



Shoplifting,
or being forced
to steal?

Evie

"I thought she was my friend at first. She gave me vapes, offered me lifts, and always acted like it was no big deal. I never thought I owed her anything.

Then she introduced me to her brother. He told me it was him that had paid for everything and that I owed him £500. When I said I couldn't pay, he threatened to come to my house and get the money from my Mam. I was terrified.

He said I could work off the debt by delivering packages and shoplifting. He gave me a lined bag and told me the alarms wouldn't go off. They did. I got caught and was too scared to tell anyone what was really happening, so I took the blame.

Now I'm banned from the precinct, and my picture is in the security lodge. The debt never seemed to get any smaller. He said getting caught was my fault and I still owed him. I felt trapped. I was scared of him and didn't feel like saying no was an option."

Beyond the behaviour

Evie was groomed and manipulated into believing she owed a "debt" to her exploiter, who went on to control her through threats and intimidation. **Members of the public had opportunities to recognise she was at risk.** Scan the QR code to learn about how children are being harmed in your community, and how you can help.

