

## **Safeguarding Children in LDN London Services**

### **Introduction**

LDN London is committed to ensuring the safety, welfare, and well-being of children and young people who are part of the families we support and to the children with whom we come into contact with via the people we support and our charitable activities. This includes reporting concerns that may arise with colleagues and within the local community during the course of our work.

This policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding children, identifying and responding to child protection concerns, and promoting a child-centred and protective environment.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to

- employees of LDN London Family Support Services
- all other employees (adult services / central staff)
- workers engaged on a contract for services (sessional workers)
- agency workers
- self-employed individuals
- volunteers.

KCA has a separate Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

### **Key responsibilities**

- All staff should actively promote the welfare of children and young people, ensuring their safety and protecting them from harm.
- All staff members have a responsibility to be aware of and comply with this policy, to report concerns promptly, and to contribute to the overall safeguarding efforts.
- The Safeguarding Leads Group will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and coordinating safeguarding activities.

### **Legal and Regulatory Framework**

We will comply with all relevant local, national, and international laws, regulations, and guidelines related to safeguarding children.

Our policy will be consistent with statutory obligations, including reporting procedures and cooperation with child protection agencies.

## Definition

Child: Any individual under the age of 18.

Safeguarding: The actions taken to protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or any form of harm.

## Training and awareness

- All employees will receive Safeguarding for LDN Staff training which includes safeguarding children
- All Family Support Workers will receive comprehensive training on child protection and safeguarding, including recognising signs of abuse, reporting procedures, and their individual responsibilities.
- Family Support Services will have access to a trained, nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead for additional advice and support.
- Training will be regularly refreshed to ensure knowledge is up to date with current best practices and legislation.
- Regular opportunities will be provided to Family Support Workers to discuss and reflect on safeguarding concerns, provide support, and ensure compliance with this policy.

## Building trust and confidentiality

All LDN London employees will be respectful and professional when in contact with children or families in the course of their work. Information regarding child protection concerns will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in line with data protection laws. Confidentiality will be maintained, but it will not override the duty to protect the child's welfare.

LDN London's Family Support Workers have a specific role in supporting parents and carers of children or adults with disabilities or learning disability. They will build trusting and respectful relationships with children and families, ensuring confidentiality is maintained within legal and ethical boundaries.

Information shared with Family Support Workers will only be disclosed to appropriate individuals when necessary to protect the welfare of the child or young person

Family Support Workers will work collaboratively with other professionals and agencies involved in supporting the family, sharing information, and working together to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people.

Collaboration may involve attending multi-agency meetings, contributing to assessments, and participating in case conferences when required.

## Online safety

LDN London will regularly review the effectiveness of filters and monitoring systems, in order to keep young people safe if they are using IT equipment in our services. We will ensure that our staff:

- Are aware of and understand the systems in place
- Know manage them effectively
- Know how to escalate concerns when identified.

Family Support Workers will support parents and carers to understand the importance of children being safe online by sign posting to relevant information and giving advice on where they can find support if they have concerns about their child's online safety

## Recognising and responding to concerns

All LDN employees should be vigilant in identifying signs of abuse, neglect, or any form of harm to children and young people.

A child who is being abused might not realise what's happening is wrong. And they might even blame themselves. If a child talks about anything that may indicate abuse it is important to:

- listen carefully to what they're saying
- let them know they've done the right thing by telling you
- tell them it's not their fault
- say you'll take them seriously
- don't confront the alleged abuser
- explain what you'll do next

