



SHEBBEAR COLLEGE

Important Information for Parents: Understanding County Lines

Internet Matters, along with safeguarding agency Praesidio, have released guidance aimed at helping parents understand the concept of "County Lines" and its impact on children and young people.

What Are County Lines?

County Lines is a term used to describe drug distribution networks that extend from urban centres to smaller towns and rural areas, often exploiting vulnerable children and young people to transport and sell drugs. These operations are controlled by organised criminal groups using dedicated mobile phone lines.

Key Points from the Guide:

- **Targeting Vulnerabilities:** Criminals often target children who are vulnerable due to a variety of factors, including adverse childhood experiences, school non-attendance, disabilities, and more. They exploit these vulnerabilities for criminal purposes.
- **Online and Offline Grooming:** Groomers may use online platforms, social media, and even video games to connect with and exploit children. The guide details how these criminals glamorise the lifestyle to attract children into these dangerous situations.
- **Protective Measures:** The guide provides practical advice on recognising signs of involvement and how to protect children from becoming entangled in these networks.

How to Get Involved:

- **Education is Key:** Learn about the signs of County Line involvement and the tactics used by groomers, both in real life and online.
- **Discuss and Engage:** Use the resources provided to open up important discussions with your children about the risks associated with these criminal activities.

The link for the guide is below:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/online-grooming/what-is-county-lines/>