

Safeguarding Children in the Coronavirus Crisis

**Information for volunteers, delivery drivers and other workers
in contact with families**

Wakefield
Safeguarding Children
Partnership

Safeguarding is Everyone's Business

COVID-19 lockdown can be difficult for children and families.

Harm to children might increase.

Children are not being seen regularly by the people who used to see them like school staff or health professionals.

Your role as a volunteer or delivery driver might be crucial in recognising a child who needs help.

When out and about Remember the 4 R's

Recognise – Understand basic signs and indicators of abuse.

Respond – Be curious. If you are concerned ask: Are you ok? Do you feel safe? Tell me what happened?

Record – This means write it down, you might be given a special form to do this, if not make a note on a notebook.

Refer – This means tell someone. Every Community Hub will have a Designated Safeguarding Officer, make sure all concerns are recorded and passed to them, if not follow the advice here and speak to your manager.

What is Safeguarding?

- Safeguarding is everybody's concern. Harm or abuse of an adult or child can happen anywhere and be perpetrated by anyone.
- Abuse is an action or a lack of action on the part of another person that causes harm.
- Abuse can be, but is not always, a criminal offence.
- Abuse is a violation of a person's human and civil rights.
- Abuse may constitute domestic abuse/violence or hate crime.
- Abuse or neglect may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.
- It is acknowledged that abuse or neglect can take many forms.

Safeguarding **Children** – Types of abuse

Are there children in the home you are visiting? Types of abuse to look out for:

- **Exploitation** - involves being groomed, forced or coerced into doing something that you don't want to do for someone else's gain
- **Online abuse** - is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web.
- **Physical abuse** - is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose.
- **Sexual abuse** – is when a child or young person is sexually abused, they're forced or tricked into performing sexual acts.
- **Domestic Abuse** - is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse.
- **Neglect** - is the on-going failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.

Remember, children with a disability (visible or hidden) are at greater risk of abuse.

Safeguarding **Children** – Types of abuse

Other vulnerabilities

- **Toxic Trio** – a term used to describe the issues of domestic abuse, mental ill-health and substance misuse which have been identified as common features of families where harm to children and adults has occurred
- **Self-Harm** - is when somebody intentionally damages or injures their body. It's usually a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress.
- **Bullying** – Behaviour that is repeated, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It takes many forms and can include: physical assault, teasing, making threats, name calling
cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Safeguarding **Adults** – Types of abuse

- **Neglect** - this is where a person's medical or physical care needs are ignored, or withholding basic needs such as food, medication and heating.
- **Self-Neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour and can include a person neglecting to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings which can have a direct impact on their safety, health and wellbeing.
- **Physical Abuse** – this is where harm is caused to a person. It can include being hit, kicked, and burnt or being given the wrong medication.
- **Psychological Abuse** – This is where an individual controls, intimidates or verbally abuses the adult involved.
- **Financial Abuse** – this is where someone misuses your property or finances, steals from you or commits fraud. It can also include the misuse of funds attached to personal budgets.
- **Domestic Abuse** – this is abuse or neglect which arises from within an intimate or family relationship and can include physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse.
- **Exploitation** - Exploitation can be a common theme in the experience of abuse or neglect. It can be where somebody uses another person for profit, or financial advantage.

Identifying Concerns

You might be worried because:

- An adult or child tells you they have been harmed.
- You see or hear something that concerns you.
- When something 'doesn't appear right' to you.
- You are told about an allegation of abuse by someone else.

Remember, Remember...

- Keep yourself and others safe.
- Report any thing you are concerned about.
- Doing nothing is not an option.

Responding to abuse

- If you have concerns make a record of the details as soon as possible, using the words of the person or record what you have seen.
- Don't ask too many questions or interview the person that you have seen or spoken to.

Signs to look out for...

- House/Garden in unsafe state – anyone can have an untidy garden but if it is unsafe for example broken glass/drugs or door / windows smashed live for a child living in these conditions might not be so good and you should report.
- Children or adults looking unkempt –dirty/hungry/cold/ old soiled nappy/on their own at home when they seem to o young to be left alone.
- Odd looking bruises that you wouldn't expect to see. Bite marks. Cigarette burns. Black eyes. Split lips. Grab marks. Marks around neck. Defence marks on arms. Cuts to wrists.
- Adults under the influence of substances, drunk or seemed stoned when looking after children i.e. incapable of looking after the children properly.
- Loud arguments and conflict in front of children.

Signs to look out for...

- Children who are overly affectionate to strangers – there can be different reasons for this but abuse can be one.
- Child showing signs they are scared to be at home.
- All curtains always drawn, even on warm days, may lead us to be curious.
- Aggressive/reckless behaviour, more so than normal teenager behaviour.
- Any behaviour that indicates a breakdown of mental health.
- A young person taking on adult responsibilities on a regular basis may indicate extra support is needed in that family.

Use of Social Media

Social media is a really powerful which enables people in the district know about services that are available to them in this difficult time.

You can use social media to:

- Promote the services you are offering
- Let people know central contact details in case they need support
- Show general photographs/videos of some of the items you can support them with

Do not use social media to post:

- Pictures or videos of individuals receiving the support i.e. a food parcel, medication
- Pictures or videos that can clearly identify the front door / street of those individuals receiving support i.e. food parcel, medication

Using photographs and videos of those receiving support could lead to these individuals been targeted and exploited by criminals.

Once videos and pictures are available on these platforms, organisations can lose control of how they are used **and other people can use information from posts to identify and exploit or abuse people you are trying to help.**

Where pictures and videos are being used by organisations they will need to seek written permission from those people in the picture/video, clearly explaining how it will be used and how long it will be kept for.

Data Protection

Take care and look after the personal information of others just as you would like to see your personal information being treated, and be careful when handling someone else's personal information.

- If you make a record of information you must keep that information safe and secure until you can hand that information over to the safeguarding lead within the safeguarding hub.
- Do take care if you have to visit people that you do not leave any copies of someone else's personal information behind.
- If you have a concern about someone or make a record, only share that information with the safeguarding lead – do not discuss or share personal information with others about the individuals who you have been asked to support. This includes your family and friends.
- If you receive information in paper format, ensure this is kept safe at all times, and where others cannot view the contents.
- If you receive information electronically, ensure that it is only you who has access to that information.
- If you speak to someone on the telephone, ensure that you verify that you are talking to the intended individual and that no one can overhear the conversation.

Do not wait if you think someone's personal information has gone missing or if a mistake has happened, as information could fall into the wrong hands. Report this immediately to your nominated point of contact or in to the safeguarding hub.

Remember, safeguarding people's information is part of safeguarding.

If you are worried or someone has told you something that make you feel concerned - share your concerns.

What to do

- If you have a concern about someone you are working with or have come into contact please speak to the safeguarding lead within your designated Hub for further advice.
- If you are not connected to a hub, or are unsure, please contact the services below:

For concerns regarding a child or adult

- During office hours call MASH on 03458 503503 (8.30am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday).
- Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team Telephone: 03458 503 503.

To register for basic safeguarding online training please visit:

www.wakefieldscp.org.uk/training-courses/