

New training enables swift response to indecent exposure incident

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College training helps officers respond quickly and effectively to protect the public.

News 2 mins read

Following the tragic cases of Libby Squire, Sarah Everard and Zara Aleena, it became clear that the impact of non-contact sexual offences had been dangerously underestimated.

Incidents that were once dismissed as "low-level" crimes are now understood to be serious sexual offences that cause significant harm to victims, often escalating to more severe offending.

New bespoke training

The College of Policing responded to the Angiolini Inquiry recommendations by developing comprehensive evidence-based non-contact sexual offences training that puts victims first and focuses on understanding suspects, to prevent further harm.?

Since launching in January 2025, over 90,000 officers and staff have completed new non-contact sexual offences specialist training representing approximately one third of the policing workforce in England and Wales.

The transformative effect of this training is demonstrated by Detective Constable Paul Slinger and Detective Sergeant Katie Brew from Lancashire Police's serious and complex crime team.

When a child witnessed a man exposing himself in a local park, officers took swift action to identify and secure a conviction against the offender. The successful outcome was supported by NCSO training, which enhanced officers' understanding of victim impact and strengthened their investigative approach.

Video Transcript

Detective Constable Paul Slinger, Lancashire Police: A non-contact sexual offence is a serious crime. There are no such things as a minor sexual offence. The training shows how under-reported these offences are and how victims have had to change their approaches to lifestyle, and nobody should have to do that. There'd been an incident in which a child had been playing in a local park. A male had approached the child and exposed his penis to her. The child had run out of the playground and told her dad. The dad went over to the male and challenged them and had the foresight at the time to take an image of the suspect and send that in to the police. We started conducting inquiries. I had real concerns about had they previously offended before and would they offend again in the future?

Detective Sergeant Katie Brew, Lancashire Police: The non-contact sexual offence training has reinforced for me how important it is to deal with these offences seriously from the outset. It's really showed me how the impact on those victims can be just as serious and just as long-lasting as if it were a contact offence. And it goes much wider than the psychological and the emotional impact. These victims are often changing their lifestyle and routine because they're so impacted by what's happened to them, they're scared of it happening again.

Detective Constable Paul Slinger, Lancashire Police: The training package has highlighted to me just how under-reported non-contact sexual offences are. If it's so under-reported, we don't have a real understanding of how much of this offending is going on and we need that so we can better resource and better plan for the future. The training really showed to me that an offender will likely have offended before and more likely offended in the future. So, it's really important that we locate them, arrest them, and deal with them in the courts.

Temporary Detective Chief Superintendent Jamie Daniels, College of Policing: These crimes are serious. We often think of there being an escalating pattern of offending behaviour when it comes to tackling non-contact sex offences. And secondly, there's a pattern there often under the surface around this offending type and we've got to get a grip of that. We also know that non-contact sexual offences, while anyone can be affected, that women and girls are disproportionately affected. And we know there's a real trust and confidence issue there and it's vital that we improve how we tackle this crime type.

Detective Sergeant Katie Brew, Lancashire Police: The warning flags were there for me from the beginning. This was a suspect who targeted children in a park in broad daylight.

Detective Constable Paul Slinger, Lancashire Police: I went up and met with the family of the victim and I had to have a real honest discussion with the family about if we were to locate and trace a suspect, what that might mean going forward regarding video interviews and a potential court appearance. We made a decision to go to the press and try and identify the offender. Within minutes of the appeal going out, members of the public were naming the offender and the suspect was arrested. During that time, I had to go back to the family and have again an open and honest conversation with them that not only we found the suspect, but it was a high-risk sex offender with previous offending. And that open and honest conversation obviously concerned them, but I was managed to alleviate some of their fears and they agreed that for their daughter to be video interviewed by an appropriate member of staff. I managed to conduct some more witness statements and then interviewed the suspect. The suspect admitted being in the location at the time of the offense but denied the offending.

Detective Sergeant Katie Brew, Lancashire Police: After that, the team worked really hard together to build the case file and put together a quality package that we could take to CPS [Crown Prosecution Service]. They authorised for him to be charged and we remanded him into custody that night. At the first hearing at magistrate's court, the suspect pleaded guilty to what he'd done and was later sentenced to prison. Being able to recognise the risks from the beginning, taking urgent action, and really working together as a team, which are all things that the training highlights, led to us being able to take a dangerous offender off the streets.

Temporary Detective Chief Inspector Kirsty Wyatt, Lancashire Police: The training has really positively impacted our force. It's helped us to improve our accuracy with crime recording. I also think that we've improved our standard of investigations. We're delivering a really standardised, excellent approach to any report of non-contact sexual offences that comes into Lancashire. That is then improving the outcomes for ourselves, in that we helping to improve the positive outcomes for our victims and ultimately improving trust and confidence with our communities and that these people, who have been victims of crime or families of survivors, have got the confidence now to speak to the police.

Temporary Detective Chief Superintendent Jamie Daniels, College of Policing: The package itself is available on College Learn which is accessible on the platform available to all the Home Office forces. The uptake has been outstanding. We've seen over 80,000 completions across the police community now, which is a real testament to how serious policing is taking this particular issue and the intentions of driving up investigative standards, improving how we respond to non-contact sexual offences and improve how we give a good service to victims of crime.

Detective Constable Paul Slinger, Lancashire Police: Complete the training with an open mind. The package that's been put together should help you improve your knowledge of non-contact sexual offences and improve your understanding of how this may impact a victim. I don't want to be the person that looks and sits in front of somebody knowing that I may have let a victim down. So, we owe it to ourselves in the police to do everything that we can to try and arrest and convict these perpetrators.

Detective Sergeant Katie Brew, Lancashire Police: I would urge all officers, if they haven't done yet, to complete the training because it genuinely changes your view on non-contact sexual offences. This is a real insight into the real-life impact these offenses have had on victims and families. Our response as police to these crimes can be the difference between stopping an offender in their tracks or letting another tragedy happen.

Evidence of success

Lancashire Police's case shows the training working exactly as intended by putting victims first, understanding suspects, and considering the wider context to prevent further harm.

This tangible evidence of success reinforces why every officer completing this training becomes better equipped to deliver justice for victims and protect their communities from serious crime, increasing public trust and confidence.

The College's ongoing commitment to stop violence against women and girls is delivering real-world impact through this specialist training programme. Lancashire Police's story demonstrates the significant opportunity to further strengthen the police response to these serious offences across all forces, ensuring non-contact sexual offences are investigated as the serious sexual offences.

[Go to non-contact sexual offences training](#)

You will need to log into College Learn to access this training.

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