

# Safeguarding Snapshot – 07.06.24

## County Lines

This safeguarding snapshot outlines what is meant by the term 'County Lines'. The information below has been taken from the [NSPCC](#)

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where urban gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns (Home Office, 2018). It can happen in any part of the UK and is against the law and a form of child abuse.

Children and young people may be criminally exploited in multiple ways. Other forms of criminal exploitation include child sexual exploitation, trafficking, gang and knife crime.

County lines gangs are highly organised criminal networks that use sophisticated, frequently evolving techniques to groom young people and evade capture by the police.

Perpetrators use children and young people to maximise profits and distance themselves from the criminal act of physically dealing drugs (National Crime agency, 2019). Young people do the majority of the work and take the most risk.

Dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines” are used to help facilitate county lines drug deals. Phones are usually cheap, disposable and old fashioned, because they are changed frequently to avoid detection by the police.

Gangs use the phones to receive orders and contact young people to instruct them where to deliver drugs. This may be to a local dealer or drug user, or a dealer or drug user in another county.

A parent session on County Lines is being run by Ivison Trust in conjunction with the MET Police Central Youth Team. Visit [www.ivisontrust.org.uk/webinars](http://www.ivisontrust.org.uk/webinars) to register

**Parent Session**  
**County Lines in London**

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a parent with lived experience & a local police officer.

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