND, NEET, and 16–17-year-olds.

Skills and confidence: Gaps in trauma-informed practice, professional curiosity, and confidence when having difficult conversations.

Community Challenges

Normalisation and denial: Exploitation can become accepted within some communities, alongside denial and peer pressure.

Fear of stigma: A strong "no grass" culture, fear of social isolation, and low confidence in statutory services can discourage people from coming forward.

Limited resources: Unequal provision across areas, a lack of youth spaces, and staff working under pressure and often responding to problems only once they have escalated.

Youth voice: Adults' accounts can sometimes be prioritised over the experiences and views of children and young people.

Future Needs

Clear reporting routes and better technology: Reliable digital reporting systems and simple, clearly communicated escalation routes.

Wider public education: Awareness and prevention work aimed at the public, parents, schools, and community-facing workers such as those in transport and retail.

More specialist support: Targeted resources for groups that are often overlooked, particularly young females, alongside earlier alternatives to school exclusion.

Stronger workforce skills: Consistent training on cyber-related risks, trauma-informed language, and learning from lived experience through dedicated multi-agency panels.





STALLS & NETWORKING

Throughout the day participants had the opportunity to access information, ask direct questions, gain advice and support from the visiting stalls hosted by No Whispers CIC, NW ROCU, Cyber Crime Unit, Local Policing and Partnerships and Missing People.

RESOURCES

In addition to the Child criminal exploitation and county lines **Toolkit Resource Pack** attendees were given an **Information Pack** which contained an array of leaflets, handouts and resources including **MISSING** – a graphic story created by Christina Gabbitas, a pack of Safeguarding zines from No Whispers CIC with SafeCall helpline, Young Minds, Childline, Fearless, NSPCC, Safer Internet, CEOP - Child Exploitation & Online Protection, NSPCC and Childnet. The information pack also contained leaflets and documents regarding Child Financial Exploitation from Fearless, Moving Money: Child Financial Exploitation from The Children's Society, Cyber Security, Social engineering – spot the scams, 2 - step verification, Stop phishing emails, Fraudster Target International Students and NW ROCU information.



Testimonials

“I thoroughly enjoyed attending today’s event on child criminal exploitation and county lines at Preston North End. The professionals who presented were clearly passionate about their work, shared a wealth of valuable knowledge, insights and practical advice. Their expertise provided effective strategies for identifying, understanding and responding to child criminal exploitation, making the sessions both informative and highly relevant to practice”

Rebecca White – Emergency Dept Navigator

“Events like this are exactly what is needed. Getting likeminded people together with a common purpose and a clear collective goal. Opportunities to support one another and also develop some new perspectives on what is happening out in the lives of our young people.”

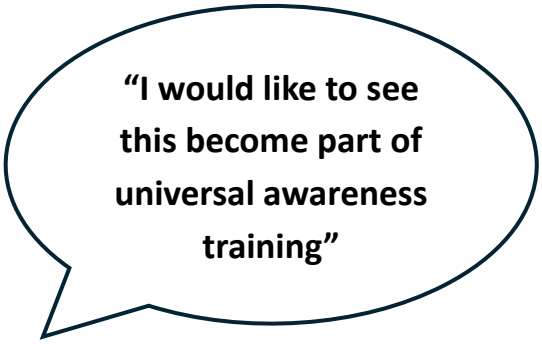
Dave Suffield Cyber Crime Unit, Protect Lancashire Constabulary

“Such a fantastic and worthwhile training day, the team from No Whispers CIC were absolutely amazing and the presentation from all were great to learn and understand the impact of how we can all come together and make a difference in or commitment and learning how to keep those most vulnerable safe from harm”

Nathan Burrell – Neighborhood Watch – Blackpool Ward

“The training had increased their understanding and confidence, enabling them to apply greater professional curiosity and ask more informed questions about financial activity”

Detective Constable Ceri Blakeley from NW ROCU – Regional Organised Crime Unit





“We would like to thank No Whispers Community Interest Company for inviting us to present and share information about Missing People's SafeCall service, at the Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and County Lines training day in Preston.

