What is Child Abuse?

Some children living within their own families or communities are treated wrongly, in a way which can have an impact on the child’s wellbeing now and in the future. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

As well as children abused within their own families or communities, some children may also be abused in an institutional setting by someone known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Abuse can take many forms, including:
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

and can occur across all social groups.

All adults have a responsibility to protect children.

What should I do if I am concerned a child may be being abused?

Contact the Access and Initial Assessment Team for Child and Family Services on 01792 635700 or by emailing access.info@swansea.gov.uk

Do not attempt to investigate your suspicions yourself.

In an emergency, always call 999

What information do I need to provide?

The more information you are able to provide, the easier it will be for Social Services staff to trace any existing records about the child. The child’s full name, address and date of birth are the most useful information. If you do not know all of these, other information such as names of parents or siblings or the school the child attends might help. You will need to explain why you are concerned about the child, giving as much detail as you can.

Is the information I give confidential?

You can provide the information anonymously if you wish, though it can be helpful to have your details in case the information given needs to be clarified during the course of enquiries. As a member of the public your identity would be kept confidential within the team(s) investigating your report.

What will happen next?

Enquiries must be made to find out what the facts are and to decide on whether a child is or may be suffering harm either physically or emotionally. Depending on the nature of the information received, it may be necessary to involve other agencies, such as the Police. Professionally trained staff will talk to the family about their concerns and hear their views on the matter. They will also see and talk to the children involved and any other people who may have relevant information.

What will happen as a result of these enquiries?

• Social Services may be able to provide support or advice to the family, or refer them to another agency that can help with their problems.

• In some cases it may be necessary to call a Child Protection Conference where professional staff from several agencies will meet to discuss the concerns about the child and agree the best way to protect the child and support the family.

• Wherever possible Social Services will keep a family together while we work with them to resolve the difficulties they are experiencing.

• In exceptional cases, however, it may be thought by the professionals involved that a child is in immediate danger of harm or that the risk of damage to a child is so great that they should not live with a particular person or people.

What if I am mistaken and there is no evidence of abuse?

Sometimes enquiries show no significant areas of concern for the child and there is no need for any further action to be taken. However it is better to have a situation checked out and find all is well than to ignore possible warning signs and endanger a child.

Comments or Complaints

We welcome any comments about our services – good or bad. If you are unhappy with the service you receive, we encourage you to make a complaint. For advice or information about making a complaint, please contact our Complaints Officers on 01792 637345.

This information is also available in alternative formats, such as large print, on audio CD, in Braille, or electronically. Please 01792 636693 for copies.