

# 7 Minute Briefing : Contextual Safeguarding

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## Facts

The University of Bedfordshire have undertaken research and published a briefing collating/summarising learning (link below). There is also a framework detailing behaviours, role of contextual interventions and the implications for child protection systems and practices.

### Further information:

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

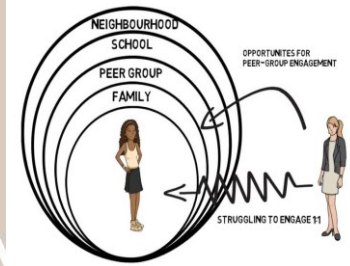
### Rotherham Advice/Referrals:

Rotherham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 01709 336080

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## What is it?

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their family environment. Young people are exposed to violence/exploitation in their school, community or peer group which makes it hard for parents/carers to keep them safe.



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## Context

Traditional approaches to protecting children/young people from harm have focused on the risk of violence and abuse from inside the home, and don't consider the time that children/young people spend outside the home. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts.

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## Why?

Contextual Safeguarding expands the objectives of child protection systems. A Contextual Safeguarding approach aims to disrupt harmful extra-familial contexts rather than move young people away from them. The approach seeks to identify ways in which professionals, adults and young people can change social conditions of environments in which abuse has occurred.



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## What are the risks?

Risks can take a variety of different forms and young people can be vulnerable to multiple threats including:

- exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups (county lines)
- extremism leading to radicalisation.
- trafficking and modern slavery.
  - sexual exploitation
  - online abuse

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## Intervention

Knowing wider contextual information can inform decision making. Working with multi-agency sectors who have influence over extra-familial contexts (eg schools, youth groups), can be effective in assisting young people to:

- Recognise/recover from trauma
- Re-build family relationships
- Re-engage in education and other activities

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## Impact

- Emotional, physical and mental well-being impacted
- "missing" episodes
- Involvement in offending
- Substance misuse (alcohol/drugs)
- Family relationships impacted
- Ability to access education and other services affected