SESSION PLAN

Youth Group: Ages 10 to 16

Topic: Out of Bounds: The Truth About County Lines

Learning objective:
- Explain what "county lines" means and how it works
- Identify how young people are groomed and exploited
- Raise awareness of the dangers and consequences
- Empower young people to seek help and avoid recruitment

Materials Needed:
- County lines scenario card/story
- Visual board for signs or risk brainstorm
- Local support info or helpline cards
- Sticky notes or posters for pledges

Icebreaker – "What Does It Mean?" (3 minutes)

Ask:
- "What do you think county lines means?"
- "Have you heard of it before?"

Quick definition:
County lines is when criminals use young people to move drugs or money from cities into smaller towns or rural areas. It often involves grooming, threats, and violence. Explain that this is not a choice - it's exploitation.

How Does It Happen? (4 minutes)

Use a story or role-play (fictional and age-appropriate):

Amir is 14. He's offered money to take a 'package' to another town. It seems harmless at first. The man says he'll protect him and keep him out of trouble. Soon, Amir's being told when to eat, where to go, and threatened if he says no.

Ask:
- "Was Amir making his own choices?"
- "How was he being groomed?"
- "Why might someone do what they're told, even if they're scared?"

Key points:
- County lines groups often target young people who are struggling
- They offer money, gifts, or promises - then use threats and fear
- You can be trapped before you even realise it's happened

Spot the Signs (5 minutes)

Group brainstorm or visual board activity:
"What are the signs someone might be involved in county lines?"

Common signs:

- Going missing for hours or days
- Sudden money, gifts, or new clothes
- Secretive behaviour, new 'friends'
- Unexplained travel or train tickets
- Phone changes or multiple mobiles
- Tiredness, fear, or change in personality

Facilitator insight:
"These are all signs someone might be in danger - not that they're bad or criminal."

Risks & Consequences (4 minutes)

Real talk on what can happen:

- You could be hurt or seriously harmed
- You might be arrested and have a criminal record
- You could be manipulated into more serious crime
- You might be taken far from home or forced to stay in trap houses

Important reminder:
It's not your fault if this happens. But there is always a way out.

What Can You Do? (4 minutes)

Give them safe options:

- Talk to a trusted adult, teacher, or youth worker
- Call Childline or Fearless (anonymous crime reporting)
- If someone pressures you or a friend - say no and tell someone

Finish with a short pledge activity:
"I know my worth. I don't carry, I don't run, I don't hide. My future is mine."

Optional Follow-Up:

- Invite a youth outreach worker or reformed speaker
- Creative session: "What does freedom look like?" posters, poetry, or role play
- Safe exit strategy guide for those already worried or involved