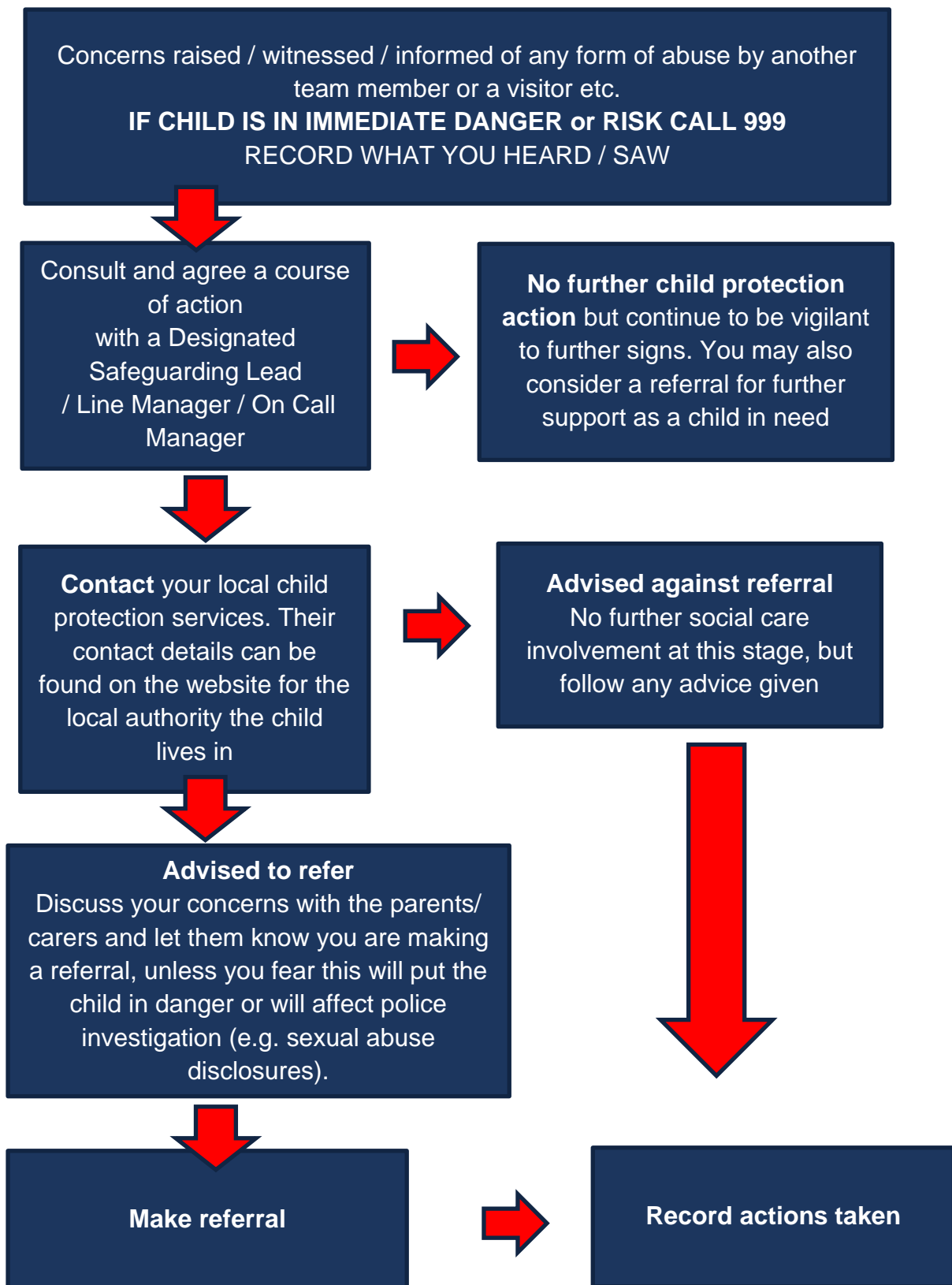
Concerns will be taken seriously, and appropriate actions will be taken, which may include contacting child protection agencies and following the internal reporting procedure

Any concerns or suspicions should be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead / line manager or on call manager, who will advise on the next steps to be taken in terms of reporting externally.

A record of the concerns will be made as soon as practicable, and this record may be shared with appropriate statutory agencies if required.

Confidentiality will be respected, but information will only be shared with individuals who need to know in order to protect the child.

**What to do if you have concerns about a child:**



## Record keeping

All employees will make a record of any concerns that they may have about a child or young person. In addition, Family Support Workers will maintain accurate and up-to-date records of interactions and observations related to the child or young person, following LDN London guidelines for record keeping.

Records should be securely stored and only accessed by authorised individuals on a need-to-know basis.

## Contact details & web links

If you believe a child may be **immediately at risk**, please call 999

### NSPCC

You can talk to the NSPCC about your concerns. The NSPCC Helpline [NSPCC Helpline | NSPCC](#) offers help, advice and support 24 hours a day by email.

You can contact them at [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) or by phone 080 8800 5000 (8am to 10pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm at weekends).

### Reference

[London Safeguarding Children Procedures](#)

### Local Authority Safeguarding Contacts

<p><b>Westminster</b> Children's Safeguarding Team</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:acesstochildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk">acesstochildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk</a></p> <p>T: 020 7641 4000</p>	<p><b>Kensington and Chelsea</b> Children's Safeguarding Team</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk">socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>T: 020 7361 3013</p>
<p><b>Ealing</b> Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS).</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:ecirs@ealing.gov.uk">ecirs@ealing.gov.uk</a></p> <p>T: 020 8825 8000</p>	<p><b>Camden</b> Children and Families Contact service</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:LBCMASHAdmin@camden.gov.uk">LBCMASHAdmin@camden.gov.uk</a></p> <p>T: 020 7974 3317 Out of office hours (after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays): 020 7974 4444</p>
<p><b>Harrow</b> Children and Family Services</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:Duty.Assess@harrow.gov.uk">Duty.Assess@harrow.gov.uk</a></p> <p>T: 020 8901 2690 Out of hours (after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays): 020 8424 0999</p>	<p><b>Southwark</b> Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:MASH@southwark.gov.uk">MASH@southwark.gov.uk</a></p> <p>T: 020 7525 192 Out of office hours (after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays): 020 7525 5000</p>
<p><b>Islington</b> Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT)</p> <p>T: 207 527 7400</p>	

## Links to other policies / references

- Accident and Incident Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for Adults at Risk
- Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Policy

Review	
<b>Date of last review</b>	November 2024
<b>Date of next review</b>	November 2025
<b>Date it was first implemented</b>	July 2023
<b>Author(s)</b>	Director of Quality
<b>Audience</b>	All employees, visitors and contractors

## Appendix Two: Types and indicators of abuse

**Physical abuse** - physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child or young person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.

