

Safeguarding and Protecting Disabled and Deaf Children

Information for Parents and Carers



Working together to safeguard all Islington's children



Disabled and deaf children are more vulnerable to abuse and/or neglect than other children. As parents and carers you play a key role in the protection of your children. You know your child better than anyone else. You're the one most able to identify if something is wrong. You'll be aware how your child communicates. You're also most likely to be the one your child will tell if someone is harming them.



What you can do to protect your child:

- Help your child develop their communication skills in ways that are best for them
- Explain 'good' and 'bad' care and touching to your child
- Explain to your child the parts of their bodies that are private and shouldn't be touched by others
- Let your child know that if anyone is hurting or bullying them (including cyber-bullying) they should tell you
- Be aware of any changes in behaviour that might indicate that your child is being harmed. For example, unexplained injuries like bruises, acting in a sexually inappropriate way, being withdrawn, being aggressive, stomach aches, headaches or bed-wetting
- Monitor your child's use of the internet. For example, the sites they access and who contacts them
- Promote your child's inclusion and participation in everyday life and mainstream activities, including personal safety programmes and personal, social, health and sex education
- Help your child build self-confidence and a positive identity
- As far as possible, support your child to build their independence and be involved in the decision making about their lives
- Ensure you are equipped with the right knowledge and skills to support your child

Take care of yourself:

- It's important for you to look after yourself and recharge your batteries
- A regular break is very important
- Don't feel you need to struggle on until you reach a crisis point
- If you have any concerns that you are no longer managing very well speak to a professional who knows your child, or contact children's services and ask about an assessment and support

If you are concerned that a disabled or deaf child is being abused or neglected you must make an immediate referral to: Islington's Children's Services Contact Team
0207 527 7400,
cscreferrals@islington.gov.uk



Using direct payments safely

If you receive support for your child via a direct payment and choose to employ your own support worker you need to satisfy yourself that the person providing help with the care of your child is an appropriate person. The greater use of direct payments carries some risk if the minimum requirements, eg, checks and references, have not been followed up.

The Local Authority can exercise their discretion and refuse to give a direct payment if they consider a child is being placed in a situation where they would be at risk of harm as a result of being cared for by an unsuitable person.

When interviewing a potential carer:

- Ask them to describe their previous experiences
- Ask them about any specialised training they've had
- Ask them how they would deal with difficult behaviour
- Ask them how they would handle an emergency
- Ask them if they have any health restrictions that would affect their ability to care for your child
- Observe how they interact with your child. Look for someone who's relaxed and happy with your child
- Ask to see their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This used to be known as a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check
- Ask for at least 2 references
- Talk to the referees yourself
- Confirm what support your child needs
- Confirm their rate of pay
- Confirm the hours and days you want to employ them

Support available for disabled children and their families:

Islington's Disabled Children's Team

For social work assessment and support for children with severe and complex disabilities

Tel 020 7527 3366 **Email** disabledchildren.team@islington.gov.uk

Central Referral Team

For health assessment, diagnostics and early support for children with additional health needs and disabilities

Tel 020 3316 1877 **Email** whh-tr.islchildrensreferrals@nhs.net

Early Support and Personalisation Team

For support with personal budgets and direct payments including DBS checks

Tel 020 7527 7263 **Email** selfdirectedsupport@islington.gov.uk

For information about early support keyworking

Tel 020 7527 7263 **Email** earlysupport@islington.gov.uk

Centre 404

Information, advice and support for parents/carers of children with disabilities

Tel 020 3316 1930 **Email** family@centre404.org.uk

Short breaks

Short breaks and activities for children with severe and complex disabilities

Tel 0207 527 8611 **Email** short.breaks@islington.gov.uk

Islington Safeguarding Children Board

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London N5 1EB

Tel: 020 7527 4209/4234

Visit: www.islingtonscb.org.uk