**Criminal Exploitation: Stages of Recruitment**

Children At Risk of Exploitation (CARE)

There are a number of different stages that people and gangs use when they’re trying to exploit you. Knowing what these stages of recruitment are, and what signs to look out for, can help you keep yourself safe from exploitation.

**There are four main recruitment stages when somebody is trying to exploit you:**



**Targeting stage**

**Experience stage**

**Hooked stage**

**Trapped stage**

**No child should feel alone**

**Targeting stage**

**Experience stage**

**Hooked stage**

**Trapped stage**

This is when a person or gang target a young person who

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is vulnerable, as this reduces their chances of getting caught. **Signs of this stage include a person or group:**

* Observing you, finding out your vulnerabilities, needs

and wants

* Glamourising their lifestyle to you
* Gaining and developing your trust
* Sharing information about you with other members

of their gang

* Recruiting you to their gang or friendship group

This stage is where this person might try to get you used to their lifestyle, or train you up in what they’re doing. **At this stage a person or gang might:**

* Make you feel wanted
* Give you gifts and rewards
* Test out your loyalty
* Offer you protection
* Relate to you and offer you advice
* Give you a sense of belonging
* Give you a weapon
* Introduce you to more established members of

their gang

This is the stage where people make you feel like you’re a member of their gang, even though actually they’re just exploiting you for their own gain. **Signs of this stage include:**

* You getting more responsibilities within the

group eg more money

* You might be asked to commit low level crimes
* You getting involved with trap houses
* Asking you to recruit others to the gang
* Engaging in activities such as drugs, alcohol

and sexual behaviour

Now you feel dependant on the group, the relationship with the person or group exploiting you may start to become unpleasant, as they reveal their true intents or character. **At this stage you may experience:**

* Threatening behaviour and physical violence
* People playing on your guilt, shame and fear
* Attempts to isolate you from your family, friends

and society

* People forcing you to abuse others, assault or even

shoot people

* Involvement in Class A drugs (cooking or running)