

# Policing Online- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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## What is CSE?

It is a form of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships where they are given 'presents' in return for sexual activities. Online, young people will be persuaded to send explicit pictures, watch sexual activities or have sexual conversations (NSPCC, 2018).



## Vulnerabilities because of Globalisation?

Easy access to the internet across the globe poses threats to the privacy of victims. Snapchat and Facebook victims can be tracked (Rahpaymaelizeh et al., 2013)

### Risk Factors/ Protective Factors

- Ecological model: the environment of the child is interrelated chain of contextual factors (Whittle et al., 2013)
- Sullivan (2009) found offenders look for vulnerability in children first.
- Those that have low self-esteem, emotional disturbance, susceptibility to persuasion all at more risk (Whittle et al., 2013)

## Why is Globalisation important for Policing?

Globalisation, while defined by many, can be simply understood as interconnectivity across the globe. Globalisation is the cross-border trade whether that's goods or services (Cecchetti, 2012)

### But,

Globalisation has meant that "women and children are increasingly becoming commodities to be bought, sold, and consumed" (Hughes, 2000) therefore it calls for transnational policing as seen within the regulation box.

### Ethics

Some forces use entrapment of these offenders online (Martellozzo, 2012).

Internet vigilantes- can they be trusted to take the law into their own hands (Telegraph, 2014)



## Regulation within the England and Wales

While there is no one set legislation, England and Wales use the **Sexual Offences Act 2003, Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the communications Act 2003.**

With the Home Office, in 2014, using #wePROTECT Children online, meaning it is now illegal for an adult to send a sexual message to a child.

## Regulating across the Globe

#wePROTECT in 2014 in the UK is a global multi-stakeholder response- 63 other countries signed, 30 NGOs and 20 leading technology companies had already committed.

Also, the Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online was launched 2012, in order to raise awareness and increase efforts around this crime and protect victims.

## The problems with defining CSE

Labelling children as victims can cause unnecessary harms and 75% of mental health problems in adults are on set from childhood. Children may, like adults, be untrusting of the police and therefore care will be vital. Gathering trust when they are abroad may also pose issues due to language barriers. The definition varies however, similarities remain to help identify this form of abuse.

- Online abuse further complicates this form due to different legislative contexts (Beckett et al., 2017)