Physical abuse	Possible types of physical abuse include:	Possible indicators of physical abuse include:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, punching</li> <li>• Shaking -especially babies and toddlers</li> <li>• Rough / inappropriate handling and other forms of assault that may not leave visible signs of injury, but may cause pain or discomfort</li> <li>• Biting, deliberate burns, scalding</li> <li>• Physical punishments / beating</li> <li>• Medical problems that go unattended</li> <li>• Induced or fabricated illness</li> <li>• Inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint</li> <li>• Deprivation of, or misuse, of physical aids and adaptations</li> <li>• Neglect of personal care</li> <li>• Making a child purposefully uncomfortable (e.g. opening a window and removing blankets)</li> <li>• Stabbing, strangulation, poisoning, and wounding (breaking the skin) and other forms of assault that cause serious injuries or death</li> <li>• Involuntary isolation or confinement</li> <li>• Unauthorised use of control and restraint, punishment, or seclusion, including the use of unauthorised or unsupervised “time out” procedures.</li> <li>• Withholding, inappropriately altering, or administering medication or other treatments</li> <li>• Forcible feeding or withholding food</li> <li>• Restricting movement (e.g. tying to a chair)</li> <li>• Head injuries in babies and toddlers can be signs of abuse so it is important to be aware of these. Visible signs include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• swelling</li> <li>• bruising</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Bumps and bruises don not always mean a child is being physically abused. All children have accidents, trips, and falls. And there is not just one sign or symptom to look out for. But it is important to be aware of the signs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.</li> <li>• Exhibiting untypical self-harm</li> <li>• Unexplained cuts or scratches to mouth, lips, gums, eyes, or external genitalia</li> <li>• Unexplained bruising to the face, torso, arms, back, buttocks, thighs, in various stages of healing</li> <li>• Collections of bruises that form regular patterns which correspond to the shape of an object, or which appear on several areas of the body</li> <li>• Unexplained burns on unlikely areas of the body (e.g. soles of the feet, palms of the hands, back), immersion burns (from scalding in hot water/liquid), rope burns, burns from an electrical appliance</li> <li>• Unexplained or inappropriately explained fractures at various stages of healing to any part of the body</li> <li>• the effects of poisoning, such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures breathing problems from drowning, suffocation, or poisoning.</li> </ul> <p>Physical abuse can happen in any family. But some parents might find it hard to give their children a safe and loving home if they are facing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poverty</li> <li>• poor housing</li> <li>• issues with drugs and alcohol</li> <li>• mental health issues</li> <li>• relationship problems</li> <li>• domestic abuse</li> <li>• isolation or a lack of support</li> <li>• the effects of childhood abuse or neglect.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fractures</li> <li>• being extremely sleepy or unconscious</li> <li>• breathing problems</li> <li>• seizures</li> <li>• vomiting</li> <li>• unusual behaviour, such as being irritable or not feeding properly</li> </ul>	<p>Babies have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse as well as disabled children, especially those who are unable to tell someone what is happening or don't understand what is happening to them is abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical problems that go unattended</li> <li>• Induced or fabricated illness</li> <li>• A child being taken to many different places to receive medical attention</li> <li>• Being left in soiled clothing</li> <li>• Evidence of over/under-medication</li> <li>• Flinches at physical contact</li> <li>• Appears frightened or subdued in the presence of particular people</li> <li>• Asks not to be hurt</li> <li>• May repeat what the person causing harm has said (e.g. 'Shut up or I'll hit you')</li> <li>• Reluctance to undress or uncover parts of the body / wears clothes that cover all parts of their body or specific parts of their body</li> </ul>
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**Domestic abuse** - Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and experiencing domestic abuse is child abuse. Children who witness (if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse). domestic abuse are also victims.

