

**Children and Families**  
**“Working together to safeguard children”**

## **A Guide for Children and Young People**

### **Child Protection Enquiries**

**What happens when someone  
is worried about my safety?**



**All children have the right to be kept safe and looked after and it is everyone’s job to make sure this happens. This guide explains what happens if someone reports that they are worried about you.**

**A separate leaflet for children and young people is available on Child Protection Conferences and Child Protection Plans.**

**Produced by Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board**

## **What happens if someone is worried about my safety?**

If someone reports that they are worried about your safety, or concerned that you are being neglected, we will look into the facts and talk with you, your family and colleagues from other agencies. Examples of agencies are Social Services, the police, health or education.

It is difficult bringing up children and some parents and carers need help and support but don't like to ask. This means that it is often adults who notice something is wrong and worry if they think you are being harmed in any way. Sometimes, however, it is children themselves who are concerned about how they are being treated

## **What should I do if I am concerned about my own safety?**

If you are worried about how you are being treated, you should discuss your situation in confidence with someone that you trust such as your teacher, GP, health visitor or social worker who will listen to what you say and take appropriate action to have your concerns investigated.

## **Who will talk to me?**

A social worker, police officer, or sometimes both will wish to speak to you. You could meet with them on your own or with another adult that you know and trust. The adult could be a relative, your teacher or someone else who knows you well.

You may be asked some questions and if there are suspicions raised about you being hurt or harmed in any way, you may be asked to agree to be examined by a doctor. The police and social workers are specially trained and will understand any concerns you may have.

## **Will I be taken away from my parents/carers?**

Children are usually best looked after by their own family so the people involved in child protection enquiries will share information and assess whether your parents/carers can continue to look after you with extra help. In most cases, children remain with their parents during these enquiries but only if it is considered safe to do so.

If we are satisfied that you will be safe to continue living at home, we will arrange for help to be provided. But, the situation will be monitored until there are no significant concerns for your safety and any risk has gone.

## **Where will I go if I am removed from my parents/carers?**

Although we prefer children and young people to stay with their parents/carers, it is not always possible, due to concerns for your safety and/or welfare. In such cases, we try to arrange for other family members to look after you but if that isn't possible, we arrange for you to stay with foster carers unless a more permanent option is thought necessary.

## **What happens next?**

When the social worker has spoken to everyone involved, they will speak to you and the person looking after you to talk about what happens next. This could be:

- Not taking any further action;
- Offering you and the person looking after you help to keep you safe; or
- A meeting called an 'initial child protection conference' to plan what is needed to keep you safe and looked after properly. This is a meeting where agencies come together to discuss how best to keep you safe.

## **If I'm not living with my parents/carers, will I be able to return?**

If you are removed from your parents/carers during the enquiries you will be able to return once social services and the police are satisfied that your parents/carers have made any improvements necessary.

## **What if I am not happy with the outcome or the way things have been handled?**

If you are not happy with the decision or the way things have been handled you should contact your social worker or the person leading the Initial Child Protection Conference and let them know the details. This gives them the chance to put things right and/or fully explain the decisions made. If you are not satisfied with the response you get you can make a complaint, which the social worker or chair person will advise you about.

## Useful information

My social worker's name is:

Telephone Number

E-mail