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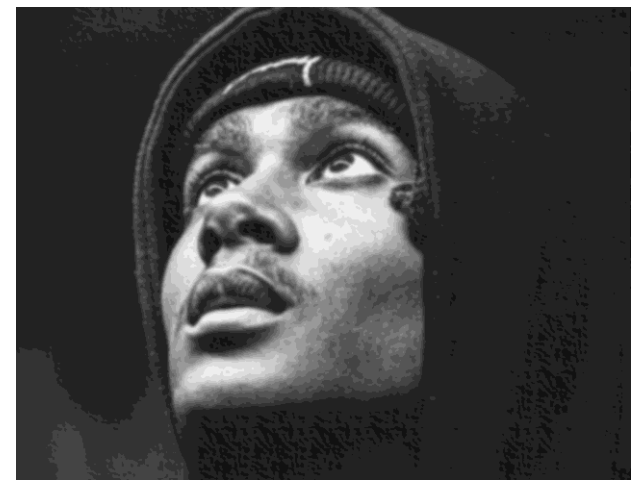
Creating Stable Futures: Human Trafficking, Participation and Outcomes for Children

Forms and dynamics of trafficking and
exploitation of children and young
people in the UK
(Power point 4)

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Journeys and trafficking





Labour Exploitation



Labour Exploitation

Most prevalent form of trafficking/exploitation - labour exploitation – may be ‘a fact of life’ for many (e.g. asylum seekers) to meet basic needs.

Documented in a wide range of industries such as care, warehouses, construction, manufacturing, hospitality and food, beauty, car washing and agriculture/fishing.

Either transaction arrangements, the withholding or excessive reductions of wages, withholding of documents.

Excessive hours/overtime, few breaks and hazardous working and living conditions.

Accompanying forms of exploitation e.g. physical and sexual abuse, criminal exploitation.

Considerations: Labour Exploitation

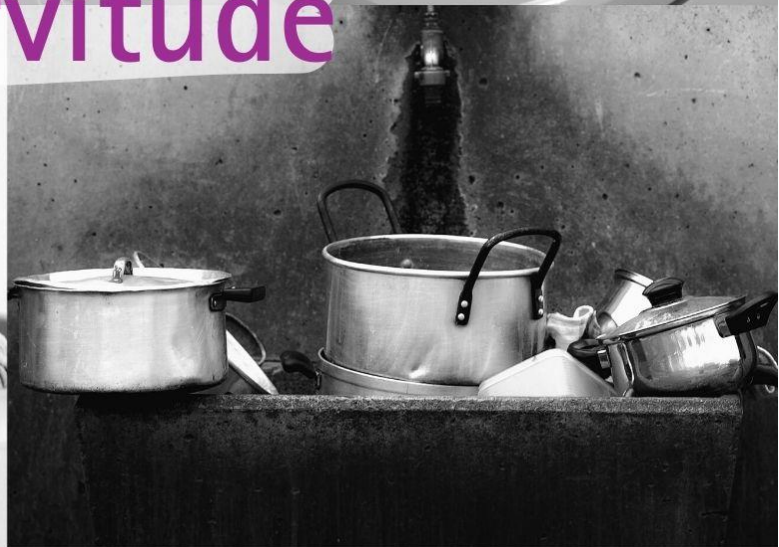
Cultural differences in understanding of 'exploitation' – our young people might not see this as trafficking, but instead a 'fact of life'.

Do they still owe a debt to their so-called 'smuggler'? If so, it is likely to involve exploitation, therefore it is trafficking, not smuggling.

Structural vulnerabilities: are they not allowed to work? Do they need to send money to their family?



Domestic Servitude



Domestic Servitude

An extremely hidden form of trafficking.

Often recruited with promises of schooling and deception about wages and working conditions.

Working in households - responsible for domestic and childcare work.

In child cases they may/may not be enrolled in education or with a GP.

Often suffering neglect, physical, sexual, emotional abuse.

Links to spiritual abuse and other intangible forms of control.

Unique to other forms of trafficking as it is rarely linked to organised crime but to cultural practices such as 'fosterage'.*

Considerations: Domestic servitude

Be alert for domestic servitude or other forms of trafficking in unregistered private fostering arrangements.

When there are concerns of neglect or poor-school attendance, could domestic servitude be a factor?

Could young 'adult relatives' helping out in homes be children?



Child Sexual Exploitation

Considerations: CSE

Numerous typologies: either for commercial gain or personal gratification.

Sexual exploitation is often not the primary form of exploitation.

Close links with other forms of trafficking (e.g. domestic servitude and CCE) Used as a 'secondary gain' or method of control.

