

Dumfries & Galloway
Child Protection Committee



CHILD PROTECTION BOOKLET



Dumfries
& Galloway
COUNCIL

The vision for all children and young people in Dumfries & Galloway is:

“Children and young people should be protected from abuse, neglect and harm by others at home, at school and in the community.”

“All children have the right to be protected and kept safe from harm”

(European Convention and the Rights of the Child 1989)

Every adult in Scotland has a role in ensuring all our children live safely and can reach their full potential.

The purpose of this booklet is for all staff in agencies and organisations throughout Dumfries & Galloway to:

- know about their responsibilities.
- know what action they need to take; and
- know what to do when they are concerned about a child.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To make sure everyone is aware of their responsibility in protecting children
- To be aware of some of the signs which may indicate risk of harm
- To know where to seek advice when they have concerns
- To understand the need to share information to protect children
- To ensure staff understand the importance of listening to children

SHARING INFORMATION

All staff have a responsibility to act when concerned about a child's safety.

"It is only when information from a range of sources is put together that a child can be seen to be in need or at risk of harm".

(What to do if you are worried a child is being abused DOH 2003)

This includes agencies working with adults who may not have direct contact with children but who should always consider how the adult's behaviour or lifestyle might impact on their ability to safely care for any dependent children, e.g. Substance Misuse Workers.

If you observe something that gives you concern about a child, or if the child or another person tells you something of concern, it is vital that this information is shared with your Line Manager, Agency Adviser or Child Protection

Co-ordinator (schools, nurseries and non-statutory agencies). This information will ensure the appropriate information is shared to ensure children get the help they need when they need it.

THE CHILDREN'S CHARTER

(Scottish Executive 2005)

- Get to know us
- Speak with us
- Listen to us
- Take us seriously
- Involve us
- Respect our privacy
- Be responsible to us
- Think about our lives as whole
- Think carefully about how you use information about us
- Put us in touch with the right people
- Use your power to help
- Make things happen when they should
- Help us be safe

FRAMEWORK FOR STANDARDS

PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

(Scottish Executive 2005)

Eight standards set out what children have the right to expect

1. Children get the help they need when they need it.
2. Professionals take timely and effective action to protect children.
3. Professionals ensure children are listened to and respected.
4. Agencies and professionals share information about children where this is necessary to protect them.
5. Agencies and professionals work together to assess needs and risks and develop effective plans.
6. Professionals are competent and confident.
7. Agencies work in partnership with members of the community to protect children.
8. Agencies, individually and collectively, demonstrate leadership and accountability for their work and its effectiveness.

RECOGNISING WHEN A CHILD MAY BE IN NEED OF PROTECTION

Staff in a variety of settings are in a good position to notice signs or symptoms indicating a child or young person may be in need of help.

Harm or neglect can involve a one off incident or a longer term pattern. Often children will experience harm in more than one way.

Signs of physical abuse or injury may include:

- Injuries not consistent with the child's age or parent's explanation
- Bruises on soft tissue areas e.g. upper legs, buttocks, lower back, cheeks, also neck, mouth or genitals
- Burns or scalds
- Black eyes
- Any injury with implement outlines which suggests by its outline that an implement has been used
- Medical attention delayed or avoided
- There may be signs of behavioural change in the child. The child may be aggressive, may have unexplained absences e.g. from school or nursery.
- Repeated visits to the accident & emergency department

Signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Sexually explicit behaviour and language
- Knowledge beyond age and stage of development
- Sexual transmitted infections
- Pregnancy
- Illness or injury urinary tract infections, bleeding or abdominal pains
- Itchy or painful genital area
- A child may present with self harming, depression, poor personal hygiene, the child may become withdrawn or have overly affectionate behaviour

Signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A nervous and or anxious child who may be withdrawn
- Poor self confidence and self esteem
- Unusual fears or panic attacks
- Emotionally unresponsive
- A child who is socially isolated
- Developmental delay
- Self harming
- The child may have aggressive behaviour towards others
- Attention seeking

Signs of physical neglect:

- A child who is hungry or under weight
- Stealing food
- Untreated illness or injury
- Poor concentration
- Age inappropriate self care skills
- Developmental delays
- Shabby or inappropriately dressed
- Poor hygiene
- Child who is unhappy or distressed
- Victim of bullying
- Tiredness

No list of signs can be conclusive. It is important to bear in mind that other explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms described.

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES

It is important to listen to children and to know what to do if a child discloses or alleges abuse to you.

- Listen carefully
- Let them tell their story
- Do not promise to keep secrets
- Do not show disbelief or panic
- Take the allegations or information seriously and reassure the child or young person
- Avoid expressing your own views on the matter
- Explain that you will have to share the information with someone else.

Do not enquire into the details or make the child repeat their story unnecessarily.

This is the responsibility of Social Work and/or Police who are investigating agencies experienced in interviewing children.

It is important to understand that people may experience strong emotions if they come across signs of children being harmed. This is normal. However, difficult feelings can sometimes act as a barrier that prevents us from recognising when children might be at risk of harm which may, in turn, stop some people taking action to protect the child.

You should seek advice and support from your Line Manager or any member of staff within your organisation who has a lead responsibility for child protection.

What do you do if you have concerns about a child or have information you need to share.

