



# **Information on Safeguarding from Cambridgeshire County Council**

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[http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20075/parenting\\_and\\_family\\_support/409/child\\_protection\\_and\\_safeguarding\\_children](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20075/parenting_and_family_support/409/child_protection_and_safeguarding_children)

Child protection involves taking steps to safeguard children and young people at risk or suffering from physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

### What to do if you suspect child abuse

If you are

- concerned that a child may be suffering physical, sexual or emotional abuse or is being neglected
- a child or young person and you are being abused or neglected
- a parent or carer and you feel you are harming your child or are close to doing so

telephone 0345 045 5203 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. If it is outside office hours or at the weekend, call the Emergency Duty Team on 01733 234 724, or the police on 999.

Email: [ReferralCentre.Children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:ReferralCentre.Children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or [referralcentre.childrens@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:referralcentre.childrens@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk).

You can also fax your concern on 01480 376 748.

If you think you or the child is in immediate danger and needs urgent help, please call the police on 999.

### What happens when you call 0345 045 5203?

Your call will be received by the Contact Centre who will

- take details to help them gain a picture of your concerns
- send the information to a specialist team to investigate. This team may then need to call you to follow up on details if you have agreed to be contacted (you can choose to make your referral anonymously).

You can also get advice and help from [NSPCC](#) for all concerns around abuse and neglect, and from [Stop It Now!](#) for concerns around sexual abuse.

Children and young people can also contact [Childline](#) for support and [Youthoria](#) for more information and local contacts.

Cambridgeshire LSCB has information for parents about [child sexual exploitation](#).

For practitioners working with children for more detail see the [policies and procedure page](#).

We work with other organisations across Cambridgeshire through the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure the good practice and effective sharing of information that helps protect children is in place.

Where a child appears to be in danger or at risk we have a legal duty to investigate. When a concern is raised, a worker trained in child protection will investigate, talking to other practitioners, schools, police, health, the child and family concerned, as necessary. If a child is thought to be at serious risk of harm through abuse or neglect a child protection conference will be held to which family members are usually invited. At this meeting a child protection plan may be drawn up to help ensure the safety and welfare of the child(ren) and to help their family care safely for them.

### Signs of child abuse

The following may help you decide whether a child is at risk of abuse, harm or neglect. Children and young people with disabilities may be more vulnerable.

#### Signs which may suggest physical abuse:

- any bruising to a baby - pre-walking stage
- multiple bruising to different parts of the body
- bruising of different colours indicating repeated injuries
- fingertip bruising to the chest, back, arms or legs
- burns of any shape or size
- an injury for which there is no adequate explanation.

#### Signs of possible sexual abuse:

- something a child has told you
- something a child has told someone else
- a child who shows worrying sexualised behaviour in their play or with other children
- a child who seems to have inappropriate sexual knowledge for their age
- a child who may be visiting or being looked after by a known or suspected sex offender.

### Signs which may suggest emotional harm

The following signs may be present in children whose parents are over critical and emotionally distant, or who are unable to meet their child's emotional needs

- children whose behaviour is excessive. For example, excessive bedwetting, overeating, rocking, head banging
- children who self harm. For example, they may cut or scratch themselves or overdose
- children who attempt suicide
- children who persistently run away from home
- children who show high levels of anxiety, unhappiness or withdrawal
- children who usually seek out or avoid affection.

### Signs which may suggest neglect

- squalid, unhygienic or dangerous home conditions
- parents who fail to attend to their children's health or development needs
- children who appear persistently undersized or underweight
- children who continually appear tired or lacking in energy
- children who suffer frequent injuries due to lack of supervision.