

# ***Child Trafficking – A National Perspective***

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# Background: why is child trafficking becoming such a national concern?

- Increasing problem: rise in number of cases at UK level
  - e.g. CEOP reporting over 300 cases in the UK (2007-08)
- Increasing international response to problem:
  - Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
  - European Council/Parliament draft Directive on Human Trafficking
- UK commitment to act: UK Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings

# Background: a UK problem, a Glasgow problem, but is it a *Scottish* problem?

- Clear that there is a UK-wide problem
- Clear prevalence of issue in Glasgow
- However, to what extent is trafficking a significant issue across the rest of Scotland?
  - lack of clear evidence of a widespread and rising problem, but...
  - difficulty in getting clear evidence
  - in many respects, similar conditions for child trafficking in other parts of Scotland

# **Background: what is the nature of the child trafficking problem in Scotland?**

- Children as labour
  - e.g. sexual exploitation
  - e.g. drugs trade
- Children as 'fronts'
  - e.g. cover for benefit fraud
- Domestic servitude
- 'Secondary' trafficking

# Child trafficking and child protection: challenges to policy and practice

- Local duty to protect all children
- Difficulties in identifying all risk factors:
  - concealed activity
  - cultural/linguistic barriers
- Complexity of child trafficking issues
  - involvement of different agencies locally with different objectives: e.g. police and social services
  - involvement of different agencies nationally with different objectives: e.g. UK immigration authorities and local child protection services (the National Referral Mechanism)

# National policy on child trafficking: child trafficking guidance

- Scottish Government published dedicated national guidance on child trafficking in February 2009
  - *Safeguarding Children in Scotland who may have been Trafficked*
- National guidance based on Glasgow experience but applicable to all areas – including use of assessment tool to help practitioners identify potential victims
- Experience of using the guidance: *is it sufficient?*

# National policy on child trafficking: child protection guidance

- Revision of 1998 national child protection guidance
- Dedicated section on child trafficking, reflecting 2009 guidance
- Consultation on new national child protection guidance 1 June – 17 September