Make sure you know who to speak to in your place of work when you have a concern about a child or young person. This will usually be your Line Manager, Agency Adviser or Child Protection Co-ordinator (schools, nurseries and non-statutory agency).

See the end of this booklet for contact details.

If your Adviser or Line Manager feels the information needs to be shared, a referral to Social Work or the Police will be made.

If you at any time think that a child or young person might be in

immediate danger

please telephone the Police on:

0845 600 5701

When information is shared, Social Work and the Police may talk to colleagues in other agencies, e.g. Health and/or School Services, to gather information that will help them make decisions.

Social Work will usually let the referrer know what happens but will not be able to provide you with details.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REFERRAL IS RECEIVED?

Social Work will make an initial assessment of the referring information and other information they have gathered. They will then make decisions about the most appropriate course of action. This may involve a child protection inquiry which will include a risk assessment. If, as a result of this, a child is thought to be at risk a multi agency meeting, called a Child Protection Case Conference, may be called.

The Child Protection Case Conference will decide whether a child protection plan is needed to protect the child and if so the child's name will be placed on the Child Protection Register.

If the child is not considered to be at risk, but needs help, a support plan will be put in place to meet the needs of the child and family.

Consideration will be given to refer the child or young person to the Children's Reporter, who will decide whether to call a Children's Hearing.

A Children's Hearing will consider whether there needs to be legal measures put in place to meet the child's needs.

Useful Contact Details Specific For Health Staff

NHS Dumfries & Galloway Child Protection Office

Address:

Child Protection Office

Nithbank

Dumfries

DG1 2SD

Telephone: 01387 244572

Nurse Consultant in Child Protection and Vulnerable Children

Trish Gillespie

Tel: 01387 244572

Child Protection Advisers

Eleanor Brodie

Tel: 01387 244419

Mobile: 07736 955 512

Ann Fitzpatrick

Tel: 01387 244419

Mobile: 07736 955 493

Child Protection Trainer/Liaison Nurse for Children in Hospital

Natalie Potts

Tel: 01387 244567

Mobile: 07921 046 437

FOR ALL MEDICAL STAFF - Consultant Paediatrician on Call

Tel: 01387 246246

CHILD PROTECTION ENQUIRY LINE TO CONSULTANT PAEDIATRICIAN

This Child Protection Enquiry Line is to be used when advice is required from the Lead Clinician in Child Protection or if unavailable, and immediate advice is required, the Consultant Paediatrician on call.

This telephone line is to be used only by Medical Staff, Senior Social Work Professionals, Family Protection Unit, Children's Reporter and Procurator Fiscal.

The telephone number is: 01387 739937

In the case of non-urgent calls to Dr Ruth Thomson, Consultant Paediatrician for Child Protection please continue to use: 01387 241306

Directory of Interpreter Services can be accessed on NHS Dumfries & Galloway Intranet

AFTER COMPLETION OF THIS BOOKLET, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU COMPLETE THE ELECTRONIC QUESTIONNAIRE AVAILABLE AT: <http://surveys.citrix.dghealth.scot.nhs.uk/FormServer/mt-childprotection>

The questionnaire is designed to test your knowledge and understanding of Child Protection.

You will be asked a series of questions, each with multiple choice answer options. A score of 100% will allow you to record your details and will verify your completion of the mandatory training.

Your Line Manager will facilitate this for you.

Local Authority Staff

Designated staff (e.g. Child Protection Co-ordinators) needing advice in Education, Social Work & Community Services (including Leisure & Sport and Cultural Services) and the Office of the Chief Executive (including Community Learning & Development) can contact the Senior Child Protection Officer:

Alison Penman
Nithbank
Dumfries
DG1 2SD

Telephone: 01387 244571
Mobile: 07712 666 826
Fax: 01387 244564
E-mail: alisonp@dumgal.gov.uk

NB seeking such advice is not a substitute for making a referral and should not delay concerns being reported to the relevant agencies

Voluntary Sector Staff should contact their local Social Work office for advice - a list of contact details for area offices is attached below.

When contacting Social Work, ask to speak to the Duty Worker

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS (Continued)

Children & Families Social Work 5 Gordon Street Dumfries DG1 1EG	Tel: 01387 260877
Cornerstones 29 Bank Street Annan DG11 2AA	Tel: 01461 207550
72 – 74 George Street Stranraer DG9 7SS	Tel: 01776 706082
Penninghame Centre Auchendoon Road Newton Stewart DG8 6HD	Tel: 01671 403164
Longacres Road Kirkcudbright DG6 4AT	Tel: 01557 339260
49 Main Street Kirkconnel DG4 6NE	Tel: 01659 67601
Social Work - Out of Office Hours West of Scotland Standby	FREEPHONE: 0800 811505
Police and Family Protection Unit	0845 600 5701

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration – Authority
Reporter

3 Newall Terrace
Dumfries
DG1 1BN

Tel: 01387 255734

10 Market Street
Stranraer
DG9 7RF

Tel: 01776 706937

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Web-site:

www.dgcouncil.net/cis/

NHS

Dumfries & Galloway
Intranet for Health Staff

Go to:

(<http://intranet.dghealth.scot.nhs.uk/index.html>)

On the NHS Dumfries & Galloway home page

Go to:

Quick Links

click on:

Child Protection for news, policies and procedures

Scottish Executive website:

www.scot.gov.uk

for Child Protection related documents

