

Safeguarding Children During Covid-19

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Local Safeguarding
Children Partnership

Hammersmith & Fulham | Kensington and Chelsea | Westminster

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is protecting children from abuse and neglect:

- Domestic Abuse: A child witnessing controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and/or violence from one adult towards another in their household
- Neglect: A child not being provided with the physical and emotional care and supervision they need. This isn't always intentional but has an impact on children
- Physical Abuse: A child being deliberately hurt or physically injured, including hitting, kicking, shoving, throwing or using an object
- Emotional Abuse: A child being made to feel scared, put down, humiliated or not being comforted and reassured when they need it
- Sexual Abuse: A child being forced to engage in sex or sexual touching or watch sexual activity in person, in pictures or in videos. This can happen to boys or girls.

What are Local Authority Children's Services doing to respond to Covid-19?

Our business has continued – with very small changes to how we work

- We still take referrals about children who are being subjected to abuse
- We still visit children at home when we are worried about their safety and well-being
- With some families, we are being creative about how we make contact and visit with children whilst still following the social distancing rules
- We still accept and respond to referrals about professionals or volunteers who may seek to harm children
- We still hold meetings with our partner agencies to share information and discuss how we can reduce risks to children during this time – these may take place now over the phone or by video conference.

What are we most worried about during the lockdown?

From other countries we know that during lockdown some risks to children may increase. For example:

- Domestic Abuse
- Mental Health
- Neglect
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse

What should volunteers do?

If you see something – say something!

- Tell your organisation's safeguarding lead
- Tell the Local Authority – the Front Door or the LADO
- No need to investigate or make further enquiries – leave that to us!

Also make sure you say something if:

- you feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- if you see someone else volunteering do something that crosses a boundary or unsafe.

What should organisations do?

- Review the LSCP website local to you and also the NSPCC website for Organisational safeguarding advice
- Ensure volunteers know who to speak to if they are worried about a child
- Have a safeguarding policy – if forming a new organisation – NSPCC has good examples
- Contact the Local Authority if you are unsure about whether you need to report something – we can help you decide
- Have a simple code of conduct for volunteers – for example if working online with young people or visiting young people in the community – NSPCC has good examples
- Make it clear that volunteers who work directly with children will be expected to undergo checks such as DBS
- Consider offering online training to staff who are most likely to have contact with children

Useful links

- <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/lscb/about-us> - Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership website
- For other boroughs – the LSCP website can usually be found by googling the name of the local authority followed by LSCP or LSCB
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-factsheet-community-volunteers-during-covid-19-outbreak> - Advice from DBS on checking volunteers
- https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/?_ga=2.174564002.1682606038.1585663204-375031839.1562760496 – website by NSPCC which is for organisations and professionals working with children

Further Resources

- [Working together to Safeguard Children 2018 – Key Statutory Guidance](#)
- [London Child Protection Procedures](#)
- [Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000](#)
- [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners \(2015\)](#)