

Money Mules – Parent Advice



What is a Money Mule?

A money mule is someone who is asked by a third party to receive money into their bank account and transfer it onto another account, keeping some of the cash for themselves. The money being transferred is proceeds of crime.

Criminals need money mules to launder the profits of their crimes.

Young people are increasingly being targeted to become money mules. They are approached online or in person, including through social media, at school, college or sports clubs.

Sometimes people they know persuade them to take part, often because they are also acting as money mules. Mules will usually be unaware of where the money comes from – commonly fraud and scams – and that it can go on to fund crimes such as drug dealing and people trafficking.

Those recruited as money mules can be threatened with violence or physically attacked if they do not continue to allow their account to be used.

Being a Money mule is Illegal

Money mules are involved in money laundering, which is a crime and carries a maximum sentence of 14 years in prison. Not knowing that it is a crime is no excuse, you can still be prosecuted.

When signing up for a bank account you are also signing to agree you will not share the details of the account, identification numbers and passwords with anyone else. If caught, your bank account will be closed and a fraud marker placed against your name.

This will result in problems obtaining other bank accounts, student loans, mobile phone contracts or credit in the future. Banks who identify unusual behaviour on an account will inform the relevant authority.

What to look out for

Tell-tale signs that someone might be involved could be them suddenly having extra cash, buying expensive new clothes, top-of-the-range mobile phones and gadgets, with very little explanation as to how they got the money. They may also become more secretive, withdrawn or appear stressed.

Advice

- Do not engage with offers of get rich quick schemes via social media. Too good to be true? Usually is !!
- Do not attempt to contact any individual you suspect of organising money muling.

Useful Links

- <https://www.moneymules.co.uk/>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-49717288>
- <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>