



Office of the Children's Rights Director

# Young Person's Guide to Working Together to Safeguard Children

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# A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM EDWARD TIMPSON (the Children's Minister)



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In the revised Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance, which we published on 21 March 2013, the Government made it very clear that keeping you all safe from harm and improving your life chances is the responsibility of all professionals who work with you. We have spelt out how teachers, the police, doctors, health visitors, social workers and other professionals working with children and families should work together to achieve this. Also set out is what these different professionals can expect from each other. Most importantly this guidance puts the needs of children and young people at its heart - so the system fits and responds to you and not the other way around.

I know how very important this is. I grew up with over 80 foster children and two adopted brothers, who often came from very difficult and troubled backgrounds. Over time, I saw how love, stability and routine helped them settle and thrive. But many of these and other children could have been spared a lot of suffering and long-term damage if they'd got the right help earlier.

This Guide has been written by the Office of the Children's Rights Director, so you too are clear about how professionals should work together to help keep you safe.

Edward Timpson

# QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

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## What is this guide about?

**Working Together to Safeguard Children (usually just called Working Together) tells the different professionals - like teachers, doctors, school nurses, health visitors, social workers and others - and organisations working with you and your family, what they should be doing to improve your life and to keep you safe from abuse and neglect. In Working Together, 'children' means anyone who is not yet 18 years old.**

This Young Person's Guide has been written to help explain the Working Together guidance. It might be useful to you if you have questions about help you think that you or someone you are worried about should be getting.

## Do I have to read it all?

No, definitely not. It has been written **so that you can look at it for information as and when you want to.**

## Why is the Working Together guidance important to children?

It is important that you know you have a right to be kept safe from anything that might do you harm; and what professionals are supposed to do. Children and young people told the Children's Rights Director for England that **being kept safe from harm is the most**

**important right they have.**

## What should you do if you are worried about your safety?

If you feel that you, or someone you might be worried about, are in some sort of danger you should contact the police. If you need to talk to someone about anything you are worried about you can call ChildLine (on FREEPHONE 0800 1111), or you can ask to speak to a social worker (just contact your local council and ask for children's services).

## Why the need for new Working Together guidance?

In May 2010, the Government asked Professor Eileen Munro to look at the child protection system in England. Professor Munro practised as a qualified social worker for a number of years before pursuing an academic career. She is currently Professor of Social Policy at the London School of Economics. Professor Munro spent a year speaking to many different people, including children, to find out what could be improved.

Professor Munro said that the rule books needed to be changed. These needed to be shorter and clearer for professionals. It is very important that people working with children understand what they each need to do, including working together, to keep children safe. Most important of all, she told Government that **the**



**system should focus on the needs of the child.**

The Government listened very carefully to Professor Munro, and to what children and young people themselves had to say. They have now changed the main rule book, Working Together to Safeguard Children. First, they have **made it a lot shorter** and clearer; and, second; they have said that **children must be at the heart of the system.**

**Who is the Working Together guidance for?**

Working Together guidance is for **all professionals and organisations** working with children and young people, for example, social workers, teachers, health care staff, youth workers, the police, probation, youth offending teams, early years and childcare, housing, adult social care, the UK Border Agency, Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) voluntary organisations and faith organisations. **It must be read, understood and used by them** so that they can better keep you safe.

## WHAT CHILDREN CAN EXPECT **2**



### **Services should work together**

**Help should be given to children who need it as soon as possible. This is called “early help”. All services working with children must look out for any signs of harm. Working Together says that services must be able to provide early help and make things better for children and their families. Professionals working with children need to:**

- find out which children and families need early help;
- share information with each other;
- decide who will be working with the child and family; and
- get help quickly to children and families.

They should share any concerns that they have with others working in children’s social care. They should also explain to you when they are doing this.

**The law says what has to happen if someone reports a child as being at risk of harm.**

### **What happens when there are concerns about a child?**

When a person reports concerns about a child, social workers must first talk with the person who has made the ‘referral’ so that they are clear about what their concerns are.

A social worker, with help from their manager, must decide within a day what happens next.

This may be:

- no further involvement;
- the police being told about the concerns;
- finding out more about whether children are safe or being cared for properly (this is called an ‘assessment’); or
- the local authority taking emergency action to remove a child.

### **What is an assessment?**

The purpose of an assessment is to find out information to help social workers make the right plan to do **what is best for children**. Assessment helps social workers to get a better understanding of what is happening within a family. It means social workers and other professionals finding out all the information that they need to be able to come up with a plan to keep you safe from harm.

A social worker does an assessment (it is also known as a ‘statutory assessment’ because it is backed by the law) by:

- speaking to other professionals, like teachers, health visitors, doctors or the police;



- talking to the child and their family, listening to what they have to say; and
- agreeing with them what needs to be done to help sort out problems.

How long an assessment takes will be different for each child. Sometimes, this will need to be done very quickly indeed, because the child is in immediate danger. The maximum time an assessment should take is no longer than 45 working days (or nine weeks) to complete.

The social worker should be clear with you and your family about how the assessment will be carried out. They should be able to answer any questions you and your family may have about this and listen to your concerns. Your own views must be taken into account and in order to be able to take those into account you should be offered assistance to communicate your views. Social workers should always give you the chance to speak to them on your own and in private. Social workers must decide what action will best meet your needs to be kept safe from harm and so be in your interests. Your safety must always be their priority, when deciding what should happen next.

