



General Information

for people worried about child abuse



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Introduction

This leaflet is for anyone worried that a child may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

It is everyone's responsibility to protect children

All children have a right to grow up in a caring and safe environment. All adults have a responsibility to protect children including:

- parents
- family members
- friends
- neighbours
- professionals
- members of the public

What is Child Abuse?

There are different types of abuse:

- **Physical injury** - being hit, kicked or punched
- **Physical neglect** - not being properly fed or clothed, poor hygiene
- **Sexual abuse** - inappropriate sexual behaviour or language
- **Emotional abuse** - constantly criticised, ignored, humiliated



What might make you concerned?

Children rarely tell if they are being abused. However, there may be signs which make you concerned and may be an indication of a child being abused or neglected.

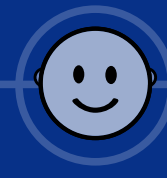
The child may:

- have unexplained bruising or bruising in an unusual place
- appear afraid, quiet or withdrawn
- appear afraid to go home
- appear hungry, tired or unkempt
- be left unattended or unsupervised
- have too much responsibility for their age
- be acting in a sexually inappropriate way
- be misusing drugs or alcohol

The adult may:

- be acting in a violent or sexual manner towards a child
- be misusing drugs or alcohol while caring for a child

These are some examples of what might make you worried, or you may know of other things that are happening which mean you need to take action to protect the child.



What to do if you are concerned?

If you are concerned about a child, speak to someone. This might be a health visitor, nursery staff, teacher, GP, social worker, police officer or children's reporter.

Make sure you:

- act promptly
- note your concerns
- give as much information as you know about the child and family

Will I need to give my name?

No. However, remaining anonymous may cause difficulties in establishing whether or not a child is at risk of abuse. All information received will be treated with discretion. Any details received, including your name, will not be revealed unless the child's safety requires it.



What happens next?

All information received is treated seriously and will be acted upon. This might include:

- checking agency records and gathering information
- speaking to the child and family and assessing the situation
- making sure the child is safe

What will happen to the child and family?

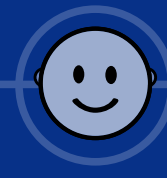
Once enquires have been completed one or more of the following might happen:

- no further action
- support or advice offered to the family
- referral to another agency for a service
- referral to the appropriate legal system

Where child protection concerns are identified:

- An inter-agency meeting will be held to decide the best way to protect the child

In a small number of cases, immediate, emergency action may be necessary to protect the child.



What might happen if you do not report your concern

If you have a worry about a child and do not share your concerns a child may be harmed.

If you are worried or know of a child who could be at risk of being abused, you can talk to staff at one of the following numbers.

List of useful local contact numbers

Social Work Services.....0141 287 8700

Police - Family Protection Unit.....0141 532 3000

Out of Hours Standby Social Work.....0800 811 505

Scottish Children's Reporters Administration0141 567 7900

Parent Line..... 0808 800 2222

Child Line 0800 1111

This leaflet has been prepared by the local Child Protection Committee. The Child Protection Committee is made up of representatives from across the main statutory and voluntary organisations in your area. The purpose of the Child Protection Committee is to ensure local agencies work together to protect children. Working together with the community we can be assured that all our children are given the best possible chance in life.

www.glasgowchildprotection.org.uk

This leaflet can be made available in Braille, large print, on disc and tape. For further information contact Social Work Services Public Information on 0141 287 8897. If you require this information in other languages, please contact the Glasgow Translation and Interpreting Service on 0141 341 0019, who will give advice.