It is important to remember domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Domestic abuse	Types of domestic abuse include:	Possible indicators of domestic abuse include:
	<p>The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• psychological</li> <li>• physical</li> <li>• sexual (including rape in a relationship)</li> <li>• financial</li> <li>• emotional</li> <li>• technology-facilitated (e.g. having messages and emails monitored or deleted, constantly being sent messages or calls, or being tracked via device location)</li> </ul> <p>It also includes so called ‘honour’-based violence (when families feel that dishonour has been brought to the family by the actions of another family member. In some circumstances, there is a degree of collusion from family members and/or the community in the abusive and or violent behaviour), female genital mutilation and forced marriage.</p> <p>Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.</p> <p>Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.</p>	<p>Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child or young person’s mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour. And this can last into adulthood.</p> <p>It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening and those carrying out the abuse can act very different when other people are around. Children and young people might also feel frightened and confused, keeping the abuse to themselves.</p> <p>Indicators that a child has experienced domestic abuse can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aggression or bullying</li> <li>• anti-social behaviour, like vandalism</li> <li>• anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts</li> <li>• attention seeking</li> <li>• bed-wetting, nightmares, or insomnia</li> <li>• constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches, and mouth ulcers</li> <li>• drug or alcohol use</li> <li>• eating disorders</li> <li>• problems in school or trouble learning</li> <li>• tantrums</li> <li>• withdrawal.</li> </ul>

**Sexual abuse** - When a child or young person is sexually abused, they are forced or tricked into sexual activities. They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it is wrong. And they might be afraid to tell someone. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere – and it can happen in person or online. It is never a child's fault they were sexually abused – it is important to make sure children know this.

Sexual abuse	Types of sexual abuse include:	Possible indicators of sexual abuse include:
	<p>There are two types of sexual abuse – contact and non-contact abuse. And sexual abuse can happen in person or online.</p> <p>Contact abuse is where an abuser makes physical contact with a child. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sexual touching of any part of a child's body, whether they are clothed or not</li> <li>• using a body part or object to rape or penetrate a child</li> <li>• forcing a child to take part in sexual activities</li> <li>• making a child undress or touch someone else.</li> <li>• Contact abuse can include touching, kissing and oral sex – sexual abuse isn't just penetrative.</li> </ul> <p>Non-contact abuse is where a child is abused without being touched by the abuser. This can be in person or online and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exposing or flashing</li> <li>• showing pornography</li> <li>• exposing a child to sexual acts</li> <li>• making them masturbate</li> <li>• forcing a child to make, view or share child abuse images or videos</li> <li>• making, viewing or distributing child abuse images or videos</li> <li>• forcing a child to take part in sexual activities or conversations online or through a smartphone.</li> </ul>	<p>Emotional and physical signs can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.</li> <li>• Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.</li> <li>• Having nightmares or bed-wetting.</li> <li>• Alcohol or drug misuse.</li> <li>• Self-harm.</li> <li>• Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.</li> <li>• Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.</li> </ul> <p>Physical signs can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruises.</li> <li>• Bleeding, discharge, pains, or soreness in their genital or anal area.</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted infections.</li> <li>• Pregnancy.</li> </ul> <p>If a child is being or has been sexually abused online, they might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media</li> <li>• seem distant, upset, or angry after using the internet or texting</li> <li>• be secretive about who they are talking to and what they are doing online or on their mobile phone</li> <li>• have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop, or tablet.</li> </ul> <p>Children and young people might also drop hints and clues about the abuse.</p> <p>Sexual abuse can have both short and long term effects. The impact of sexual abuse can last a lifetime. Children, young people, and adults may live with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anxiety and depression</li> <li>• eating disorders</li> <li>• post-traumatic stress</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• difficulty coping with stress</li><li>• self-harm</li><li>• suicidal thoughts and suicide</li><li>• sexually transmitted infections</li><li>• pregnancy</li><li>• feelings of shame and guilt</li><li>• drug and alcohol problems</li><li>• relationship problems with family, friends and partners</li></ul>
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The signs that a child or young person is experiencing emotional abuse and or sexual abuse are often similar. This is due to the emotional impact sexual abuse can have on a person's sense of identity. In such circumstances, the perpetrator may apply emotionally manipulative behaviour in order to "groom" the child or young person they plan to abuse sexually.

**Emotional abuse** - Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate, or ignore a child.

Emotional abuse is often a part of other kinds of abuse, which means it can be difficult to spot the signs or tell the difference, though it can also happen on its own.

