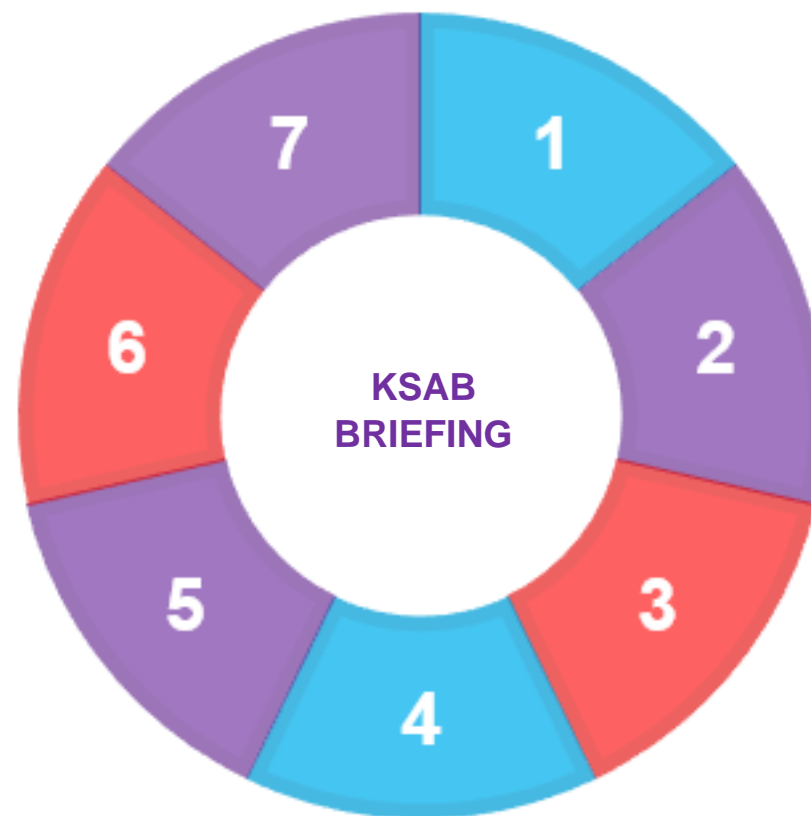


7 MINUTE BRIEFING – CUCKOOING/HOME INVASION



1. What is Cuckooing/Home Invasion?

- Cuckooing/Home invasion is when criminals take over the home of a vulnerable person and use it for criminal purposes such as dealing drugs.
- The term comes from the behaviour of cuckoo birds who take over the nests of other birds.
- A criminal will often befriend a vulnerable person in order to exploit them and use their property.
- The person is usually intimidated and too scared to report it to anyone.

2. Who are the Victims?

Victims are vulnerable individuals and can include people who are:

- Older
- Living with mental or physical health conditions
- Living with learning disability
- Involved in prostitution
- Single parents
- Experiencing poverty
- Isolated
- Living with addiction or alcoholism

3. Controlling the Victim

- Criminals use the property to discreetly conduct criminal activity out of sight of the police
- They will use a range of tactics to control the victim.
- May offer free drugs to use their home for dealing
- Once they gain control, gangs move in
- Increased risk of domestic abuse, sexual exploitation and violence
- Once the 'high' wears off the victims want the criminals to leave, leading to fear and threats or violence being used.

4. Spotting the signs:

- High number of vehicles stopping at the property for a short time.
- Increased anti-social behaviour around the property
- Open drug dealing near the property
- Not seeing the resident of the property as often
- People coming and going at various times day and night.
- Sudden and increased levels of noise and disturbance coming from household.

5. The person at risk:

- They have stopped engaging with support services
- They are presenting with unexplained injuries
- They have paid off debts (including housing debts) in full and in cash
- They are appearing withdrawn and fearful of disclosing information for fear of 'betraying' the criminals, abuse, or eviction
- They are associating with new unidentified people who are often present at the home
- They have changed their appearance either wearing expensive clothing or appearing unkempt

6. If you are worried...let someone know

- If you are worried that an adult is a victim of cuckooing it is important that it is stopped. Organisations can help stop cuckooing occurring so if worried, you can contact:
- Merseyside Police on 101 or 999 in an emergency.
- You can also make a [safeguarding referral](#) or contact Knowsley Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, (MASH) on Tel: 0151 443 2600.
- It is also important to involve the housing provider if this is a registered housing property or the landlord if it is a privately rented property so you can also contact your housing provider.

7. Further Information:

[Crime Stoppers](#) – 0800 555 111

[Modern Slavery Helpline](#) – 08000 121 7000

[Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults \(Home Office\)](#)

[County Lines \(National Crime Agency\)](#)