

County Lines

County Lines is a serious issue where criminal gangs set up a drug dealing operation in a place outside their usual operating area. Gangs will move their drug dealing from cities to smaller towns in order to make more money. This can have a big effect on the community who live there and bring with it serious criminal behaviour. There are county lines operating in the Avon and Somerset area

Crimes Associated with County Lines

Drugs County lines commonly involves the illegal distribution and dealing of seriously dangerous drugs from one city/town to another. The most common drugs involved are heroin and cocaine (crack and powder), MDMA, cannabis, amphetamines and spice.

Violence Gangs sometimes use violence to threaten children and young people when recruiting them. Gangs also violently assault children and young people working for them if they find their drugs or money to be missing. Weapons such as firearms, knives, bats, acid are sometimes used to make violent threats.

Exploitation Gangs recruit and use children and young people to move drugs and money for them. Children as young as 12 years old and up to 17 years old are recruited, often using social media. They are exploited and forced to carry drugs between locations, usually on trains or coaches. They are also forced to sell drugs to local users.

Sexual Exploitation Young girls are often groomed and forced into relationships with gang members and are made to perform sexual acts.

Signs to look out for

Here are some signs to look out for that can suggest that someone you know might be involved in county lines activity.

- Are they always going missing from school or their home?
- Are they travelling alone to places far away from home?
- Do they suddenly have lots of money/lots of new clothes/new mobile phones?
- Are they receiving much more calls or texts than usual?
- Are they carrying or selling drugs?
- Are they carrying weapons or know people that have access to weapons?

- Are they in a relationship with or hanging out with someone/people that are older and controlling?
- Seen in unknown cars
- Do they have unexplained injuries?
- Do they seem very reserved or seem like they have something to hide?
- Do they seem scared?
- Are they self-harming?

Useful Links If you or anyone you know is affected by the issues mention on this page, here are some useful links you can explore for more information and support. When reporting concerns follow *The SSCB Effective Support for Families and Children document and local crime reporting procedures*

- [Childline](#)
- [Catch-22](#)
- [Gangline](#)

Here are some words/terms that are commonly used when describing county lines activity.

Cuckooing This is when drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable individual and use it as their base for selling/manufacturing drugs. Commonly, drug users are targeted and are offered "free" drugs in exchange.

Going County This is the most popular term that describes county lines activity. It can also mean the act of travelling to another city/town to deliver drugs or money.it can also be referred to as **OT**

Trapping The act of selling drugs. Trapping can refer to the act of moving drugs from one town to another or the act of selling drugs in one.

Trap House A building used as a base from where drugs are sold (or sometimes manufactured). These houses usually are occupied by someone (usually adult drug users but sometimes young people are forced to stay in trap houses) location.

Trap Line This refers to when someone owns a mobile phone specifically for the purpose of running and selling of drug.