

Information for
Children & Young People

Child Protection Investigations



ChildProtection
Perth & Kinross



All children have the right to be kept safe from harm. Everybody in society has a responsibility to ensure that children are safe and to tell someone if they are worried that a child is being harmed. Many people who are involved with children such as Teachers, Social Workers, Health Visitors and family members report their worries when they think a child that they know is being harmed or might be at risk of being harmed.

This leaflet explains what will happen if someone has reported that they are worried about you.

Why are adults worried about you?

Adults may worry about you if they think you are being harmed in any way at all. For example if:

- *someone hit, kicked, punched, burned or scalded you;*
- *someone spoke to you in a way that made you feel sad or uncomfortable;*
- *someone did something to you that made you feel uncomfortable;*
- *someone constantly criticised or ignored you, or made you feel frightened or unhappy a lot of the time;*
- *you are living in the same house as, or spending time with, another person who has hurt a child in the past;*
- *you are not being properly fed, clothed or kept clean;*
- *you are being left on your own or taking too much responsibility;*
- *your health is not being looked after properly.*

What happens next?

If someone is seriously worried about you they will tell a Social Worker or Police Officer and it is their job to make sure you are safe and looked after properly. The Social Worker may come and speak to you at home or at school, or in a room at the local social work department or police station. Sometimes a Police Officer may also want to speak with you and your family. You could speak to them with another adult that you know and trust, or on your own. Most of the time they will want to meet you, and the person looking after you, to talk about the worries about you, your safety and what can be done to make sure you are kept safe and properly looked after. They will also want to speak to other adults who know you, such as other members of your family and your teacher to decide how best to help you.

Will I be taken away from home?

Children are usually best looked after by their own family. Social Workers will work with you and your family to keep you at home if possible.

If it is not possible for your family to look after you and keep you safe, you may need to be looked after away from home. Your Social Worker will listen to your views and take them into account as far as possible in deciding what to do. If there is another member of your family who can help to look after you they may be asked to help. If this is not possible you may be cared for by foster carers.

If you are cared for by foster carers your Social Worker and the other adults who are involved in looking after you will make a plan for helping you to return home as quickly as possible, if this is what is best for you.

What could happen afterwards?

When the Social Worker has spoken to everyone involved, they will speak to you and the person looking after you to talk about what will happen next. It may be decided that:

- *you are safe and being well looked after, and that you do not need help from a Social Worker;*
- *you may need a Social Worker to help your family to look after you and keep you safe;*
- *a meeting called a Child Protection Conference may be called to make a plan to make sure that you are being kept safe.*

There is a separate leaflet that tells you about the Child Protection Register and Child Protection Case Conferences.

Who can I talk to?

If you have any questions, or need advice, you can speak to:

- *your Social Worker*
- *your teacher*
- *other people that you know and trust*
- *Childline (phone: 0800 1111) - calls are free*

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only, a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Communications Manager on 01738 476873.



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