Boys are also victims of sexual exploitation at higher rates than conventionally thought (*ECPAT International, 2021; Rescue & Response, 2019; Home Office 2020*).

Questioning conventional wisdom - most common typologies e.g. the 'loverboy' model.

Who is vulnerable to CSE? (only 1 in 8 victims were previously 'known to services').

Typologies



Group
offending

Commercial
sexual
exploitation



Single
offender



Secondary
exploitation



Online CSE

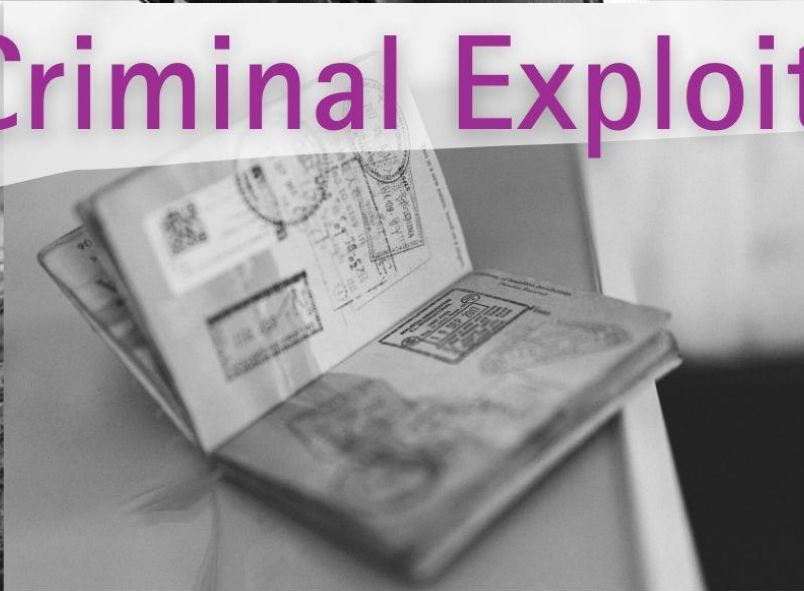


Personal
gratification





Child Criminal Exploitation



Child Criminal Exploitation

‘occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child ... The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual’ *(MoJ practice guidance)*

Considerations: CCE

So prevalent due to high profits and transferring of risk of arrest/ injury: therefore forms of recruitment and control are very sophisticated.

Children are being treated as defendants not victims of trafficking for the purposes of criminal exploitation, despite legal framework and obligations to protect.

Close interactions with sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and other forms of trafficking.

The shifting dynamics of CCE

First recognised in the UK as occurring in the context of 'county lines' drug-dealing operations

The model of CCE is continually evolving. Be alert to more traditional forms of modern slavery in which child victims are used as commodities:

~~Children into committing crime close to home;~~

Criminal activity that has moved beyond drugs supply into a range of illegal economies

Children being sold by exploiters onto different county lines networks

~~Exploitation that begins immediately, without any grooming~~

Considerations: CCE

If a young person has any offending behaviour always consider: “could this be exploitative?”

Children often refuse to or cannot see themselves as victims. They may mask their vulnerabilities as may have had to be self-sufficient growing up.

Child protection and safeguarding responses must be prioritised.

Consider timeliness of NRM referrals – ensure you have enough evidence of indicators.

Advocate for non-prosecution processes - ensure victims are treated as such, rather than suspects or offenders.

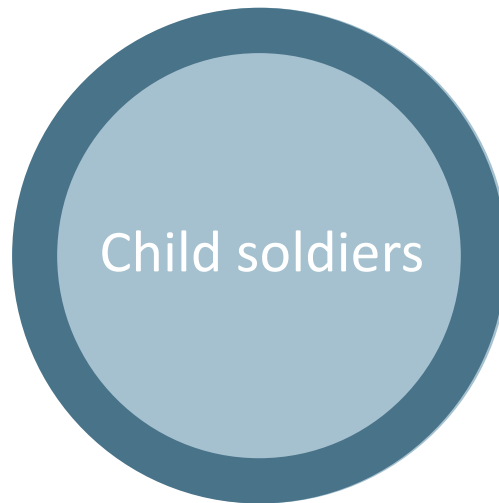
Legal Obligations to Victims: the non-prosecution principle

AN & VCL v UK case law

Reinforces the obligation not only to protect victims by prosecuting traffickers, but also to ensure VoTs are identified and not prosecuted themselves.

The responsibility is on the state to identify trafficking, not on the victim of trafficking (VoT) to self-identify.