Emotional abuse	Possible types of emotional abuse include:	Possible indicators of emotional abuse include:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• humiliating or constantly criticising a child</li> <li>• threatening, shouting at a child, or calling them names</li> <li>• making the child the subject of jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child</li> <li>• blaming and scapegoating</li> <li>• making a child perform degrading acts</li> <li>• not recognising a child's own individuality or trying to control their lives</li> <li>• pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations</li> <li>• exposing a child to upsetting events or situations, like domestic abuse or drug taking</li> <li>• failing to promote a child's social development</li> <li>• not allowing them to have friends</li> <li>• persistently ignoring them</li> <li>• being absent</li> <li>• manipulating a child</li> <li>• never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes</li> <li>• never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.</li> </ul>	<p>There might not be any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse or neglect. And a child might not tell anyone what's happening until they reach a 'crisis point', so it is important to look out for signs in how a child is acting.</p> <p>As children grow up, their emotions change. This means it can be difficult to tell if they are being emotionally abused. But children who are being emotionally abused might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seem unconfident or lack self-assurance</li> <li>• struggle to control their emotions</li> <li>• have difficulty making or maintaining relationships</li> <li>• act in a way that's inappropriate for their age / developmental stage</li> </ul> <p>The signs of emotional abuse can also be different for children at different ages.</p> <p>Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused or neglected might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be overly affectionate to strangers or people they don't know well</li> <li>• seem unconfident, wary, or anxious</li> <li>• not have a close relationship or bond with their parent</li> <li>• be aggressive or cruel towards other children or animals.</li> </ul> <p>Older children might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use language you wouldn't expect them to know for their age</li> <li>• act in a way or know about things you wouldn't expect them to know for their age</li> <li>• struggle to control their emotions</li> <li>• have extreme outbursts</li> <li>• seem isolated from their parents</li> <li>• lack social skills</li> <li>• have few or no friends</li> </ul> <p>Need to be aware that children with learning disabilities or an autistic child may present differently to their peers at different developmental stages, which may mean that emotional abuse is harder to spot.</p>

**Neglect** - Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision, or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.

Neglect	Types of neglect include:	Possible indicators of neglect include:
	<p>Neglect can be a lot of different things, which can make it hard to spot. But broadly speaking, there are 4 types of neglect.</p> <p><b>Physical neglect</b> A child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter, are not met or they are not properly supervised or kept safe.</p> <p><b>Educational neglect</b> A parent does not ensure their child is given an education.</p> <p><b>Emotional neglect</b> A child does not get the nurture and stimulation they need. This could be through ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them.</p> <p><b>Medical neglect</b> A child is not given proper health care. This includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations.</p>	<p>Neglect can be difficult to spot. Having one of the signs does not necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:</p> <p>Poor appearance and hygiene:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being smelly or dirty</li> <li>• being hungry or not given money for food</li> <li>• having unwashed clothes</li> <li>• having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter</li> <li>• having frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants.</li> </ul> <p>Health and development problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anaemia</li> <li>• body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints</li> <li>• medical or dental issues</li> <li>• missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations</li> <li>• not given the correct medicines</li> <li>• poor language or social skills for their developmental stage</li> <li>• regular illness or infections</li> <li>• repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision</li> <li>• skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm</li> <li>• thin or swollen tummy</li> <li>• tiredness</li> <li>• untreated injuries</li> <li>• weight or growth issues.</li> </ul> <p>Housing and family issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating</li> <li>• being left alone for a long time</li> <li>• taking on the role of carer for other family members</li> </ul> <p>Changes in behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• becoming clingy</li> <li>• becoming aggressive</li> <li>• being withdrawn, depressed or anxious</li> <li>• changes in eating habits</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• displaying obsessive behaviour</li><li>• finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities</li><li>• missing school</li><li>• showing signs of self-harm</li><li>• using drugs or alcohol.</li></ul>
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**Bullying and cyberbullying** - Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening, or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming, and mobile phones

Bullying and cyberbullying	Types of bullying and cyberbullying include:	Possible indicators of bullying and cyberbullying include:
	<p>Bullying can take different forms. It could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical bullying: hitting, slapping, or pushing someone</li> <li>• verbal bullying: name calling, gossiping, or threatening someone</li> <li>• non-verbal abuse: hand signs or text messages</li> <li>• emotional abuse: threatening, intimidating, or humiliating someone</li> <li>• exclusion: ignoring or isolating someone</li> <li>• undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours</li> <li>• controlling or manipulating someone</li> <li>• making silent, hoax or abusive calls.</li> </ul> <p>The following types of bullying are also hate crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• racial, sexual, transphobic, or homophobic bullying</li> <li>• bullying someone because they have a disability.</li> </ul> <p>Cyberbullying can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sending threatening or abusive text messages</li> <li>• creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos</li> <li>• trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games</li> <li>• excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups</li> <li>• shaming someone online</li> <li>• setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child</li> <li>• encouraging young people to self-harm</li> <li>• voting for or against someone in an abusive poll</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• belongings getting 'lost' or damaged</li> <li>• physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises</li> <li>• being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school – this is not the same as children who have school phobia / school refusal</li> <li>• not doing as well at school as previously with no other identifiable reason</li> <li>• asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)</li> <li>• being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn</li> <li>• problems with eating or sleeping</li> <li>• bullying others</li> </ul> <p>The effects of bullying can last into adulthood. At its worst, bullying has driven children and young people to self-harm and even suicide.</p> <p>Children who are bullied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may develop mental health problems like depression and anxiety</li> <li>• have fewer friendships</li> <li>• are not accepted by their peers</li> <li>• are wary and suspicious of others</li> <li>• have problems adjusting to school, and do not do as well as expected.</li> <li>• All children who are affected by bullying can suffer harm – whether they are bullied, they bully others or they witness bullying.</li> </ul> <p>Any child can be bullied for any reason. If a child is seen as different in some way or seen as an easy target they can be more at risk.</p> <p>This might be because of their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• race or ethnic background</li> <li>• gender</li> <li>• sexual orientation.</li> </ul> <p>Or it could be because they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appear anxious or have low self-esteem</li> <li>• lack assertiveness</li> <li>• are shy or introverted.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name</li> <li>• sending explicit messages, also known as sexting</li> <li>• pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations</li> </ul>	<p>Popular or successful children are also bullied, sometimes because others are jealous of them. Sometimes a child's family circumstance or home life can be a reason for someone bullying them.</p> <p>Disabled children can experience bullying because they seem an easy target and less able to defend themselves</p>
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**Criminal exploitation and gangs** - Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. They might be victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited, and put into dangerous situations. Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes

