



Online Safeguarding Issues for LGBT Young People

Blessing or a Curse?



Finding our Tribe




LGBT Youth statistics

- 42% are bullied online
- 33% are sexually harassed online
- LGBT youth spend more time online
- 73% are more honest online
- 50% have at least one close friend online
- 62% use the internet to connect with other LGBT people
- 1 in 10 disclosed their identity to someone online
- 1 in 4 were more out online than in person

- 2 in 5 have met up with someone they met online
- 3 in 10 met someone who was older
- 1 in 5 did not tell anyone they were meeting up
- 2 in 5 have sent or received sexual, naked or semi-naked photos to a person they talked to online





What makes a young
person vulnerable to
exploit?



Gemma Watts, 21

Posed as a 16yr old boy on social media to engage young girls in online and face to face sexual relationships, encouraging them to swap intimate photos

Also developed relationships with some of the girls' families

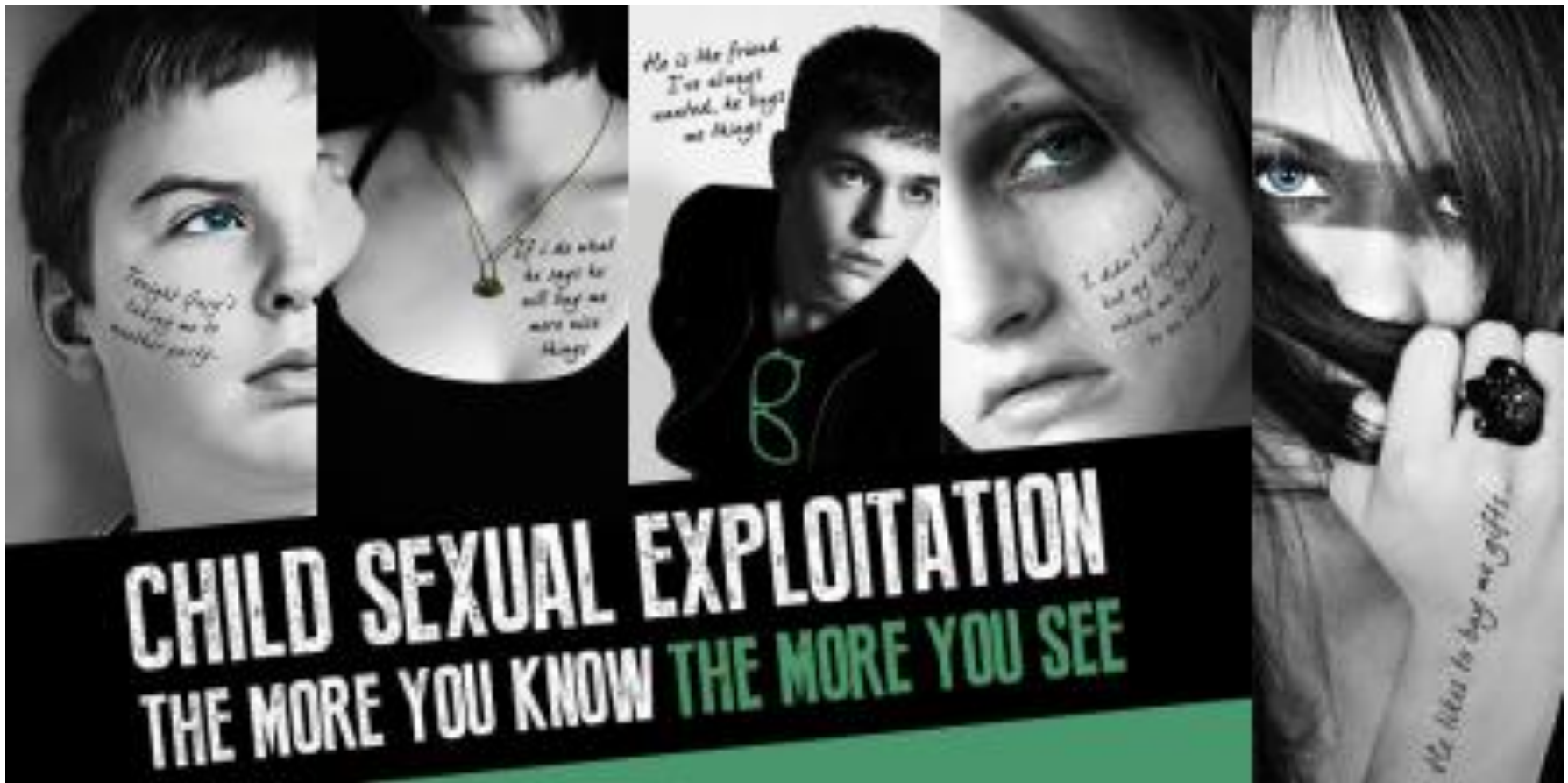
Believed to have sexually assaulted up to 50 girls

All young people are potentially at risk!

- 15 is the peak age

Additional vulnerabilities:

- Living in care
- Living with disabilities
- Experiencing bereavement
- Being marginalised
- Family rejection
- Being homeless
- Loneliness



Potential signs...

Secrecy

Jumpy/ frightened/ angry

Unexplained gifts

Changes in mood or behaviour

Spending more time online

Spending more time on their phone

Being upset/ withdrawn

Missing from home or school

Protection

- To recognise potential risk we must be open to the understanding the diversity of gender and sexual identity
- Use open, neutral language or phrase questions to encompass a range of possible responses
- Help young people understand healthy relationships
- Create a safe and trusting relationship so they can talk to you
- Teach them boundaries, respect and how to say NO

If they disclose

- Listen
- Assure it's right to tell you
- Assure it isn't their fault
- Take them seriously
- Explain what you will do
- Report what you have learned as soon as possible



Impact

- Physical and mental pain
- Education
- Family relationships
- Friendships
- How they view others

This may be short
and long term...



!mpact



Impact

- Anxiety and depression
- Low self-esteem
- Nightmares
- Attachment problems
- STIs
- Isolation
- Self-harm
- Guilt
- Shame
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Eating disorders
- Offending
- NEET
- Negative future relationships
- Increased risk of further/
other violence

Remember

- Be aware of your own misconceptions and assumptions
- Review your safeguarding policy and risk assessment to ensure it encompasses LGBT young peoples' experiences

Report

- Local child protection services
- The police
- CEOP (child exploitation & online protection command)

Links

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/how-to-spot-child-sexual-exploitation/>

https://www.youngstonewall.org.uk/system/files/staying_safe_online_guide.pdf

https://www.csepolicyandprevention.org.uk/sites/default/files/cse_guidance_lgbtq.pdf

<https://www.glsen.org/news/out-online-experiences-lgbt-youth-internet>

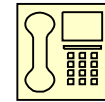
<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/disrespect-nobody-teaching-resources-preventing>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/schools/making-sense-relationships/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals/guidance/relationships-and-sex-education-and-health-education-statutory-guidance/>

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