



TPS Global Citizenship Programme

County Lines Information Sheet



What is it?

County Lines is where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries (although not exclusively), usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs. The 'County Line' is the mobile phone line used to take the orders of drugs.

Potential signs

The following signs **may** indicate that a child is being exploited by a county lines gang, this list is not exclusive

- frequently going missing from school, home or care;
- travelling to locations, or being found in areas they have no obvious connections with, including seaside or market towns;
- unwillingness to explain their whereabouts;
- acquiring money, clothes, accessories or mobile phones which they seem unable to account for;
- receiving excessive texts or phone calls at all hours of the day;
- having multiple mobile phone handsets or sim cards;
- withdrawing or having sudden changes in personality, behaviour or the language they use;
- having relationships with controlling or older individuals and groups;
- unexplained injuries;
- carrying weapons;
- significant decline in school results or performance;
- being isolated from peers or social networks;
- associating with or being interested in gang culture;
- self-harming or having significant changes in mental health.

What can you do?

- If you are worried about a child and believe them to be in immediate danger, please call **999**.
- If you're worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, you should share your concerns with one or more of the following:
 - **The NSPCC Helpline** on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000) or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk. Our trained professionals will talk through your concerns with you and give you expert advice.
 - **The local child protection services:** their contact details can be found on the website for the relevant local authority. The local authority the child comes from is responsible for the child's welfare. However, it is also good practice to contact the local authority in the area the child is found, as they may need to be a part of the multi-agency response and there may be other children or vulnerable adults at risk.
 - **Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111**
 - **The local police**

Additional Support available

St Giles Trust

<https://www.stgilestrust.org.uk/new-county-lines-support-service-will-offer-lifeline-across-england-and-wales/>