



# NOT IN OUR COMMUNITY

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**Lesson Plan:** Ryan's Story Film Resource



[www.notinourcommunity.org](http://www.notinourcommunity.org)

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# What is Grooming & Exploitation?

These icebreaker activities are introductions to the topic of grooming and exploitation. Often young people have an idea of what grooming might be through learning about staying safe online, however grooming and exploitation in the context of CSE is different.

For this activity, you may want to make a simple PowerPoint presentation to prompt your group or, if you prefer, you could make some handouts.

## 1. Defining Grooming and Exploitation

- Speaking to the class, ask for a show of hands who has heard of the phrase 'grooming'.
- Ask a few students to explain what they think grooming is.
- Once the class is close to guessing the definition, explain the actual definition of grooming in the context of exploitation:

"Grooming is when someone builds a trust and a connection with a young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Grooming can happen over a short or long period of time, from weeks to years! Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race, and grooming doesn't necessarily always take place in private, groomers might build relationships with a young person's friends or family to make them seem more trustworthy and authoritative."

- Once you are confident your group understands the definition, ask them to suggest some tactics that groomers might use to groom their victims.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pretending to be younger than they are  | <input type="checkbox"/> Giving attention                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buying gifts and treats   | <input type="checkbox"/> Isolating the young person from friends/family        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doing fun activities (especially activities young people may not be able to do) | <input type="checkbox"/> Blackmail, shaming and guilt                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giving advice and understanding   | <input type="checkbox"/> Introducing the idea of 'secrets' to control and trap |

Make it clear here that a victim doesn't always understand they are being groomed as the manipulation of grooming can make feelings complicated as a victim might admire and love the groomer as well as fear them, which can be confusing.

# What is Grooming & Exploitation?

- Ask your group what they think the signs of grooming might be. Prompt them with the tactics if they need it, asking them what that might look like to them if their mate was being groomed.

- Being secretive about who they're with and how they spend their time (online and offline)
- Having new friends or boyfriend/girlfriend (especially if there are older)
- Having money, new clothes and/or a new phone that they can't or won't explain
- Drinking underage, smoking or drug taking
- Spending a lot of time away from home, school or friends.
- Obsessively using their phone, especially if they are being secretive over it (or perhaps they could be spending less time on their phone when they would be online).
- Being withdrawn, upset or distressed
- Over sexualised behaviour, using sexual language or understanding sex more than you think is normal for their age.

## 2. Next, ask the group what they think exploitation may be.

- Similar to the previous activity, ask for the group to suggest what they think exploitation might be.
- Once they are getting close, give them the definition:

Sexual exploitation (or CSE) is a type of abuse. It's when a young person is given things like gifts, drugs, money, status or affection in exchange for performing sexual activities. Often, a victim is tricked into believing they are in a loving relationship through grooming. Anybody can be a perpetrator of exploitation no matter their age, gender or race, and anyone can be a victim of exploitation too.

- Explain that the sexual activities that a young person might be made to do might also happen online, things such as:

- Sending or posting sexually explicit images of themselves
- Filming or streaming sexual activities
- Having sexual conversations through messaging apps

Criminal exploitation (or CCE) is when a young person finds themselves being asked, or forced, to do criminal things for someone else. Whilst initially they may feel part of a group or even a family, over time they will be told that there is no other option, that they owe someone, owe money or should do things out of loyalty.

# What is Grooming & Exploitation?

- You may ask your group what they think the signs of exploitation are, or just read them out to the group.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age | <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking alcohol, smoking or doing drugs                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being frightened of people, places or situations          | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting STI's, having pregnancy scares or becoming pregnant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being secretive   | <input type="checkbox"/> Having older friends or an older boyfriend/girlfriend       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mood swings   | <input type="checkbox"/> Staying out, being hungover and skipping school             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having money or items that they can't or won't explain    | <input type="checkbox"/> Going missing for periods of time                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signs of abuse such as bruises on their body              |  |

- Explain that any one of these signs could just seem like normal behaviour for a young person growing up. Signs aren't always obvious and may be hidden, but if you spot any worrying behaviour - any 2-3 or more of the above signs - and you are worried about someone you know, then it is worth speaking to a trusted adult about it.

**Make sure to use the debrief section (at the end of this document) to explain how to get help if someone in your group is worried about themselves or a friend.**

# Ryan's Story

## Supporting Activities

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Ryan's Story is an interactive film whereby viewers can choose to see what happens next based on the decision that they make on behalf of the main character. The storylines follow paths based on Ryan joining either a local or out of town organised crime group. From there, the character of Ryan wrestles with his conscience and the consequences of the violent world he inhabits.

The young people advising the project agreed it was important that the film felt realistic and that once in these kinds of situations there are no right and safe options you can make. Their message is that wherever possible you should avoid getting involved in drug dealing and organised crime in the first place.

