



Modern Slavery and Young People

What is Modern Slavery?

Modern slavery is the exploitation of people for financial gain. It is worth over \$150 billion per year – that's more than the profits of Nike, Amazon and Google combined.

Someone is in slavery when they are:

- Owned or controlled by an 'employer'
- Forced to work through threat
- Treated as property to be bought and sold
- Restricted in their freedom to come and go

Where Does it Happen?

Modern slavery exploits men, women and children all over the world - from sweatshops in Bangladesh and cocoa plantations in Ghana, to nail bars and hand car washes in the UK.

You may be surprised to learn that the UK Government estimates there are around 13,000 people living in slavery in the UK. Sadly, this is the tip of the iceberg and the figures could be much higher.

What Types of Slavery Are There?

The most common types of slavery are:

- Forced labour (making somebody work for little or no pay)
- Forced criminality (making somebody commit crimes such as theft or drug offences)
- Sexual exploitation (forcing someone to sell sex)
- Domestic servitude (forcing someone to work in a private home cooking and cleaning)
- Organ Harvesting (removing someone's organs without consent for sale on the black market)

How Does Modern Slavery Affect Me?

You have probably met someone working in slavery without even knowing it.

You may have seen people working in a hand car wash, a nail bar or on a construction site who are being exploited.

You may have even been cooked or served fast food by someone who is being held in slavery, and you have most likely worn clothing that has been made by someone in slavery.



The Risk to Young People

Young people are at risk of being exploited. Last year, around 3,000 people under 18 were referred to the government for emergency support to help them out of slavery. Half of them were British.

Young people in the UK are mainly at risk of two types of exploitation:

1. Child sexual exploitation
2. Forced criminality

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is when an adult exploits a young person into sexual activity. If the adult spends a lot of time **grooming** the young person, the young person may think they are in a relationship.



Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. It may involve flattery, buying presents, or offering drugs and alcohol. Over time, the adult will start to bring sexual touching into the relationship, followed by sexual abuse. Grooming often leads to the young person feeling **guilt** and **shame**, and **thinking the abuse is their own fault**. Grooming can happen in person or using technology (smartphones, social media, etc.)

If you are under 18 and in a sexual relationship with an adult, you may be a victim of sexual exploitation.

Forced Criminality



Forced criminality is when an exploiter forces or pressures someone into committing crimes for them. The crimes could be shoplifting, fraud, or transporting and selling drugs. The young person is made to shoulder all the danger and risk, and the exploiter keeps the money. The exploiter may act like a friend at first, before using threats and/or violence.

Young people who have been forced to commit crimes are often **too scared to get help**. They may be **threatened** by their exploiter or **told that they will be in trouble with the police** for what they have done.

If you are spending time with adults who are encouraging you or pressuring you to commit crimes, you may be a victim of forced criminality.

GETTING HELP

Exploitation is never the fault of the child or young person. Help is available.

There are adults who will believe you and help you.

Tell a trusted adult at school or call the Modern Slavery Helpline or Childline.

The Modern Slavery Helpline: 08000 121 700

Childline: 0800 1111