

## **Mate Crime and Cuckooing**

**I thought I'd made a new friend.**

**But they make me feel scared.**

**What do I do?**

Do what I say.  
Or else!



**Fife Adult Support & Protection**

[www.fife.gov.uk/adultprotection](http://www.fife.gov.uk/adultprotection)





This booklet is about mate crime.

Mate crime is when someone pretends to be your friend to take advantage of you.



Read this booklet with someone who supports you.

You don't have to read it all at once.



## Alternative Formats

Information about Fife Council can be made available in large print, braille, audio CD/tape and Gaelic on request by calling **03451 55 55 00**



### British Sign Language

please text (SMS) 07781 480 185



### BT Text Direct:

18001 01592 55 11 91

## Language lines

Arabic

خط هاتف اللغة العربية: 03451 55 55 77

Bengali

বাংলায় আলাপ করার জন্য টেলিফোন লাইন: 03451 55 55 99

Cantonese

中文語言熱線電話: 03451 55 55 88

Polish

Polskojęzyczna linia telefoniczna: 03451 55 55 44

Urdu

اُردو زبان کے لیے ٹیلیفون نمبر 03451 55 55 66



## What is a friend?

A real friend is someone you trust, who will support you and enjoys being with you.

## Why would someone pretend to be your friend?

They might do this because they want to use you and take advantage of you.

This is sometimes called 'mate crime'.

A real friend would never:

- hurt you.
- make you feel scared or uncomfortable.
- threaten you—say things like 'you HAVE to do this, cos you're my friend.'
- tell you to do something you don't want to, and it feels wrong.
- ask you to keep a secret about something bad.



This means a secret that might harm you or hurt others or might be illegal (against the law).

If a friend does these things, they are not a real friend. They are bullying you.

If this is happening to you, call the Police or tell someone you trust.

A real friend would **never**:



- Borrow or take your money and not give it back.



- Take your cashpoint card and PIN number and take your money out without asking you.



- Make you go to the cashpoint or the bank and take money out when you don't want to.



- Come to your house and eat your food, or get you to buy takeaways all the time, but never pay their share.



- Invite all their friends to your house, without asking you.





A fake friend is someone who pretends to be your real friend.

They may:

- threaten you to make you do what they want.
- come to your house whenever they want, even if you don't want them to.
- refuse to leave when you want them to.
- try to move into your house and take over.
- get you to move out of your house.



If you live in a flat with a security door or a door entry system, make sure the door is not wedged open.



If you keep the security door closed it will stop people getting into your building.

If any of these things happen call the Police.



A fake friend may ask you to do something that is illegal and would get you in trouble with the Police.

They may do things in your house that make you feel scared or uncomfortable.

This could be:

- growing or selling drugs
- using your house as a place to bring people who want to drink lots of alcohol
- telling you to hide dangerous things in your house like drugs, or weapons like knives or a gun.



They may say they will hurt you if you tell someone about what is happening.



They may offer you drugs to encourage you to do things you don't want to.

They may say things have gone missing and you have to pay for them.

They may say you have to have sex with them or their friends.

**You don't have to put up with any of these things.**

If this happens to you, call the Police or tell someone you trust.

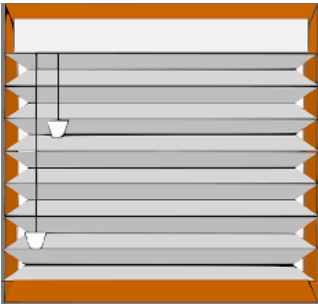
You can get help and support.



## Things to look out for if you think someone's house may have been taken over (this is sometimes called 'cuckooing').



- You haven't seen the person who lives there for a while.
- When you see them, they look worried
- They always have someone with them and they seem frightened of them.



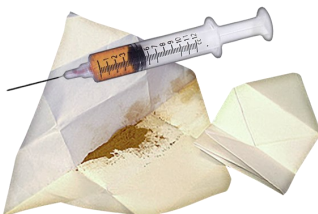
- Curtains or blinds are closed a lot of the time.



- Lots of people coming in and out of the house.
- It is noisier than usual.



- More cars or bikes than usual arriving at the house but not staying for long.



- Signs that people have been taking drugs.  
This could be things like needles lying around.



If this is happening to you or someone you know, call the Police or tell someone you trust.

**If someone says they are your friend,  
but they make you feel scared, tell someone you trust.  
If it is an emergency or you are in danger call 999.**



If it is not an emergency call Police: 101  
or the Adult Protection Phone Line: 01383 602200  
People with a hearing loss—SMS 07781 480 185



Report using a [Third Party Reporting Centre](#).



If you need support to speak out you can ask for an advocate. Visit: [www.fifeadvocacyforum.org.uk](http://www.fifeadvocacyforum.org.uk)



All Adult Protection easy read information is available at:  
[www.fife.gov.uk/adultprotectioneasyread](http://www.fife.gov.uk/adultprotectioneasyread)  
and includes information on advocacy, and disability hate crime.



Fife Council Housing Information and Advice (8am-6pm)  
03451 55 00 33  
Homeless number: 0800 028 6231



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**Fife Adult Support & Protection**  
[www.fife.gov.uk/adultprotection](http://www.fife.gov.uk/adultprotection)



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