

Girl of 15 on sugar daddy site

Rebecca Myers, Louis Goddard and Robin Henry

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Young girls are posing as 18-year-olds to attract older, wealthier men on internet matchmaking websites
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British girls as young as 15 have been able to list themselves on the world's biggest "sugar daddy" website, which matches young women with men willing to pay for their company, a Sunday Times investigation has found.

SeekingArrangement not only had underage girls on its website, but it was also possible for their home addresses to be found by other members, placing the girls at risk of stalking, harassment, blackmail and sexual exploitation.

The girls were posing as 18-year-olds to attract older, wealthier men. One 15-year-old described herself as "a little girl eager to please" and listed her price as "negotiable".

The US-based business boasts hundreds of thousands of British users and has targeted students at UK universities, claiming it offers a way to pay off tuition fees and other debt. Its website states that it facilitates "discreet" relationships between these "sugar daddies" and "sugar babies", and has "a commitment to privacy".

However, unlike most dating sites, SeekingArrangement has a security flaw that can be easily exploited to reveal a member's location. Analysis by The Sunday Times found location data on more than 1,700 UK members, the majority of them teenagers and young women.

SeekingArrangement has a minimum age requirement of 18 years old, but only asks users to tick a box confirming they are at least that age when they create an account. Our reporters were able to identify girls aged 15, 16 and 17 who had signed up.

This weekend, SeekingArrangement admitted it had discovered the security flaw six months ago but had not informed its users.

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The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children said it was “gravely worried” by The Sunday Times’s findings. “These worrying defects mean that underage users could be tracked down to their home address and sexually exploited by adults,” a spokesman said.

Last year, SeekingArrangement was named in the trial of Doug Richard, the former Dragons’ Den star, who admitted having sex with a 13-year-old girl he met through the site. The businessman, who was cleared, said the girl had claimed to be 17.

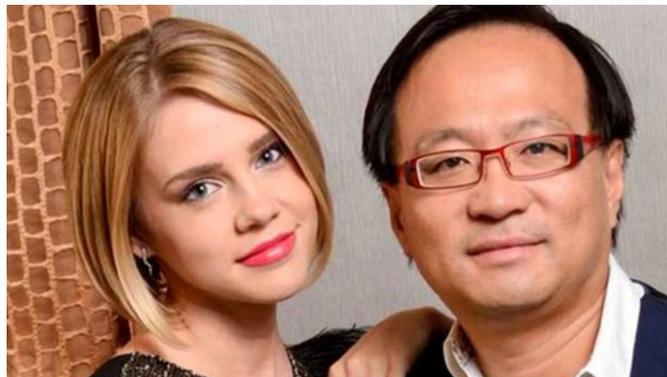
The Sunday Times has passed its dossier of findings to the National Crime Agency’s Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre for further investigation.



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The fully responsible adult of course. Or do you mean the child Ken?

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Parents cannot control a child's various accesses to internet. So "frank talks" are the only recourse, and good luck with that with a headstrong teenager.

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When I was 15, even 18, I would have balked at the idea of dating an older man. These girls must be either financially desperate, or value Luxury above all else. I feel sorry for them either way. I've little doubt most of them will love to regret it.

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Disgusting. These sites should be banned.

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