

a guide to
**Child
Protection**



"child protection is everyone's job...it's our job"

www.fifechildprotection.org.uk

What is child protection?

All children have a right to be kept safe and looked after properly, and Child Protection is about keeping children and young people safe and free from harm. Child Protection is also about helping you to understand when you are at risk and what you can do to protect yourself.

Why might adults be worried about a child or young person?

Adults may worry about you if they think you are being harmed in any way. Below are some examples of what harm is.

Physical

Anything that somebody does that hurts a child's body, such as being punched, kicked, hit, burned or scalded, or results in the child being cut or having bones broken.

Neglect

This is where a child is not being looked after properly, such as not having enough food to grow, not having enough clothes to keep warm and dry, not being kept clean and washed, not taking a child to the doctor or hospital when they are ill or injured, being left alone when a child is unable to look after themselves, or where a child has to look after other children for long times



Emotional Abuse

Anything that somebody does which harms a child's mental wellbeing is emotional abuse. Emotional abuse can result in a child feeling small and worthless, unloved, rejected or scared and frightened.

Sexual Abuse

This is where a child is made to see, touch or take part in sexual acts. It can be unwanted kissing or touching, being made to pose for photographs with no clothes on, having to listen to sexual talk, being made to touch other people's private parts, and anyone putting their body parts or other objects inside a child or young person.

What happens when someone thinks a child has been harmed?

When a person is concerned that you may be harmed they will tell a social worker or police officer and it is their job to make sure you are safe and looked after properly.

Normally they will want to speak to you and the person who looks after them. If they want to talk to you, they will ask if you want to see them on your own or with an adult that you trust, such as a relative or teacher. They will speak to you in your own home, or at school, or at a social work office or in a police station, but you can say where you would like to talk to them.

The Police Officer or Social Worker will make written notes of what was said and keep it in their file, but you can ask to see the notes.

Will there be a medical examination?

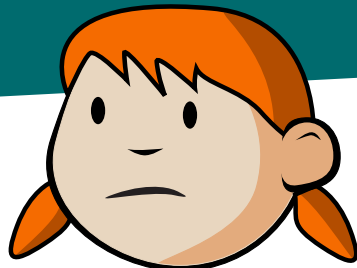
You might be asked to see a doctor if you say that you have been harmed, or other adults such as a police officer or social worker think you have been harmed. The doctor will check the injuries and make sure you are ok. The police might use the information they get from the doctor when they speak to the person who might have harmed you.

If you do not want a doctor to examine you, the doctor will need to decide if they think you are able to understand the reasons for the medical and what might happen if you don't have a medical.

Will you be taken away from home?

Children and young people are usually best looked after by their own family and social workers will work with your family to keep you at home if possible.

The family needs to be able to keep you safe and care for you properly. If this is not possible, you may need to be looked after away from home. The workers will listen to what you think before they decide what should happen. If there is another member of the family, such as a grandparent, aunt or uncle, they might be asked to look after you. If this is not possible, you might have to live with other people, such as a foster carer.



What is a child protection case conference?

A child protection case conference is arranged if there are serious worries that you may not be kept safe or be looked after properly. The case conference is for:

- Sharing information about you and your family
- Talking about their worries and how to help
- Deciding if your name should be placed on the child protection register
- Plan what is needed to make sure you are safe and properly looked after

Who will be at the conference?

If you are able to understand what is happening you will be invited to attend the case conference. The other people who will be asked to go to the conference are:

- Your parents and carers
- Adult friends or family members who can help
- Workers that know you or your family, such as, social worker, teacher, youth worker, school nurse or GP

It is important that the people at the conference know what you think and they will want to know:

- What are the good things about living in your family?
- What are the things you find difficult?
- Who in your family helps you most?
- What do you think would help you and your family?

If you don't go to the conference, it is still important that they know what you think. If you do not wish to speak to any of the people who will attend the conference, you can contact the Fife Children's Rights Officer. The telephone number is on the back of this leaflet.

There is another leaflet about Child Protection Case Conferences that you may want to have a look at.

What is the Child Protection Register?

Every area in Scotland has a Child Protection Register and it is a list of childrens names who are at risk of significant harm. Your name will only be put on the Register after a discussion at a Case Conference, and your name can be taken off the Register after a Review Case Conference. When your name is put on the Register everyone at the Case Conference will help to make a plan to look after you. The small group of people involved in the plan will meet regularly to check that the plan is working and they are called a Core Group. If you are able to understand and go to the Case Conference, you will be able to the Core Group Meetings.

What happens in an emergency?

Sometimes children and young people are unsafe and need to be protected and the only way to help them is to by using legal methods. These are only used if it is the only way to make sure you are safe.



Emergency Powers

In an emergency situation a Police Officer can take you to a place they think you will be safe. This only lasts for 24 hours and after that the Police or another person will have to apply to the Sheriff for a Child Protection Order.

Before the Police or any other person takes emergency action, they will try to work with your family to make you safe at home. Court Orders or emergency action will only be taken where there is no other way to keep you safe.

Exclusion Order

If you are unsafe in you own home because of the way an adult behaves, a court order can be made to stop that adult from coming into the family home, or make the adult stop living there. The Exclusion Order lasts for 6 months and during that time a Social Worker will assess if the excluded adult can go back to the family home.

Child Protection Order

If you are unsafe in you own home, the court could decide that it is safer for you to move to a different home. This order only lasts for 8 days and within 3 working days there must be a Children's Hearing (sometimes called a Children's Panel). If the Hearing decides that the order will continue, the panel will also look at other things, such as, if it is safe for you to visit the people you used to live with, and how often they can visit you.

Child Assessment Order

Sometimes there may be concerns about you, but the Social Worker does not know the best way to help you. In this case, the court can grant a Child Assessment Order, which will say how you will be assessed, who will do it and when they will do it.

More information about keeping **safe from harm**

- **Fife Child Protection Committee**
www.fifechildprotection.org.uk
- **National Child Protection Line**
www.infoscotland.com/childprotection/index.jsp
tel: 0800 022 3222
- **Childline**
www.childlinescotland.org.uk
tel: 0800 1111
- **Crimestoppers**
www.crimestoppers-uk.org/solving/preventingcrime
tel: 0800 555 111
- **Fife Children's Rights**
tel: 01592 265294
email: fifechildrensrights@barnardos.co.uk
- **Social Work Service**
 - Cowdenbeath (tel: 01383 602201)
 - Cupar (tel: 01334 659322)
 - Dunfermline (tel: 01383 609111)
 - Glenrothes (tel: 01592 583321)
 - Kirkcaldy (tel: 01592 583322)
 - Leven (tel: 01334 659323)
 - Rosyth (tel: 01383 602203)
 - Out of Hours (tel: 08451 550099)
- **Police Family Protection Unit**
tel: 01383 312190

This leaflet was given to you by:

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Their telephone number is:

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Fife Child Protection Committee
www.fifechildprotection.org.uk