Other forms of trafficking...



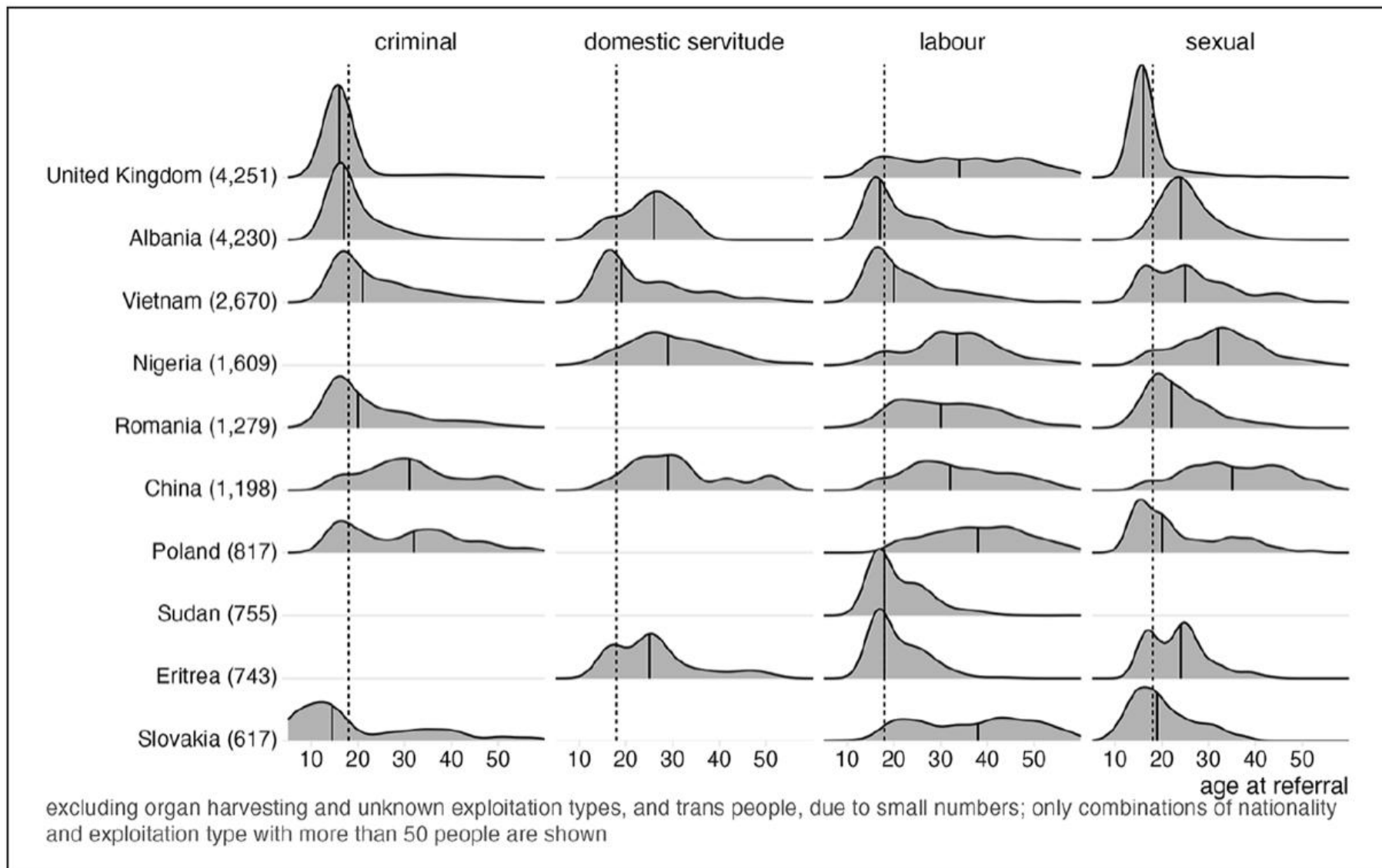


Figure 8. Differences in exploitation type by age and nationality.

