

Keeping Children Safe

A Guide for Parents
and Carers





You and your child

This leaflet gives you information about how to keep your child safe, but also what to do if you are concerned about a child or young person who you know. It has been developed by your Local Safeguarding Children Board. We work with local agencies to ensure that we are all safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

The law says that a child is anyone under the age of 18. We have different concerns about our children, depending on their age, circumstances and abilities. The information provided here should be considered for all children and young people up until their 18th birthday.

PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS WHO LOOK AFTER YOUR CHILD

There are many different types of organisations and workers with whom your child may be involved. You need to be able to reassure yourself that your child's safety and wellbeing is protected.

PEOPLE WHO LOOK AFTER YOUR CHILD

May include

\\babysitters \\childminders \\crèche workers \\volunteers
\\nannies \\your new partner or a partner of people close to you
\\step relatives \\in-laws \\brothers and sisters \\parents of your children's friends

Ask yourself...

\\What do I know about this person? \\Do I know this person well enough before I trust them with my child? \\If I am employing them, can they provide trustworthy references? \\Do I have their address and telephone number and do they have mine? \\Is my child happy to talk about what they do together?



ORGANISATIONS WHO LOOK AFTER YOUR CHILD

May include

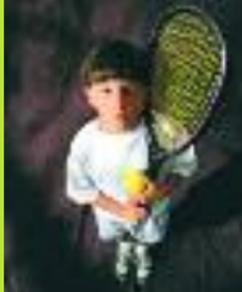
\\nurseries \\primary and secondary schools
\\residential schools \\school bus \\taxi drivers
and escorts \\midday supervisors \\after
school activities \\traffic crossing wardens \\colleges \\private
music teachers \\private tutors \\adult activities that provide
child care

\\Uniformed activities \\cinema/bowling \\sports clubs \\martial
arts \\music lessons \\hobby clubs \\theatre and drama
\\outdoor pursuits \\swimming \\ice skating \\dance \\activities
in public parks

\\Churches \\mosques \\madrassahs \\Sunday schools
\\temples \\synagogues \\chapels \\house church or youth
groups in someone's home

Ask yourself...

\\Does the organisation have a child protection policy that I can
have a copy of? \\Have they done checks on staff and
volunteers? \\Will my child be supervised by a safe adult at all
times? \\Are there adequate staff for the numbers of children?
\\Do they keep my child safe with good security? \\Is there an
effective anti-bullying strategy? \\Do the adults create a happy
atmosphere and treat the children with respect? \\Are my
child's specific needs being properly catered for? \\Is my child
happy to tell me about activities and people? \\Have I got any
concerns about the organisation or people associated with it?
\\Do the staff have my details and know how to contact me?



PREVENTING ACCIDENTS



Accidental injuries can have a major impact on the health of your child. They are the commonest cause of death in children over the age of 1. Every year accidents can leave many thousands of children and young people permanently disfigured or injured. Most of these accidents are preventable through increased awareness, improvements in the home environment and greater product safety.

Ask yourself ... How can I make our house safe for my child?
\\What injuries are they most at risk from (this may depend on their age and ability)? \\Does my child always use a car seat appropriate to their age? \\Do I keep all medicines and poisons out of reach? \\Do I regularly test the smoke alarm batteries?

For further information and advice contact the Child Accident Prevention Trust www.capt.org.uk (0207 608 3828).

YOU AND OTHER PEOPLE'S CHILDREN

\\ Licensed premises – be aware that children may be at risk in pubs, clubs and other public venues if they are not properly supervised, if the adults they are with become intoxicated, if they themselves are allowed to drink alcohol or if the surroundings are unsuitable.

\\ Domestic abuse and violence – it is important to remember that children are always affected by living in an atmosphere of domestic abuse, whether or not they are directly abused themselves.

\\ Looking after someone else's child – this is also known as private fostering. If you know of a child or young person under the age of 16 who is living informally for more than 28 days with adults who are not members of their family, the Local Authority must be informed so that a social worker can visit and check the arrangements.

INTERNET AND MOBILE PHONES

Many children and teenagers spend a lot of time on the computer or their mobile phone, which may have Internet access. The Internet is a fabulous and exciting way of communicating, learning, and accessing other types of information. However, we need to make sure that our children are using it safely.

Some adults who want to abuse children use the Internet to access them. \\They often pose as children themselves \\Abusive or offensive images can cause psychological damage to children who are exposed to them. Child abuse images can also be obtained and exchanged via the Internet \\Emails, Internet chat rooms, web cams, online gaming and mobile phones can be used to bully and exploit children and young people, and to send inappropriate images \\Children and young people can be exploited financially through scams and online gaming.



Ask yourself...

\\How much do I know about what web sites my child is visiting? \\How can I make it safe for my child to learn and communicate with friends on the Internet? \\How do I get parental controls installed to prevent my child accessing unsuitable websites? \\What ground rules do I set about the amount of time my child spends online? \\Have I warned my child about being careful who they give their mobile phone number and email address to?

For further information contact: www.thinkuknow.co.uk for information on internet safety; www.digizen.org for information on cyberbullying; www.ceop.gov.uk (0870 000 3344) to report child abuse; or www.iwf.org.uk to report Internet material that you think may be illegal.

SLEEPING SAFELY WITH YOUR BABY

Babies may be at risk of dying suddenly in their sleep. This is often known as cot death. \\But there are things you can do to reduce this risk. For the first six months, your baby should sleep in your room in a cot.

Ask yourself...

\\Do I, or my partner, smoke? \\Have I taken any drugs that may make me feel drowsy? \\Have I drunk any alcohol? \\Am I very tired? \\Was my baby born before 37 weeks, or had a low birth weight? If so, it is particularly dangerous for your baby to sleep in your bed.

\\Ask your midwife or health visitor for more information or contact the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths www.fsid.org.uk (0207 233 2090).

IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON WHO YOU KNOW

Everyone has a responsibility to report any concerns they have that a child or young person is being neglected or abused. Professionals can only become involved in helping a child, if we know that the family is having problems. We need people to tell us about their concerns. You don't have to give us your name if you do not want to.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person there are a number of ways you can let us know. You can speak in confidence to a professional you know, e.g. a teacher at the local school, staff at the children's centre, a health visitor or doctor, and they will ensure your worries are passed on and their situation is looked into.

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child contact:

Duty and Assessment Service
01924 326097 / 326076 / 431429

or out of hours 01484 414933

In an emergency you should always ring 999

If you have any doubts about sharing or reporting your concerns

Don't think What if I'm Wrong – Think What if I'm Right

Keeping Children Safe is Everybody's Business

If you would like this leaflet in any other language, please contact us on 01484 225161