

Safeguarding Neglect



Working Together 2023 defines neglect as: “the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs”.

Widely considered as the most common form of abuse, neglect can present itself in a multitude of ways such as emotional, physical, educational, and medical. **Children that suffer neglect are often subject to other forms of abuse.**

Signs and indicators include:

- Being particularly hungry
- Being unclean
- Having unwashed or unsuitable clothing
- Being tired
- Poor attendance/time keeping.
- Delays in development
- Parental engagement
- Emotional wellbeing of the child

Factors that are recognised as contributing to neglect include 'parenting capacity' and 'family and environmental factors.' And whilst a family approach for support is most effective, the child's well-being should remain paramount.

Where neglect is suspected, practitioners should act in accordance with the settings safeguarding policies and procedures.

Task 1

With your team, consider the questions below:

- Are staff confident in identifying the signs and indicators of neglect?
- Are staff able to articulate what they would do should they suspect this form of abuse?
- What training/support has been made available to the staff team to keep them well informed about neglect?
- Do the safeguarding policies and procedures for the setting provide enough information about neglect?
- Do practitioners endeavour to effectively engage parents when concerns arise?
- What are the potential obstacles when engaging parents and how could they be overcome?
- How do you ensure that the child's well-being remains the primary focus?
- How do you allow for the child's voice to be heard?
- What other professionals may you wish to engage with for further support?

Neglect and the damage to children from neglect has been a feature in both local and national serious case reviews have been identified as a feature in national and local serious case reviews, and locally in learning reviews and multi-agency audits. Therefore, a neglect toolkit has been launched by the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland, safeguarding children's partnership. It will support you in having professional discussions when you are concerned about a child:

Neglect Toolkit Launch video

- [Neglect Toolkit Launch x 1 20211004 123239 Meeting Recording - YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XiIQBbOR90](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XiIQBbOR90)

Neglect toolkit and score sheet - https://lrs.cb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html - click on Risk Assessment/Screening Tools/ Toolkits to access the Neglect toolkit and score sheet.

This version was released in July 2021 after the addition of information regarding adolescent neglect, ICON (Infant crying is normal; Comforting methods can help; It's Ok to walk away; Never, ever shake a baby), safer sleeping, and SUDI (Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy).

Task 2

Use the links above to establish what the neglect toolkit is. Then work with your team to produce an action plan on how you will be able to use/embed this in practice.

Useful Links:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/neglect/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/neglect/research-and-resources/>

LLR Procedures Online

[Leicester and the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures Manual \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)

LLR LSCPБ Neglect Strategy and Toolkit

[Neglect \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)

Training is available both online and through the LLR Multiagency Training Programme.