Source: Cockbain *et al.*, 2024

Recruitment & grooming

Recruitment
through family
and networks



Promises



Befriending



In person & online



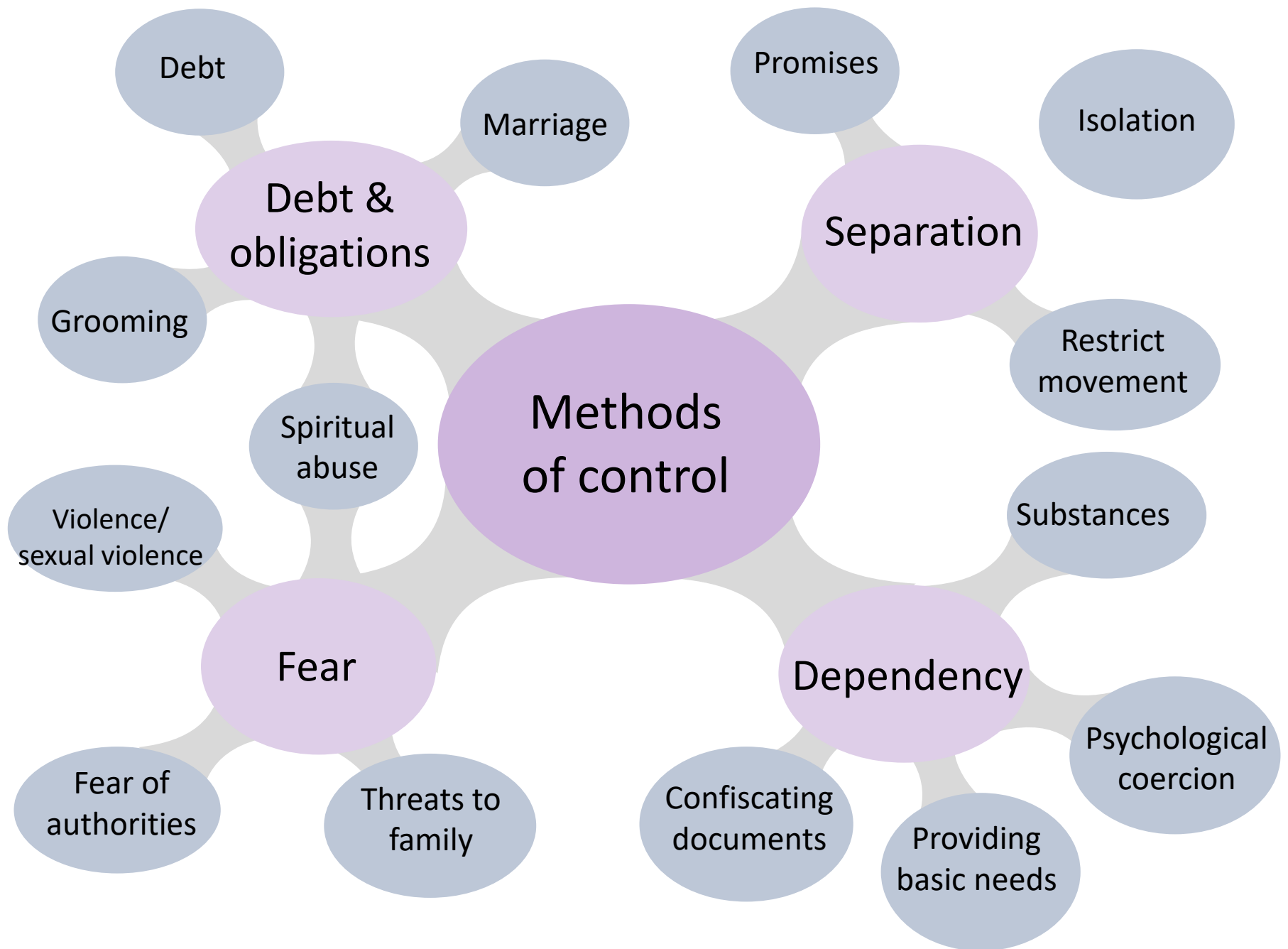
Grooming of parents/ carers



Grooming



Force or coercion very rarely used in recruitment



Non-disclosure

Disclosures of child trafficking are challenging

Mistrust of
professionals

Not knowing what
trafficking is



Methods of coercion
and control

Child cannot
articulate
exploitation

Trauma in child victims of trafficking

Child victims of trafficking have more complex PTSD symptoms and impacts (Ottisova *et al.*, 2018).

Children who are separated from the parents are more likely to suffer serious, long-term effects.

People who had been trapped or immobilised in some way, unable to escape are more likely to be impacted by trauma.



The trauma experienced in trafficking is relational, which is more likely to impact the young person more severely.

Trauma affects children and adolescents more than any other group.

Trafficking as a process of 'cumulative trauma'

Trauma from experiences precipitating or triggering trafficking



Abuse they experienced
War and natural disaster
Separation, bereavement and abandonment
(see Thomas et al., 2003)



***Trauma young people experience
whilst being trafficked and exploited***



***Ongoing trauma after their
trafficking experience has ended***

Doherty & Morley (2017)

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Thank you!

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