

If you do not understand any part of this leaflet or have any other queries, the Social Worker will do all that is possible to help you. They will advise you to seek legal assistance through a solicitor or other independent advice such as the Citizens Advice Bureau.

This leaflet was given to you by a member of Child Care Services staff.

Contact details are as follows:-

Name: .....

Designation: .....

Location: .....

Contact Tel. No. ....

Police Scotland Contact details are as follows:-

Name: .....

Designation: .....

Location: .....

Contact Tel. No. ....

You may like to talk to someone else about what has happened and one of the people listed below will also be able to listen to you and help you.

- ▶ Clackmannanshire Council Child Care Services. Tel.01259-225000
- ▶ Scottish Child Law Centre 0131 667 6333
- ▶ Childline. Freephone 0800 1111
- ▶ Who Cares (Scotland) Tel. 0141 554 4452
- ▶ Police Scotland Family Unit Tel. 01786 813412.



یہ دستاویز کے بارے میں معلومات فراہم کرتا ہے۔ ایڈیٹ یعنی بالغ افراد کے لئے کیئر سروس  
اس دستاویز کو اپنی زبان میں سمجھنے کے واسطے اگر آپ کو مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو برائے مہربانی اس کو کونسل آفس  
لے جائیں اور ریسپشن پر پوچھیں۔ کونسل کے دفاتر کے پتے نیچے درج ہیں۔

這文件內容是有關 成人護理服務。  
如你需要，我們可以用你的語言幫助你了解此文件的  
內容。請携同此文件到議局辦公室接待處查詢。辦公室  
地址如下：

Niniejszy dokument udziela informacji na temat Opieki  
Społecznej dla Dorosłych.  
Jeśli chcieliby Państwo skorzystać z pomocy w zrozumieniu  
tego dokumentu w swoim języku, proszę go ze sobą  
zabrać do Biura Rady Miejskiej (Council Office) i zapytać  
w recepcji. Mogą Państwo znaleźć Biura Rady Miejskiej  
pod poniższymi adresami:

Social Services,  
Kilncraigs,  
Greenside Street, Alloa  
FK10 1EB.

### Core Values of the Council

Commitment, Trust and Partnership  
Openness and Accountability  
Respect and Dignity  
Equity, Fairness and Inclusion



This leaflet can also be made available on audio tape.  
Contact the Research & Information Service on  
01259 452519.

Further information can be obtained on the Clackmannanshire Council  
website: [www.clacks.org.uk](http://www.clacks.org.uk).

Contact the Research & Information Service on 01259 452519 to obtain  
further supplies of this leaflet or to request changes / amendments



# Working Together for Child Protection



Clackmannanshire Council

[www.clacksweb.org.uk](http://www.clacksweb.org.uk)

A Guide for parents who become involved in Child Protection Investigations

## Introduction

This leaflet is intended to help parents who become involved in child protection enquiries and investigations.

It has been provided for you by Clackmannanshire Council Child Care Services which encourages, wherever possible, the involvement of children, parents and other members of the family in decisions about the safety and welfare of children.

The abuse of children arouses strong feelings; parents, for example, may feel worried, upset, confused and sometimes angry when allegations are made about possible abuse to their child.

Social Workers from Child Care Services and Police Officers, who have a legal duty to investigate, will be concerned to make the right decisions. At all times the interests of the child must come first. Wherever possible your views as a parent will be taken into account.

## What is Child Abuse?

Children can be abused in different ways. They could be physically injured, sexually abused, emotionally abused or neglected. Children living in households where there is domestic abuse or substance misuse are also at risk.

## Investigating Allegations of Child Abuse

Whenever an allegation of possible child abuse is made to Social Services or Police. It is their duty to investigate.

When necessary the investigation is carried out on a co-operative basis by trained Social Workers and Police Officers.

The investigation is a legal duty and it is very important that the Social Worker and Police Officer contact you as quickly as possible. There are four main reasons for this:-

- ▶ To ensure immediate and appropriate action is taken to protect children.
- ▶ Parents need to be contacted and informed of the allegation.
- ▶ The reasons need to be explained for speaking to and listening to what children in the family have to say.

- ▶ Parents/carers or other people who are suspected of being involved in allegations of child abuse will be interviewed by Police Officers.

## What action may follow?

The workers you meet will try to gather all the facts about the matter and to decide whether your child is **at risk**. They may need to discuss what has happened, in confidence, with others who have offered help to you and your family.

Sometimes it may be necessary to talk with children away from the family home. If this is the case, then children may be interviewed at a suitable place set aside for that purpose. Wherever possible you will be asked to accompany your child and, in all cases, arrangements will be made to ensure that he/she is properly looked after.

The better the communication between yourselves and the workers involved, the more likely it is that the facts will be discovered and the correct decisions taken to help your child and yourselves. The worker's aim will always be to work together with parents and carers as much as possible during and after the investigation.

In some cases, it is likely that the Social Worker or Police Officer will want to seek a medical opinion. In these circumstances you will be asked to give your consent to your child being medically examined. Such an examination may confirm whether your child has been injured, what the nature of the injuries are and indicate how they might have been caused. The results of the medical examination may be used later as evidence that abuse has occurred. If consent to the medical examination is not given, the Social Worker will have to consider whether to take legal action to ensure your child is examined.

## What happens next?

The workers investigating child abuse have to report their findings to Senior Officers. If it is then felt that there is no substance to the allegations, the investigation will end there. You may be offered some other support service for yourself and your child.

If, on the other hand, it is felt that your child may have suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, then it may be necessary to take further action.

This may include:-

- ▶ Further investigation. You will be kept informed throughout the process.
- ▶ The calling of a Child Protection Conference. This is a meeting attended by professionals concerned with children at which the facts of the investigations are considered and action agreed. You will also be invited to attend all or part of the conference. If a Child Protection Conference is to be called, the Social Worker involved will discuss this further with you and give you the Leaflet 'A Guide for Parents About Child Protection Meetings'.
- ▶ In a small number of cases, if it is thought that your child will not be safe at home, it may be necessary to seek the legal removal of the child to a place of safety. This will allow your child to be moved to a safe place while further investigation takes place. In such cases the Children's Reporter is always informed. In some cases it may be possible to arrange for the person who has harmed, or is likely to harm, your child to temporarily move out rather than move your child. The Social Worker involved will discuss this with you.
- ▶ It may be necessary for a referral to be made to the Reporter to the Children's Panel who will consider what action may need to be taken to help and protect your child.

## Remember

In most cases of alleged child abuse, the child is not removed from the family home.

If there is anything that you do not understand, you must always ask. It is part of the Social Worker's job to ensure that you understand what is happening and staff are used to being asked questions in these situations. If they are not able to give you an answer themselves they will find the right person to do so.