

Child Protection Committee



South Lanarkshire

Information
for people worried about

Child Abuse
or
Neglect

Introduction

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

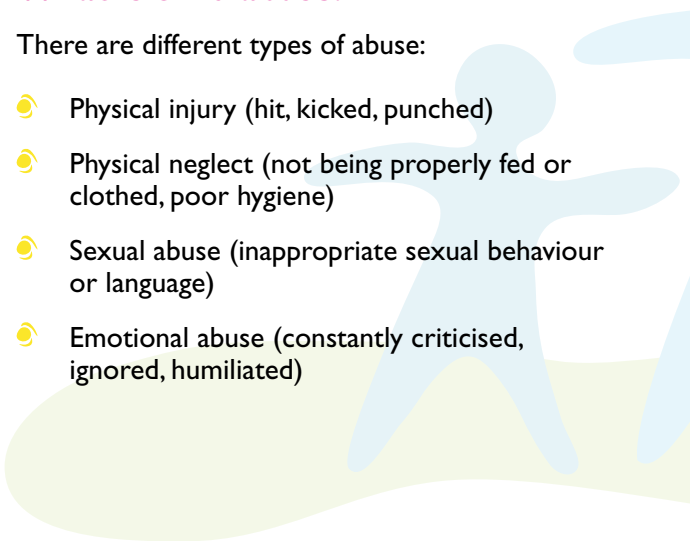
It is everyone's responsibility to protect children.

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
- ☺ Members of the public
- ☺ Professionals

What is child abuse?

There are different types of abuse:

- ☺ Physical injury (hit, kicked, 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- ☉ Appear afraid, quiet or withdrawn
- ☉ Be afraid to go home
- ☉ Appear hungry, tired or unkempt
- ☉ Be left unattended or unsupervised
- ☉ Have too much responsibility for their age
- ☉ Be acting out in a sexually inappropriate way
- ☉ Misusing drugs or alcohol

The adult may be:

- ☉ Acting in a violent or sexual manner towards a child
- ☉ Misusing drugs or alcohol while caring for a child
- ☉ Verbally abusive towards a child.

If you notice any of these signs and/or are worried, please 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, family doctor, 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

If the child is at risk of abuse this information will need to be shared with other agencies.

Will you need to give your 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.

Once you have passed on your concerns someone will get back in touch to confirm appropriate action has been taken.

All children have a right to grow up in a caring and safe environment.

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 enquiries 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. This will include people who have a knowledge of the child and family eg. health visitor, police, teacher, social worker. In a small number of cases, immediate, emergency action may be necessary to protect the child

What might happen if you don't report your concern?

If you have a worry about a child and don't share your concerns a child may be harmed.

List of useful local contact numbers

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

Social Work Resources **0303 123 1008**

Police **101** (and ask for Lanarkshire Family Protection Unit)

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration **0131 244 8701**

ParentLine Scotland **08000 282233**

ChildLine Scotland **0800 1111**

This leaflet has been prepared by South Lanarkshire 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 aim to ensure that all children in our area are protected from harm and given the best possible chance in life.

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs. Phone: 0303 123 1015

Email: equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

www.childprotectionsouthlanarkshire.org.uk