

CHILD PROTECTION: CONCERNS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM

IMPACT ON/ ABUSE OF THE CHILD IDENTIFIED	VULNERABILITY FACTOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Sexual Exploitation • Emotional Abuse • Neglect • Physical Abuse • Sexual Abuse • Child Trafficking • Criminal Exploitation • Female Genital Mutilation • Honour-Based Abuse and/or Forced Marriage • Internet-Enabled Sexual Offending • Underage Sex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services Finding It Hard to Engage • Domestic Abuse • Parental Alcohol Use • Parental Drug Use • Child affected by parent/ carer mental ill-health • Other Concern • Parent(s)/ Carer(s) with Learning Disability • Child experiencing mental health problems • Child displaying harmful sexual behaviour • Online safety

IMPACT ON/ ABUSE OF THE CHILD IDENTIFIED

Child Sexual Exploitation	Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse in which a person or persons of any age take advantage of a power imbalance to force or entice a child into engaging in sexual activity, in return for something received by the child and/or those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. As with other forms of child sexual abuse, the presence of perceived consent does not excuse or mitigate the abusive nature of the act.
Emotional Abuse	<p>Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. 'Persistent' means there is a continuous or intermittent pattern which has caused, or is likely to cause, significant harm. Emotional abuse is present to some extent in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse. It may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person • exploitation or corruption of a child, or imposition of demands inappropriate for their age or stage of development • repeated silencing, ridiculing or intimidation • demands that so exceed a child's capability that they may be harmful • extreme overprotection, such that a child is harmed by prevention of learning, exploration and social development • seeing or hearing the abuse of another (in accordance with the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018)
Neglect	Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. 'Persistent' means there is a pattern which may be continuous or intermittent which has caused, or is likely to cause significant harm. However, single instances of neglectful behaviour by a person in a position of responsibility can be significantly harmful. Early signs of neglect indicate the need for support to prevent harm. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers), or to seek consistent access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
Physical Abuse	Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after
Sexual Abuse	Child sexual abuse (CSA) is an act that involves a child under 16 years of age in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening

Child Trafficking	Child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt, exchange or transfer of control of a child under the age of 18 years for the purposes of exploitation. Transfer or movement can be within an area and does not have to be across borders. Examples of trafficking can include sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs, illegal adoption, and forced or illegal marriage.
(new) Criminal Exploitation	Criminal exploitation refers to the action of an individual or group using an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. Violence or the threat of violence may feature. The victim may have been criminally exploited, even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation may involve physical contact and may also occur through the use of technology. It may involve gangs and organised criminal networks. Sale of illegal drugs may be a feature. Children may be exploited to move and store drugs and money. Coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons may be involved.
(new) Female Genital Mutilation	This extreme form of physical, sexual and emotional assault upon girls and women involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Such procedures are usually conducted on children and are a criminal offence in Scotland. FGM can be fatal and is associated with long-term physical and emotional harm.
(new) Honour-Based Abuse and/or Forced Marriage	A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the full and free consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional abuse. Forced marriage is both a child protection and adult protection matter. Child protection processes will be considered up to the age of 18. Forced marriage may be a risk alongside other forms of so called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA). HBA includes practices used to control behaviour within families, communities, or other social groups, to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or 'honour'.
(new) Internet-Enabled Sexual Offending	Internet-enabled sexual offending includes possession, exchange and distribution of indecent images of and/or with children (IIOC); production of IIOC; sexual solicitation (online interaction with minors for sexual purposes); non-consensual sharing of sexual images; and conspiracy crimes such as working with others to distribute IIOC or to solicit children.
(new) Underage Sex	Child protection concerns arise when the impact of under-age sexual activity could cause significant harm. In Scotland the law states that a young child (under 13 years of age) cannot consent to any form of sexual activity (section 27 of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009). An IRD must also be convened with older children (over 13 years) who may have been pressured in to sexual activities involving force or exploitation, may have had indecent images taken, suggesting abuse or exploitation, or may otherwise be at risk of significant harm relating to sexual activity.

