

## Hoteliers and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Wolverhampton Safeguarding Service are keen to work closely with Hoteliers in the City to reduce the risk of CSE for young people. This work is replicated in other Local Authorities, who like Wolverhampton, have signed up to a Regional CSE Framework which seeks to involve professionals from a range of backgrounds in the CSE agenda.

Specialist training has been devised which focuses on the key roles that exist within the hotel business and, as such, helps hoteliers support their staff in understanding how CSE might be identified dependent on individual hotel roles. The training also supports staff in gaining confidence to report any concerns they may have for young people in a timely and effective way.

CSE is a national issue which has been highlighted on television and in the Press. Despite the public being worried about the issue it remains difficult for individuals to act if they are concerned about individual young people for fear of reprisals or 'getting it wrong'. Those working in hotels reflect public opinion but, it cannot be underestimated how vital hotels are in combatting this awful crime.

More recently hoteliers may have been impacted by a recent report of a father being spoken to by the police after the manager of a hotel was concerned about his stay, at their premises, with a teenage girl. For the father and his daughter, the experience was difficult but the motivation of the manager was linked to safeguarding. Some press treatment of the hotel was negative as they struggled to understand the reason for police contact; yet, as we all know, if the hotel had identified a young person being exploited the press response would have been very different.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-surrey-39514900>

The world of safeguarding is challenging but, if decisions are defensible, and the aim is to protect a child; individuals should not be criticised. In this instance the father offered a solution and suggested the introduction of 'proof of identification for children' be implemented by hotels to assure reception staff that the young people staying are linked to the adult taking them there. Such a response may not stop CSE but, it would contribute to a reduction in risk and inform hotel staff when deciding to contact the police.

The Key message to Hotels and their staff is:

**DO NOT BE AFRAID OF ADVERSE PRESS WHEN THE ACTIONS TAKEN ARE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF A CHILD.**

If your hotel is interested in accessing the bespoke Hotel training please contact Sandeep Gill, CSE coordinator, on 01902 550523 or [Sandeep.gill@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Sandeep.gill@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

Hotel CSE resources can also be downloaded from [www.seemehearne.org.uk](http://www.seemehearne.org.uk)