

Collette Devlin-Smith

CEO of EDGE NE

Person With A Purpose Commended
NPW Awards 2022

EDGE
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NORTHERN POWER WOMEN
PODCAST



HOW TO PREVENT THE EXPLOITATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO COUNTY LINES

Collette's Story

- Collette is our NPW Awards 2022 Person With A Purpose Commended winner
- She is the CEO of EDGE North East, working with young people who have been groomed and exploited in to Gangs, Child Criminal Exploitation including County Lines, and Serious Youth Violence.
- She was a medic in the Navy for 10 years and also previously took on the role of North East Child Sexual Exploitation Officer

What Are County Lines and Why Do They Pose A Threat

"County lines is where somebody will abuse their position of power over young people or vulnerable adults into getting them to deal drugs for them. Technically, now county lines doesn't have to be how you see on the news of the movement of drugs going from London into kind of Edinburgh and Glasgow and places like that county lines can be within your local area. If it's got the four elements of an organised crime network or mentality around it, the movement of drugs, the exploitation of children or vulnerable adults, and a deal line a mobile phone deal like then it's a county line. And that can be in your local area. It can be regionally or it can be nationally"

What Did Being Commended At The NPW Awards Mean To Collette?

"There was this room full of just amazing people. I was reading the books, I was listening to their stories. And I just thought wow. I can't actually remember going up for my award because I was in such a daze about it. I still get quite emotional when I think about it actually to just be recognised for what we've done. Not just me, but as a team as a whole team.

How Collette Copes With The Situations She Hears About

- "I have 2 dogs that I just walk and walk and walk on the beach when I get stressed"
- Her team all support each other " I have a very good team around me"
- "I do alternative holistic things like a lot of yoga and cold water therapy"
- 'If I didn't do all of the self care and self love.. I would probably hide in my bed and never let my children out of the house"