



Recognise
Be aware that people may be at risk of harm and may need support and protection.



Respond
Address immediate needs. Ensure the people at risk are safe.



Report
Follow procedure outlined below.



Record
Record all information including actions and decisions.



Reflect
Learn lessons. Share learning. Use your experience to support colleagues.

Recognise	
Who is at Risk?	Any child or young person may be at risk of abuse/and or neglect and everyone should be vigilant whether working directly with children or indirectly through working with adults. Perhaps you work in a general public facing area and see children and adults on a daily basis. Or maybe you have a child protection concern as a member of the public. When we talk about children and young people we mean those who have not attained their 18 th birthday as yet.
How to Recognise?	<p>Child abuse and neglect covers a wide spectrum and the following information is a general guide only. For those whose roles involve working with children and families as well as those working in adult services, your level of knowledge in protecting children will require additional training. We have included information and links to these at the end.</p> <p>Obvious physical abuse or neglect can include e.g. Fractures (broken bones), burns, bruises, head injuries, malnourishment that takes the form of both overweight or underweight, poor hygiene, dental decay, not being given the medicines for a medical condition.</p> <p>Emotional abuse and/ or neglect of children remains a main category identified for children who are placed on the Child Protection Register both locally in Grampian and nationally. This experience can have a long term and damaging impact on a child's life. This can be seen e.g. as the child who is the focus of blame in a family. The child who is challenging/ called 'attention seeking' or appears sad and withdrawn. The child who is</p>

regularly shouted at by an adult carer using inappropriate language or called 'stupid' or 'useless' time and again.

Recognition of abuse or neglect can be very challenging to identify as injuries may be hidden, children may not realise they are being harmed due to their age or capacity. Children may live in abusive/neglectful environments where adults cannot keep them safe or nurtured due to domestic abuse, mental ill-health, substance use or parents who resist practitioners or services which may result in potential harm to children and young people. The impact of neglect that endures over time is cumulative and leads to the poorest outcomes for children and young people. Children may also be exposed to child sexual abuse by exploitation or be at risk of cyber abuse via social media/ mobile technology. Children can also be exposed to inappropriate adult material such as pornography through various different media platforms.

It should also be remembered that children may be at risk of harm from other children or by adults in a position of power and we have to acknowledge this may be from the adults who are our colleagues.

As seen, concerns for a child may come to light in a variety of ways including:

A child telling you or someone about an experience. It is essential that any disclosure is believed and acted upon.

Respond	
Address Immediate Safety Issues	<p>Your first responsibility is to ensure that any child you are concerned about is made immediately safe. It is impossible to describe all possible scenarios here, but this may include e.g. immediate medical needs and supporting admission to hospital.</p> <p>Do not hesitate to contact 999 for the appropriate service where there is immediate risk of significant harm.</p>

<p>Your Legal Duties and Responsibilities</p>	<p>Children (Scotland) Act 1995 – Explains that all suspected or actual abuse must be reported to our statutory agencies of Social Work and Police. Where there is potential conflict of interest between an adult and a child’s needs or rights, the needs of the child will take precedence.</p> <p>UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. This act is to ensure that children’s rights in Scotland are protected to the fullest extent possible.</p> <p>The Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019, came into force in November 2020. This relates to the physical abuse/ assault of children who now have the same rights as adults against assault including by a parent or person who cares for them. ‘Reasonable chastisement’ or ‘justifiable assault’ no longer exists in law.</p>
--	---

<p>Report</p>	
<p>Who do you Report to and How?</p>	<p>If it is known or believed that a child is at risk of significant harm the facts and circumstances must be reported to the local duty Social Work Team. If a crime is suspected this should also be reported to the Police:</p> <p>Police Scotland - Non Emergency on 101 Police Scotland - Emergency 999</p> <p>Aberdeen City Reception Team 0800 7315520 (0830–1700hrs) Joint Child Protection Unit (JCPU) 01224 070807</p> <p>Emergency Social Work Out of Hours (1700-0830) 0800 7315520</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Social Work (0830–1700) 01467 537111 Emergency Social Work Out of Hours - (1700-0830) 03456 081206</p> <p>Moray: Moray Joint Child Protection Unit Elgin – 01343 554370 Emergency Out of Hours 03457 65656</p> <p>For advice about a child protection concern staff can contact the:</p> <p>NHS Grampian Child Protection Specialist Team at RACH 01224 551706.</p>

	<p>Out of Hours, and weekends contact NHSG switchboard: 0345 456 6000. Ask for Duty Consultant Paediatrician Royal Aberdeen Children’s Hospital.</p> <p>If a child resides in Moray - Contact NHSG switchboard: 0345 456 6000 and ask to be put through to Duty Consultant Paediatrician Dr Gray’s Hospital Elgin.</p>
<p>Information Sharing</p>	<p>All information relevant to ensuring the safety and protection of a child must be shared with Social Work or Police. Where a child “may be at risk of abuse” consent is not required to share this information. The National Child Protection Guidance stipulates that is everyone has a duty to protect and share concerns relating to child protection.</p> <p>This may include relevant and proportionate information about adults and other children linked to the child at perceived risk of harm and is in keeping with National Child Protection Guidance and Data Protection legislation.</p> <p>Information Commissioner’s Office - A 10 step guide to sharing information to safeguard children</p>

Record	
<p>What to Record and Where?</p>	<p>Record your concerns clearly and promptly, in line with your organisation’s processes.</p> <p>Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was seen, heard, or reported • Actions taken • Who information was shared with <p>Ensure records are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factual and accurate • Dated and timed • Stored securely

Reflect	
Debrief	<p>Working with children who are at risk of harm can be challenging and can have an impact on you. Please remember to take the time to discuss difficult experiences with your organisational processes.</p> <p>If you and/or your team would like to review and learn from your experience with a child protection case, the Child Protection Team will happily support you through a debrief conversation. Please contact the Child Protection Team via the details below.</p> <p>You should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek supervision or advice where needed • Take time to reflect on practice and decisions • Access available wellbeing and support resources
Further Training and Learning Opportunities	Please consult your own organisational training offer for further learning opportunities.

You can contact the Child Protection Team via: gram.cpinfo@nhs.scot

NOTE: This e-card is specifically designed for healthcare staff in primary care settings who are NOT employed by NHS Grampian. NHS Grampian employees should access the most up-to-date guidance for them via the Public Protection intranet page.

Version 1.0

Date Issued: June 2026