Whilst the story goes down different routes based on real life events, we see that ultimately Ryan does have a choice of whether or not he can trust people who want to help him get his life back on track.

### Age advisory

Year 10 + Warning: contains language and scenes of violence that some viewers might find upsetting.

### Film Running Time

2 x 10-minute standalone films **OR** Interactive version approximately 12 minutes.

### Advised Session Duration

30 - 50 Minutes

### Film Link

Standalone version simulating the interactive choices:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qct4mGYgNql>  
Ryan's Story (goes with the local group)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqmkSHw\\_\\_iw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqmkSHw__iw)  
Ryan's Story (Ryan joins the out of towners)
- Or search 'Ryan's Story' on Not In Our Community's YouTube channel.

### Suggested Follow-up Materials

- Visit [www.notinourcommunity.org](http://www.notinourcommunity.org)
- Follow Not in our community on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube.
- Create an e-learning account at NIOC interact at <http://notinourcommunity.org/nio-interact/>

### Closing Message & Accessing Help

Think you or a friend might have been exploited? Want some advice or someone to talk to? Exploitation is never your fault.

If someone is in immediate danger call **999**. If you have concerns about grooming, exploitation or relationship abuse, you can call the local police on **101**. You can also arrange to see an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate on **0800 197 4787** if you're worried about a relationship.

If you want to anonymously discuss concerns about grooming, sexual or criminal exploitation you can speak to Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**, share information via Fearless <https://www.fearless.org/en/give-info> or call Childline on **0800 111**.

For 24/7 free, confidential help and advice you can call or text 116000 a dedicated sexual exploitation helpline run by the Missing Persons Charity.

Alternatively, you could speak with a trusted adult such as a parent, grandparent, carer, teacher, youth, health or social worker, and you can use [www.notinourcommunity.org](http://www.notinourcommunity.org) to work out the next steps to take together. There are also local organisations here to help you listed on the "Get help" section of the website.

# Ryan's Story

## 1. How do you feel about what happened to Ryan?

Prompts:

- Do you think it was his fault?

## 2. Do you think the choices we could see for Ryan were his only choices?

Prompts:

- What else could he have chosen to do?
- Which early choice do you think was a wrong one?

**Hint:** he could see only a choice to join in with Harvey or Sammy, though he had a choice to do neither which would have avoided so much pain and problems for him.

## 3. In what ways was Ryan vulnerable to becoming involved in and then exploited by an organised crime group?

Hints:

- He was pushed in: his judgemental stepdad didn't respect him.
- He was pulled in: his best friend Harvey was connected to drug dealers, a new dealer Sammy had given him free things and casually offered him work, he wanted status to "make something of himself".

## 4. What did Ryan learn about the harsh realities of joining a criminal group?

Hints:

- It was violent and he was forced to hurt people.
- He felt regret and remorse for what he had to do.
- He didn't make money like he thought he would.
- He was trapped and could no longer choose for himself.
- Hurting people made him feel ashamed.
- He was in more danger than he realised.

## 5. Do you think that what we see in the film happens where we live?

# Ryan's Story

## 6. What would you do if you or someone you know was at risk of or being exploited?

**Notes:** When someone has been groomed and exploited it is hard to understand what is going on. Often victims do not see themselves as being exploited and might be defensive. Speaking with a trusted adult to share what you know and to raise your concerns would be advisable so that they can help decide how to get help.

Alternatively, you could speak anonymously to Fearless or Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111** or call **Childline** on **0800 111**.



# Ryan's Story

After a session learning about exploitation, we recommend debriefing your students about what they have just heard.

Our films can be distressing for some young people so we have tried to categorise lessons appropriate for particular age groups but are aware that how appropriate our content is may differ from person to person. We always recommend reviewing content before showing it to your group.

If a young person in your group is worried by the content they are shown, make sure they can air their concerns and have someone trusted to speak to.

In general, make sure you ask students if they have any questions or worries that they want to share before they leave the session, and make sure they have the opportunity to ask questions in private after the session.

**Before the session is over, make sure that your group is aware of the following information about accessing help:**

Think you or a friend might have been sexually exploited? Want some advice or someone to talk to? Exploitation is never your fault. If someone is in immediate danger, call **999**. If you have concerns about sexual exploitation, you can call the local police on **101**.

For 24/7 free, confidential help and advice you can call or text **116000** a dedicated sexual exploitation helpline run by the Missing Persons Charity.

Alternatively, you could speak with a trusted adult such as a parent, grandparent, carer, teacher, youth, health or social worker, and you can use **[www.notinourcommunity.org](http://www.notinourcommunity.org)** to work out the next steps to take together.

## Resources Near You

Find local support services on the 'Who Can Help?' page of the **Not In Our Community website**.