A child is more at risk of being recruited if:

- they have been excluded from school
- they have special education needs
- there are problems at home like neglect, domestic abuse, or sexual abuse
- they have problems with their mental health
- they live in existing gang territory

	Types of criminal exploitation and gangs include:	Possible indicators of criminal exploitation include:
Criminal exploitation and gangs	<p>The word 'gang' means different things in different contexts, the government paper 'Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity' distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.</p> <p>Peer group -A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.</p> <p>Street gang- "Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity."</p> <p>Organised criminal gangs- "A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.'"</p> <p>It is not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types of 'gang' and not every 'gang' is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime.</p> <p>County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area,</p>	<p>Possible indicators of criminal exploitation include:</p> <p>Signs of criminal exploitation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequently absent from and doing badly in school.</li> <li>• Going missing from home, staying out late and travelling for unexplained reasons.</li> <li>• In a relationship or hanging out with someone older than them.</li> <li>• Being angry, aggressive, or violent.</li> <li>• Being isolated or withdrawn.</li> <li>• Having unexplained money and buying new things.</li> <li>• Wearing clothes or accessories in gang colours or getting tattoos.</li> <li>• Using new slang words.</li> <li>• Spending more time on social media and being secretive about time online.</li> <li>• Making more calls or sending more texts, possibly on a new phone or phones.</li> <li>• Self-harming and feeling emotionally unwell.</li> <li>• Taking drugs and abusing alcohol.</li> <li>• Committing petty crimes like shop lifting or vandalism.</li> <li>• Unexplained injuries and refusing to seek medical help.</li> <li>• Carrying weapons or having a dangerous breed of dog</li> </ul> <p>Signs that cuckooing has taken place include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• signs of drugs use</li> <li>• more people coming and going from the property</li> <li>• more cars or bikes outside</li> <li>• litter outside</li> <li>• the person who lives there has not been seen recently or when they have, they have seemed anxious, distracted or not themselves.</li> </ul> <p>Children living in these properties are at risk of neglect and other types of abuse.</p>

	<p>staying in accommodation, and selling and manufacturing drugs. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Airbnb and short term private rental properties</li><li>• budget hotels</li><li>• the home of a drug user, or other vulnerable person, that is taken over by a criminal gang- this may be referred to as cuckooing.</li></ul>	
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**Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** - is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited, they are given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status, and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they are in a loving and consensual relationship (grooming). They may trust their abuser and not understand that they are being abused.

Children and young people can be trafficked into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. They are moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited.

Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they have no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know cannot be repaid or use financial abuse to control them.

Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender, or race. The relationship could be framed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' or coerce others to join groups

Child sexual exploitation	Types of CSE include:	Possible indicators of CSE include:
	<p>CSE can happen in person or online. An abuser will gain a child's trust or control them through violence or blackmail before moving onto sexually abusing them. This can happen in a short period of time.</p> <p>When a child is sexually exploited online, they might be persuaded or forced to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• send or post sexually explicit images of themselves</li> <li>• film or stream sexual activities</li> <li>• have sexual conversations.</li> </ul> <p>Once an abuser has images, video, or copies of conversations, they might use threats and blackmail to force a young person to take part in other sexual activity. They may also share the images and videos with others or circulate them online.</p> <p>Gangs use sexual exploitation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to exert power and control</li> <li>• or initiation</li> <li>• to use sexual violence as a weapon.</li> </ul> <p>Children or young people might be invited to parties or gatherings with others their own age or adults and given drugs and alcohol. They may be assaulted and sexually abused by one person or multiple perpetrators. The sexual assaults and abuse can be violent, humiliating and degrading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being frightened of some people, places or situations.</li> <li>• Being secretive.</li> <li>• Sharp changes in mood or character.</li> <li>• Having money or things they can't or won't explain.</li> <li>• Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area.</li> <li>• Alcohol or drug misuse.</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted infections.</li> <li>• Pregnancy.</li> <li>• Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend.</li> <li>• Staying out late or overnight.</li> <li>• Having a new group of friends.</li> <li>• Missing from home or care or stopping going to school or college.</li> <li>• Hanging out with older people, other vulnerable people or in antisocial groups.</li> <li>• Involved in a gang.</li> <li>• Involved in criminal activities like selling drugs or shoplifting.</li> <li>• Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour.</li> </ul> <p>Signs a child's sexual behaviour could be unhealthy or inappropriate include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• showing sexual behaviour that's inappropriate for their age</li> <li>• sexual behaviour that's becoming a compulsive habit or happening frequently</li> <li>• behaviour using force, aggression, or pressuring others</li> <li>• engaging in behaviour that upsets other children involved</li> <li>• sexual interest in adults or children of very different ages to their own</li> <li>• if it is affecting their schoolwork, relationships or social life</li> <li>• using pornography or sending explicit images online, particularly without someone's consent</li> <li>• any sexual behaviour that's harmful to themselves or others.</li> </ul>