VULNERABILITY FACTOR

<p>Services Finding It Hard to Engage <i>(changed from Non-Engaging Family)</i></p>	<p>Terms: 'Resistance' and 'disguised compliance' (usually meaning disguised non-compliance or non-effective compliance), are terms sometimes used when services find it hard to engage with families. Such terms imply that the location of responsibility for this block lies with children and families. 'Non-engagement' covers a spectrum of failures that are all a product of interaction. The tone of engagement and painful previous experience of services may both play a part. Non-engagement on the part of service users may take the form of aggression, manipulation, concealment, superficiality, blaming and 'splitting' professionals, inaction or selective action. Children who experience frequent changes of address within such a pattern may be at increased risk.</p>
<p>Domestic Abuse</p>	<p>Domestic abuse is any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship may be between partners (married, cohabiting, in a civil partnership or otherwise), or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere, including online.</p>
<p>Parental Alcohol Use <i>(changed from Parental Alcohol Misuse)</i></p>	<p>Children affected by parental alcohol and drug use may experience neglect, feelings of fear, blame, abandonment, anger and shame. Children who may not be recognised as Young Carers may have to care for children, or for adults. Secrecy and denial are recurrent features within families affected by alcohol and drug use. Divisions occur within families where there is pressure to contain knowledge of substance use. Children's potential to experience and develop trusting, secure relationships are compromised.</p> <p>Harm may be multi-dimensional, affecting physical and mental health and development, relationships, behaviour, identity and survival. This could include physical and neurological damage, or death in utero. Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is the leading known worldwide preventable cause of neurodevelopmental disorder, with maternal use of alcohol during pregnancy leading to learning and behavioural difficulties. It potentially has lifelong implications, affecting not just babies and children but also young people, and adults and their families, who will be living with the impact of the condition.</p>
<p>Parental Drug Use <i>(Changed from Parental Drug Misuse)</i></p>	<p>Children affected by parental alcohol and drug use may experience neglect, feelings of fear, blame, abandonment, anger and shame. Children who may not be recognised as Young Carers may have to care for children, or for adults. Secrecy and denial are recurrent features within families affected by alcohol and drug use. Divisions occur within families where there is pressure to contain knowledge of substance use. Children's potential to experience and develop trusting, secure relationships are compromised.</p>

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<p>Child affected by parent/ carer mental ill-health</p> <p><i>(Changed from Parental Mental Health Problems)</i></p>	<p>Poor parental health (for both mothers and fathers, both mental and physical) can be a contributor to mental health problems in children and young people. The stigma associated with mental health problems means that many families are reluctant to access services because of a fear about what will happen next. Parents and carers may worry about being judged, and that they will be deemed incapable of caring for their children.</p> <p>Emotional accessibility and the reliability of parents or carers is a key feature of child protection assessment, and should be an objective in the planning of support. Children are affected when a parent is unable to anticipate or prioritise his or her needs, or by a parent's distress, disturbance, delusions and lack of insight.</p>
<p>Other Concern</p>	<p>Any other concerns not in the list of vulnerability factors and impacts on the child.</p>
<p>(new) Parent(s)/ Carer(s) with Learning Disability</p>	<p>A learning disability affects a person's development, can be significant, and will be lifelong. This means that a person with a learning disability may need help to understand information, learn skills and live a fulfilling life. Some people with learning disabilities also have specific healthcare needs and require support to communicate. Parents with a learning disability are often confused by services and disproportionately affected by poverty, social isolation, stress, mental health problems, low literacy and communication difficulties. An estimated 40-60% of parents with a learning disability do not live with their children. The children of parents with a learning disability are more likely than any other group of children to be removed from their parents' care.</p>
<p>(new) Child experiencing mental health problems</p>	<p>Children can experience a range of mental health problems, from depression and anxiety through to psychosis. While most will recover, many are left with unresolved difficulties or undiagnosed illnesses that can follow them into adult life. Parents and carers may be bewildered or frightened by their child's behaviour, or concerned that they are the cause of such behaviour.</p> <p>A small number of children with mental health problems may pose risks to themselves and others. For some, their vulnerability, suggestibility and risk levels may be heightened as a result of their mental ill health. For others, a need to control, coupled with lack of insight into or regard for the feelings and needs of others, may</p>

	<p>lead to them preying on the vulnerabilities of other children. Co-ordinated inter-agency work, and close collaboration with parents or carers, is essential to mitigate risks for these children and for others.</p>
<p>(new) Child displaying harmful sexual behaviour</p>	<p>Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is defined as 'sexual behaviour(s) expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others and/ or may be abusive towards another child or young person or adult'.</p> <p>Some young people sexually abuse other young people. Harmful sexual behaviour may be within the context of relationships, or it may be exploitative abuse that falls within the definition of child sexual exploitation. Both forms of harm may co-occur.</p> <p>Where a child or young person displays sexual behaviour that may cause significant harm, immediate consideration should be given as to whether action should be taken under child protection procedures, in order to protect the victim and to tackle concerns about what has caused the child/young person to behave in such a way.</p>
<p>(new) Online safety</p>	<p>Online child abuse is any type of abuse that occurs in the digital environment and the internet, facilitated through technology and devices such as computers, tablets, mobile phones, gaming devices and other online-enabled devices. If abusive content is recorded, uploaded or shared by others online, there is a risk of on-going experience of abuse. Online abuse can include online bullying; emotional abuse and blackmail; sharing of intimate images; grooming behaviour, coercion and preparatory behaviour for abuse including radicalisation; child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation as described above. Perpetrators may be strangers, family members, friends or professionals.</p>
<p>(Removed) Child Placing Themselves at Risk</p>	<p>This term is no longer used as it implies that the child is responsible for any harm and abuse that they experience, which is a form of victim blaming. Instead, identify the specific harm that they are at risk of experiencing, and/or that which they may impact on others, plus any vulnerability factors that may contribute towards or exacerbate the circumstances in which that harm is likely to occur.</p>