



Diagram 1: Factors contributing to and consequences of child sexual exploitation

Table 3 provides a summary of some of the underlying factors, as well as the push and pull factors involved with sexual exploitation. It also notes those potential protective factors that, if absent, can increase the likelihood of a young person becoming involved.

Table 3: Summary of underlying, push and pull factors for entering and staying involved in sexual exploitation through prostitution, and protective factors that if absent can increase risk

Underlying factors	Push factors (Pushing young people away and into sexual exploitation)	Other factors that increase likelihood of sexual exploitation	Pull factors (Attracting, coercing young people into sexual exploitation)	Absence of protective (buffer) factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty • Unemployment • Homelessness • Sex markets, including customers and sex business • Economic drivers in society • Societal attitudes to violence, sexuality, women and children • Society's ignoring of the problem • Legal system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child abuse and neglect, in all forms • Family violence • Other traumas • Rejection • Hunger, cold and need for shelter • Being labelled, stigmatised by others • Lack of leadership and structures in residential care • Negative experiences at school by teachers, peers • Boredom • Shame • Desire for autonomy, agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early sexual activity and/or naivety • Running away • Alcohol and other drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and other drugs • Being coerced, tricked or enticed by boyfriend, friends, pimps or family members (a safer option?) • Belonging to a sub-culture • Perceived glamour • Access to money • Party • Use of internet and other technologies • Sense of power and control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental supervision • Engagement with school • Positive attachments to adults • Positive self esteem • Experience of being consistently cared for • Employment • Prosecutions of adults paying for sex or organising others to pay for sex from children

Impacts of sexual exploitation on the young person

“It is difficult to even begin to capture the many ways in which an experience of sexual exploitation negatively impacts upon a young person’s life. It affects his/her health – physical, sexual and mental. It reinforces an inadequate sense of self and compounds existing vulnerabilities. It shapes future relationships, social integration and general life prospects. This is particularly the case when appropriate support is not received, both at the time and on an ongoing basis.” (Beckett, 2011, 70)