

CHILD PROTECTION - WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

A children and young people's guide to the child protection process in Wrexham



Issued by
Wrexham Local Safeguarding Children Board

If you would like information in another language or format, please ask us.
Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie,
prosimy dać nam znać.
Se deseja obter informação noutra idioma ou formato, diga-nos.

إذا أردت المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، نرجو أن تطلب ذلك منا.

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

اگر این اطلاعات را به زبانی دیگر و یا در فرمتی دیگر میخواهید لطفاً از ما درخواست کنید

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे

شہر زانیاریت به زمانیکی که یا به فورمیکی که دهوی تکایه داوامان لی بکه

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

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What is this leaflet for?

This is to explain what the child protection process is and where you fit in.

The whole process is there to help you with any problems you are having and to keep you safe.

When anyone has concerns that you might be harmed someone has to check what is going on and decide what they need to do to make sure you are safe. This is called a 'child protection investigation'.

What will happen in the child protection investigation?

- A social worker or police officer will need to speak with you in private. This might be done in a special house where they can record what you say on DVD, so that you don't have to repeat what you have said to anyone else.
- If you have any questions or don't understand what is happening, do ask. The police and social workers know that this is a difficult time and want to make it as easy as possible for you.
- Depending on your situation, you may be asked if you will agree to see a doctor for a medical examination. You have a choice as to whether you have a medical or not. The doctor will explain why they want to do this and ask you or your parents for permission. Again, please don't be afraid to ask the doctor any questions.

Who else will be involved?

The social worker will need to speak to your family and other people who are involved in your life - perhaps your teacher or doctor.

Only the people who need to know what you say will be told. Your friends will not find out about anything unless you want to tell them.

What will happen next?

The social worker's job is to make sure you are safe. If you have been harmed at home and they think you are still at risk there, you may need to stay somewhere else while they find ways of dealing with that risk.

The next step is for the social worker to arrange a child protection meeting (called a Child Protection Conference).

What is a Child Protection Conference?

It's a meeting that social workers and other people have when they think that you are at risk of being harmed. If you are over 10 you will be asked if you want to go to the child protection meeting.

Should I go?

- You can talk about that with your social worker and decide whether you want to go or not.
- What YOU think is important.
- If you don't want to say things yourself you can write down what you want to say or ask the social worker or somebody else to say it for you.
- If you decide to come you can bring someone with you to support you such as a relative or an advocate (an independent adult whose job is to speak on behalf of children and young people).
- If you need an interpreter or help to understand the paperwork or what is going on, speak to your social worker.

What will happen on the day?

- The meeting will be run by a person known as the 'chairperson' or 'chair'. They will sit at the end of the table and make sure that everyone has a turn to speak. You will be invited to meet them before the meeting starts so that you know who they are, and you can ask any questions you want to about what is going to happen.
- The chairperson will meet with one or both of your parents beforehand as well. You can choose whether you want to meet them with or without your parents there, or not at all.
- Even if you don't want to go to the meeting, you can go and talk to the chairperson if you want to, and tell them about anything you want to happen.

The social worker will have written a report, and you should have a chance to meet with them before the conference and talk about the report with them.

Who else will be at the meeting?

- Your parents or whoever looks after you
- Other people who know you and your family, for example teachers or a school nurse
- Your social worker
- Other people you may not know (for example the police) but who may know your family.



What will happen at the meeting?

At the beginning everyone will introduce themselves and say why they are there. Then they will take turns to say what they know about you and your family - the things that are going well, the difficulties you may be having and why you might be at risk of being harmed.

Everything that is said at the meeting is confidential.

Then the chairperson will ask them to decide whether your name should be put on the Child Protection Register. The register is a list of children who are thought to be in need of protection. If they do decide to put your name on, then they will talk a bit about what needs to be done to make sure that you're safe.

Does that mean that I'll get taken away from my family?

Only if you'd be in danger if you stayed where you were. Most children and young people whose names are put on the register can stay at home. If the people at the meeting think that you are not safe at home, they will tell the social worker that they think they should go to court. They will need a court order or your parents or carers will need to agree for you to be taken away from home.

Will I get a chance to ask questions and say what I want to happen?

Yes.

- ✓ The chairperson will ask you whether you have any questions or want to say anything.
- ✓ You may want to choose who to sit next to, so that you can ask them to tell everyone at the meeting that you want to say something.
- ✓ Or you can write down what you want to say and ask someone to read it out.

✓ If you need an interpreter so that you can sign or talk in your first language your social worker should arrange one.

Some examples of questions you might want to ask are:

- Can I go and stay with my nan?
- I'm being bullied at school – can you do anything to stop it?
- Who else will get to know - will it be a secret?

How will I know what's happened if I don't go?

Your social worker will explain to you what was said at the meeting and what was decided. The people at the meeting keep a record of what is said, and they will ask you if you want a copy.

What if I'm not happy with what they decide?

We hope that you'll get every chance to have your say at each stage, and the adults should listen carefully to what you say. That doesn't always mean that they make the decision that you'd like, as they have to look at it from a different point of view from you.

We aim to be sensitive to the cultural and other needs of children young people and their families. If you think there is a problem with this, tell your social worker or someone else as early as possible so that it can be put right.

You can appeal against the decision the child protection meeting has made even if you didn't go. You can also complain to a particular organisation if you think things haven't been done properly. Ask your social worker or the chairperson of the conference how to do this, or you may want to phone or e-mail one of these (contact details are at the end of this leaflet):

NYAS - National Youth Advocacy Service.

Second Voice (advocacy service based in Wrexham)

What if I don't want to ask my social worker what's going on?

All adults who work with children and young people have a responsibility to keep them safe, so if you don't feel confident talking to the social worker, you could ask someone else you know and trust - perhaps one of your teachers, your doctor or a youth worker. If they don't know the answers to your questions they will be able to talk to someone for you and find out.

Remember, if you don't understand or need to know anything, ask!!!

Your social worker is.....

You can contact him/her at.....

If he/she isn't there ask for.....

Other useful contacts for you are.....

.....

.....

.....

Other useful phone numbers (all Freefone)

Second Voice 0800 0322630

NYAS 0800 616101

Childline: 0800 1111

If you are in immediate danger phone the police on 999!



You can call in at The INFO shop behind the People's Market for all sorts of information. They can also give you a form for Second Voice, and they will be able to help you to fill it in.

You can e-mail INFO shop/ Second Voice on infoshop@wrexham.gov.uk NYAS on help@nyas.net

You can text NYAS on 0777 333 4555

Or you can try these websites

www.youngwrexham.co.uk

www.wrexham.gov.uk/lscb/advice_for_children

www.childline.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.donthideit.com

www.kidscape.org.uk (on bullying)

With special thanks to the young people and adults from Second Voice for their helpful ideas and suggestions in preparing this leaflet

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