

Information for children and young people

Someone from Gateshead Council will have talked to you about how we want to keep you safe.

They are called **social workers** and they have been to see you because someone is worried about you and how you are cared for. To make sure you are ok, they have started a child protection enquiry - which will help them find out if you and your family need help.

They have left you this leaflet so you can remember what they said, what will happen and where to go for help if you need it.

Why we are talking to you

The most important thing to remember is that you have not done anything wrong. **You are not in trouble.**

Sometimes adults or other young people hurt children and make them feel bad or afraid. **This is not ok. No-one should hurt you.**

Our job is to keep you safe and listen to what you have to tell us. We know that you may be feeling upset, confused or even angry.

Sometimes when we come to see you a police officer will come with us – this is nothing to be frightened of. We just want to hear what you have to say about how things are. Don't be afraid to ask us questions and say what you think should happen.

By talking to you we can:

find out what happened to you

work out how to help you and your family

decide if anything needs to happen to keep you safe

What happens now?

The first thing we do is to talk to people who know you and your family – people like your teacher, health visitor or family doctor.

We know that all families are different, so this helps us get a clear picture of how things are in your family. Sometimes it's a good idea for you to see a doctor to check that you are ok.

Will I be taken away from home?

In most cases, you will stay with your parents while we make our enquiries.

But if we think you are not safe at home, we will ask a relative or close family friend to look after you for a while. If this isn't possible, you will be looked after by a foster carer or stay in a children's home.

We will always listen to what you think before we decide where you should stay.

What happens next?

When we've talked to everyone involved, we will speak to you and the person looking after you about what happens next.

This could be:

Nothing, we don't feel there's anything we need to do

Offering help to you and the person looking after you

Arranging a meeting to plan what is needed to keep you safe

- This is called an *Initial Child Protection Conference*

Where to go for help

The social worker who spoke to you:

My name is:

You can call me on:

Or text me on:

Please call me if you have any questions or worries

Here are some other numbers you can call if you want to talk to someone:

Childline

- 0800 1111

NSPCC

- 0808 800 500

Not happy with us?

If you are not happy with the way you have been treated by us and want to make a complaint, please let your social worker know as soon as possible and this will be looked into for you.

Help and advice

For more information please contact:

Safeguarding Children Unit

- Civic Centre
- Gateshead
- NE8 1HH
- 0191 433 8031