This event brought together professionals from different agencies to share important information, to upskill and raise awareness and confidence in recognising and understanding options for responding to CCE, and most importantly increasing knowledge and skills needed to help safeguard children and young people**.**

The training day was impactful and very well organised. It was really valuable hearing from other professionals in this space, as well as having the opportunity for us to share information and service resources for people to use in their work with children, young people and families”

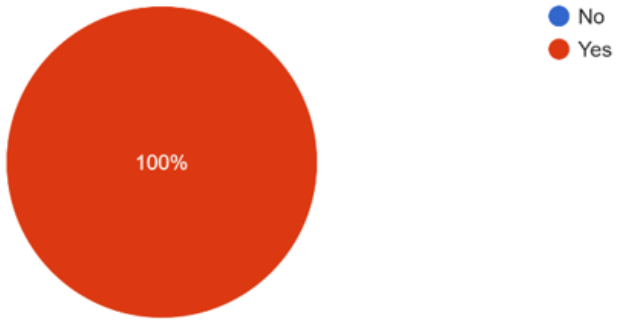
Lee Cromwell – Senior Missing and Exploitation Services Manager



safe call

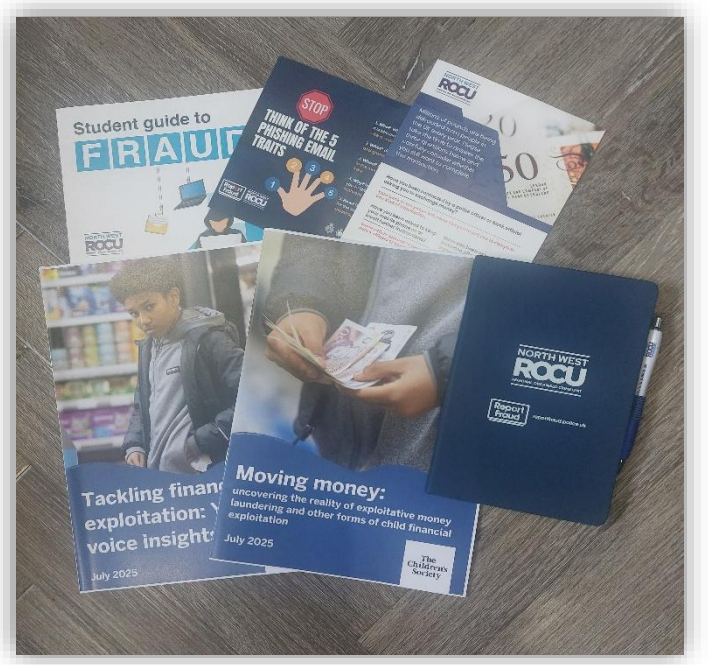


Participants response to “Would you recommend this training?”



Future action

- To deliver this Child criminal exploitation and County lines training awareness day in another region of Lancashire and increase the number of participants
- To enhance the delivery in relation to BAME issues regarding child exploitation
- To distribute and share this report as a resource and example of good practice
- To follow up with a survey to all participants to identify impact and implementation of learning and use of resources



Pictured notebook and resources from The Children’s Society and NW ROCU

No Whispers Community Interest Company

No Whispers Community Interest Company aim to prevent and disrupt child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation. We do this by educating and informing adults about the issues of child exploitation and positive ways we can safeguard children and young people to stop them from becoming victims of exploitation and abuse.

No Whispers Community Interest Company arrange lived experience guest speaker evenings, work in partnership with organisations, campaign at community events, organise networking meetings, present at National and Regional Conferences, share safeguarding resources and distribute EIGHT – a book with eight women's lived experiences of child sexual abuse and exploitation.

To view our Social Value Report, visit https://no-whispers.co.uk/no-whispers-impact-reports/

For more information about No Whispers Community Interest Company visit our website www.no-whispers.co.uk or via the QR Code or contact us info@no-whispers.co.uk



Pictured Sushma Dhakal and Rebecca Porter Volunteers with No Whispers CIC