

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused

Summary Sheet

This summary is taken from the safeguarding document: *What to do if you're worried a child is abused: advice for practitioners*. The full guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

No matter your role, you are in a position to be able to observe signs that could indicate a child may be being abused or neglected.

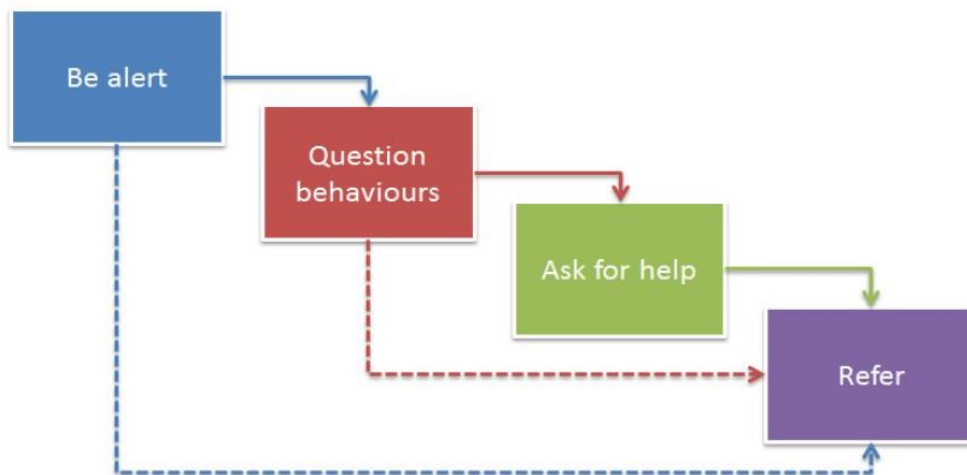
You should be guided by the following key principles:

- children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect;
- safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility;
- it is better to help children as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging;
- and children and families are best supported and protected when there is a co-ordinated response from all relevant agencies.

Key points to remember:

- Make sure that you are **alert** to the signs of abuse and neglect,
- Make sure that you **question the behaviour** of children and parents/carers and don't necessarily take what you are told at face value.
- Make sure you know where to turn to if you need to **ask for help**, and that you **refer** to children's social care or to the police, if you suspect that a child is at risk of harm or is immediate danger
- Make sure that you **understand** and work within **your settings' child protection policies and procedures**.
- **Do not let** other considerations, like the fear of damaging relationships with adults, get in the way of protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Identify and respond appropriately- there are four key steps to follow



It may not always be appropriate to go through all four stages sequentially. **If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, you should refer to children's social care and/or the police.** Before doing so, you should try to establish the basic facts.

! It is not your role to investigate. You **must** follow your settings safeguarding procedures **!**