**Child trafficking-** Trafficking is where children and young people tricked, forced, or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold

Child trafficking	Types of child trafficking include:	Possible indicators of child trafficking include:
	<p>Traffickers often groom children, families, and communities to gain their trust. They may also threaten families with violence or threats. Traffickers often promise children and families that they will have a better future elsewhere.</p> <p>Trafficking is also an economic crime. Traffickers may ask families for money for providing documents or transport and they will make a profit from money a child "earns" through exploitation, forced labour or crime. They will often be told this money is to pay off a debt they or their family "owe" to the traffickers.</p> <p>Traffickers may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work alone or in small groups, recruiting a small number of children, often from areas they know and live in</li> <li>• be medium-sized groups who recruit, move and exploit children and young people on a small scale</li> <li>• be large criminal networks that operate internationally with high-level corruption, money laundering and have a large numbers of victims.</li> </ul> <p>Children are trafficked for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sexual exploitation</li> <li>• benefit fraud</li> <li>• forced marriage</li> <li>• domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking and childcare</li> <li>• forced labour in factories or agriculture</li> <li>• committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs.</li> </ul> <p>Trafficked children experience many types of abuse and neglect. Traffickers use physical, sexual, and emotional abuse as a form of control. Children and young people are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected and may be sexually exploited.</p>	<p>It may not be obvious that a child has been trafficked, but you might notice unusual or unexpected things. They might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spend a lot of time doing household chores</li> <li>• rarely leave their house or have no time for playing</li> <li>• be orphaned or living apart from their family</li> <li>• live in low-standard accommodation</li> <li>• be unsure which country, city or town they are in</li> <li>• can't or are reluctant to share personal information or where they live</li> <li>• not be registered with a school or a GP practice</li> <li>• have no access to their parents or guardians</li> <li>• be seen in inappropriate places like brothels or factories</li> <li>• have money or things you wouldn't expect them to</li> <li>• have injuries from workplace accidents</li> <li>• give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children</li> </ul> <p>Any child is at risk of child trafficking.</p> <p>Human trafficking happens due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inequalities between countries, such as different education or employment opportunities</li> <li>• poverty</li> <li>• the effects of war</li> <li>• the demand for cheap or free labour or a workforce who can be easily controlled and forced into criminal activity</li> <li>• low levels of education</li> <li>• lack of equal opportunities, discrimination or marginalisation</li> </ul>

**Grooming** - Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited, or trafficked.

Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender, or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

Grooming	Types of grooming include:	Possible indicators of grooming include:
	<p>Children and young people can be groomed online, in person or both – by a stranger or someone they know. This could be a family member, a friend or someone who has targeted them – like a teacher, faith group leader or sports coach.</p> <p>When a child is groomed online, groomers may hide who they are by sending photos or videos of other people. Sometimes this will be of someone younger than them to gain the trust of a "peer". They might target one child online or contact lots of children very quickly and wait for them to respond.</p> <p>The relationship a groomer builds can take different forms. This could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a romantic relationship</li> <li>• as a mentor</li> <li>• an authority figure</li> <li>• a dominant and persistent figure.</li> </ul> <p>A groomer can use the same sites, games and apps as young people, spending time learning about a young person's interests and use this to build a relationship with them. Children can be groomed online through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social media networks</li> <li>• text messages and messaging apps, like WhatsApp</li> <li>• email</li> <li>• text, voice and video chats in forums, games and apps.</li> </ul>	<p>It can be difficult to tell if a child is being groomed – the signs are not always obvious and may be hidden. Older children might behave in a way that seems to be "normal" teenage behaviour, masking underlying problems.</p> <p>Some of the signs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being very secretive about how they are spending their time, including when online</li> <li>• having an older boyfriend or girlfriend</li> <li>• having money or new things like clothes and mobile phones that they can't or won't explain</li> <li>• underage drinking or drug taking</li> <li>• spending more or less time online or on their devices</li> <li>• being upset, withdrawn, or distressed</li> <li>• sexualised behaviour, language or an understanding of sex that is not appropriate for their age</li> <li>• spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time.</li> </ul> <p>A child or young person might have difficulty sleeping, be anxious or struggle to concentrate or cope with schoolwork. They may become withdrawn, uncommunicative, and angry or upset.</p> <p>Children and young people who have experienced grooming may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anxiety and depression</li> <li>• eating disorders</li> <li>• post-traumatic stress</li> <li>• difficulty coping with stress</li> <li>• self-harm</li> <li>• suicidal thoughts</li> <li>• sexually transmitted infections</li> <li>• pregnancy</li> <li>• feelings of shame and guilt</li> <li>• drug and alcohol problems</li> <li>• relationship problems with family, friends and partners.</li> </ul>

