

Pledge to stop abuse on cse awareness day

Councils behind a West Midlands campaign to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation (CSE) are urging people to make a personal pledge to help tackle the abuse.

Dudley, Birmingham, Coventry, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton councils along with West Midlands Police are supporting national CSE awareness day on Friday (March 18).

Organised by charity National Working Group, which is dedicated to helping combat CSE, the day aims to encourage everyone to think, spot and speak out against abuse.

On the day people are asked to write a personal pledge on their hands and then post a photo of it on social media using the hashtag #HelpingHands. The pledge can be anything, from speaking out, to educating others.

The seven regional councils, the police and partner organisations are working together to raise the profile of CSE in the region through the See Me, Hear Me campaign.

This aims to increase people's understanding of child sexual exploitation and how to spot the warning signs in a child or young person's behaviour that may indicate something is wrong.

Events will be taking place across the region to mark the day and councils are calling on people to make their own personal pledge and post it on line.

Nick Page, chief executive of Solihull Council and regional CSE lead, said:

“We all have our part to play in stopping this horrendous abuse. The more aware we are of the signs, the greater chance we have to stop the abuse and protect our young people.

“Please visit www.seeme-hearme.org.uk to find out more and make your own pledge on March 18 to help stop this abuse.”

People can find out more information about child sexual exploitation by visiting www.seeme-hearme.org.uk . The site contains information about CSE and how to spot the warning signs. There are also targeted resources for

schools and those who work in leisure and hospitality industries, such as hotels, leisure centres and taxi companies.

To find out more about the national CSE Awareness Day, visit www.stop-cse.org/

Anyone who is concerned about the safety of a young person should call West Midlands Police on 101, speak in confidence to Barnardo's on 0121 3595333 or in an emergency call 999.

Childline also has counsellors available online at www.childline.org.uk

Ends

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March 2016