



Taxis, ride shares, private vehicles

Child Exploitation is a serious crime. It takes place when others take advantage of the power imbalance between themselves and children and then force, trick, or coerce them into criminal activity on their behalf.

Children can be exploited anywhere, but public transport such as trains, buses and taxis can be common places. Anyone using or working within transport networks can help recognise the signs of exploitation. They may notice when things look a little out of the ordinary and be able to pass their concerns on, preventing children from coming to harm.

We know that exploitation affects children from all walks of life, including girls, boys, LGBTQ+ children, disabled children, children from ethnic minority backgrounds and, increasingly, younger children. It is a form of abuse that has a serious impact on children, their families and our communities.

People who exploit children also come from all walks of life and backgrounds. Exploiters can be adults of all genders and can also be an older child. They perpetrate this type of abuse alone, with others, online, offline and through complex organised crime networks.

Children are never responsible for the exploitation which they experience, and in all matters, they should be treated as victims of abuse. They should be given support and protection to stay safe and recover from their experiences. Children who exploit other children may also be victims of exploitation themselves.

Exploitation is a complex form of abuse which can be hard to spot or identify. Children may not show signs of abuse, may not tell anyone and may not, at first, realise that what is happening to them is wrong. Exploitation can involve trafficking of children, forcing them to carry out criminal activities as well as coercing them to take part in sexual activities against their will.

Taxis, ride shares and private vehicles

If a taxi driver transports a child, knowing or believing that the child will be sexually or criminally exploited during or after the journey, the driver will be committing the offence of human trafficking.

Exploited children are usually too terrified and ashamed to ask for help themselves. Taxi drivers are in a unique position to notice when all may not be right with passengers in their vehicle, they can pass their concerns on, and potentially save a child from exploitation.



As a driver, is a child:

Travelling alone?
Unfamiliar with the
local area?

Travelling at unusual
hours (during school
time, early in the
morning, or late at
night)?

Travelling to multiple
destinations in one
day or night?

Travelling long distances
and paying for a journey
that is expensive and
would seem unrealistic
for a child to afford by
themselves?

Paying for journeys
in cash or prepaying?
Carrying lots of cash?

Anxious, frightened,
angry, showing
signs of neglect or
displaying other
behaviour that
makes you worried?

Using words
describing criminal
or sexual activity?

Children (both girls and
boys) being collected
and taken to hotels/
bed and breakfasts/
parties at odd times,
especially if they have
no luggage?

Children being
picked up from
other cars?

Children who look
uncomfortable,
worried, frightened,
or distressed in the
company of adults?

Children being
dropped off at any
location that causes
you concern?

People who regularly
request taxi rides to
and from the same
location and take
young people with
them?

Children who are in a
vulnerable state due
to excessive drink or
drugs, don't know where
they are going and are
accompanied by adults?

Frequent
suspicious
activity in the
same place?

Children going to A&E or clinics accompanied
by someone who is not a parent?

Car hire

As a member of staff working in a car hire business, is a child:

Being instructed or
controlled by another
individual?

Anxious, frightened, angry, showing
signs of neglect, or displaying other
behaviours that make you worried?

Appearing guarded
around particular
individuals?

Accompanied by another individual
with suspicious booking information

If something doesn't feel right, don't wait, report it.

Call the police on 999 in an emergency if the crime is happening right now, the suspect is still at the scene, or anyone is seriously injured or in immediate danger.

Call the police on 101 in a non-emergency to share information, suspicions or details that can wait a day or two. Instead of phoning 101, you can report to the police on their webpages by using an online form. This can be found here: [Report a crime | Thames Valley Police](#)

Call Crimestoppers if you would prefer to make an anonymous report and it is a non-emergency. They can be contacted on 0800 555 111 or you can report on their webpages by using an online form. This can be found here: [Giving information anonymously | Crimestoppers \(crimestoppers-uk.org\)](#)

Call the NSPCC if you would like to speak to a trained professional who can provide expert advice and support if you are concerned about a child. They can be contacted on 0808 800 5000 or you can e-mail them at help@NSPCC.org.uk.

Free online training for anyone is available on the Children's Society webpages under Programme of Learning: [#LookCloser To Spot Exploitation | The Children's Society \(childrenssociety.org.uk\)](#)
Scroll up 2 pages for the training dates and times.