Whether online or in person, groomers can use tactics like:

- pretending to be younger
- giving advice or showing understanding
- buying gifts
- giving attention
- taking them on trips, outings or holidays.

Groomers might also try and isolate children from their friends and family, making them feel dependent on them and giving the groomer power and control over them. They might use blackmail to make a child feel guilt and shame or introduce the idea of 'secrets' to control, frighten and intimidate.

It is important to remember that children and young people may not understand they have been groomed. They may have complicated feelings, like loyalty, admiration, love, as well as fear, distress, and confusion.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** -FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It is also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting', but has many other names

Female genital mutilation	Types of FGM include:	Possible indicators of FGM include:
	<p>Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting.</p> <p>There are four main types of FGM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type 1 (clitoridectomy) – removing part or all of the clitoris.</li> <li>• Type 2 (excision) – removing part or all of the clitoris and cutting the inner and/or outer labia.</li> <li>• Type 3 (infibulation) – narrowing the vaginal opening.</li> <li>• Type 4 – other harmful procedures to the female genitals including pricking, piercing, cutting, scraping or burning</li> </ul> <p>FGM is carried out for a number of cultural, religious and social reasons. Some families and communities believe that FGM will benefit the girl in some way, such as preparing them for marriage or childbirth. But FGM is a harmful practice that is not required by any religion and there are no health benefits of FGM.</p> <p>Some common names for FGM include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• female circumcision</li> <li>• cutting</li> <li>• sunna</li> <li>• gudniin</li> <li>• halalays</li> <li>• tahur</li> <li>• megrez</li> <li>• khitan</li> </ul> <p>FGM terms: 'Cutter' -A 'cutter' is somebody who carries out FGM. They might use things like knives, scalpels, scissors, glass, or razor blades to carry out the procedure.</p>	<p>Signs that FGM may happen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad.</li> <li>• A special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'.</li> <li>• A female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM.</li> <li>• A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad during the summer holidays.</li> <li>• A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school.</li> <li>• A girl struggles to keep up in school.</li> <li>• A girl runs away – or plans to run away - from home.</li> </ul> <p>Signs that FGM might have taken place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having difficulty walking, standing or sitting.</li> <li>• Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet.</li> <li>• Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed.</li> <li>• Acting differently after an absence from school or college.</li> <li>• Reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations.</li> <li>• Asking for help – though they might not be explicit about the problem because they are scared or embarrassed.</li> </ul> <p>There are no health benefits to FGM. It can cause serious harm, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• severe and/or constant pain</li> <li>• infections, such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C</li> <li>• pain or difficulty having sex</li> <li>• infertility</li> <li>• bleeding, cysts, and abscesses</li> <li>• difficulties urinating or incontinence</li> <li>• organ damage</li> <li>• problems during pregnancy and childbirth, which can be life-threatening for the mother and baby</li> <li>• mental health problems, such as depression, flashbacks, and self-harm</li> <li>• death from blood loss or infections.</li> </ul>



<p>'Cutting season'- This refers to the summer months – often July, August, and September – when many girls are on break from school. This is often the period when girls have time to undergo FGM. Girls might be flown abroad during this time, so it is important to be aware of this risk.</p> <p>FGM can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when a baby is new-born</li> <li>• during childhood or as a teenager</li> <li>• just before marriage</li> <li>• during pregnancy</li> </ul> <p>FGM is a form of child abuse and a criminal offence in the UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there are no medical reasons to carry out FGM</li> <li>• it is often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass or razor blades</li> <li>• children are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained</li> <li>• it is used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.</li> </ul>	<p>Girls living in communities that practise FGM are most at risk. It can happen in the UK or abroad.</p> <p>In the UK, the Home Office has identified girls and women from certain communities as being more at risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somali</li> <li>• Kenyan</li> <li>• Ethiopian</li> <li>• Sierra Leonean</li> <li>• Sudanese</li> <li>• Egyptian</li> <li>• Nigerian</li> <li>• Eritrean</li> <li>• Yemeni</li> <li>• Kurdish</li> <li>• Indonesian.</li> </ul> <p>Children are also at a higher risk of FGM if it already happened to their mother, sister, or another member of their family.</p>
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