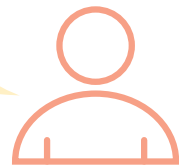
### What happens next?

The social worker visits your family.

They will give you a chance to meet with them away from your parents (or carers). They will work with your family to get a better understanding of what help you and your parents (or carers) need.

### What can I expect?

You can expect that a social worker may come to see you fairly quickly, as soon as they can. They will want to talk to you about things that may be worrying you in your life, including any worries you have for yourself or for others in your family. They should help you to talk about what you think is good in your life as well as about anything that troubles you.



### Do I have to talk to the social worker?

No, you don't have to talk to the social worker, if you don't want to, but you really should. **The social worker can only help keep you and other children safe if you tell them what is troubling you.** They should listen seriously to what you tell them, and act immediately to keep you and other children safe. **They should not tell other people what**





**you have said**, unless you say they can or if telling other people will help keep you or other children safe.

Social workers try very hard to work with families so that families can get the support they need and children can stay at home if this is safe for them. Social workers must think about how best to help children be safe from harm. They will always look at if it is possible for a child to live safely with their family, but if the assessment shows that the child will not be kept safe from harm then they may have to take action to protect the child. Unless parents agree, children can only be removed from their families if the police or a court gives social workers permission for this to happen.

If you need help talking to social workers or other professionals about things that are worrying you, or which you find it hard to talk about, they can ask someone to help you. That person is called an 'advocate'. **An advocate's job is to provide you with information, advice and support to ensure your views are heard, understood and taken seriously by people making decisions. They can help you say all the things you want to say** when, sometimes, you are not sure how you want to say them.

Here is a list of the things children's social care should do when there are concerns about your safety:

- visit you quickly, and **check for themselves that you are safe** (not just take other people's word for it that you are alright);
- **see you on your own**;
- listen to you, including about any worries you have about what will happen to you, or your family
- **be honest with you when explaining what will and won't be happening**;
- **share concerns** they have about you with other professionals that may be working with you and your family;
- **share information with other professionals about what is going on**, including any early help to be given;
- **share assessments they've done with other professionals** so everyone knows what your needs are;
- **take urgent action**, when necessary, to make sure that you are safe;
- **not judge you**, if you are being harmed they should protect you;
- **work with other agencies** to make sure you and your family are getting the right help;
- **share decisions** that have to be made about your life; and
- make sure that they **respond in a balanced way** that helps keep you safe; but without making it



worse (like removing you from your family, friends or school without a really strong clear reason).

### What can I expect?

You can expect that you will be taken seriously if you ever need to tell adults working with you that you are being harmed in some way.

You can expect that your safety will be their immediate concern. People working with you will pass on any concerns to social workers and/or the police, and will work with them to help make sure that you and other children, where necessary, are safe.

You can expect to be asked for your views on what you want to happen on important decisions in your life - like where you should live and who you are able to see.

You can expect to see different professionals working well together to do what is best for you.

You can also expect that your life will not be made any worse because you had the courage to come forward and speak out against your abuse.

### A 'child in need plan'

If an assessment shows that you are in need of services the social worker will work with you, your family and other professionals to draw up a **child in need plan**. It should say what support is being provided to help parents or carers meet your needs. It should also say who is providing this help and for how long. The child in need plan should make clear what parents and carers are expected to do to keep you safe. There should be a timetable for checking on what progress is being made.

### What can I expect?

If you are getting services from children's social care then you may have a child in need plan that looks at the individual needs of you and your family. The Working Together guidance says that children should be listened to so that the child in need plan takes into account what they want.

You can also expect that a child in need plan will say something about meeting all of your needs. It's not just about protecting you from harm.





## A 'Child Protection Conference'

Whenever there is reason to think that you are at risk of harm an urgent discussion should take place between local authority social workers, the police, health and other agencies involved to decide about your welfare; and to take any rapid action needed to protect you. They should hold a meeting, called a Child Protection Conference, within **15 working days** (or 3 weeks) of this discussion. The aim of this meeting is to agree a plan to support your needs and keep you safe. This plan is called a **child protection plan**. The Working Together guidance says that children should be listened to so that the child protection plan takes account of what they want.

### What can I expect?

If you are at risk of harm you can expect that services concerned about your welfare will hold a meeting, called a 'child protection conference' to draw up a child protection plan for you. They should ask your views so that you can have your say on what should or should not be in the child protection plan. Remember, you can ask for an advocate to help you do this, if you want.



## The 'Review Meeting'

Where social workers remain involved with you and your family, they will hold regular meetings with your family, other professionals and, where appropriate, with you. The meetings will look at your plan to ensure that it remains focussed on providing appropriate support. The review meeting will also consider whether your plan should continue, be changed and or stopped. Your views are important and should always be considered.

### What can I expect?

You can expect to be fully involved in all decisions and planning for keeping you and others you care about safe. Working Together guidance is very clear that children and young people should continue to have their say in what happens to them.



### 3 WHAT SERVICES SHOULD DO

The law says that **organisations and individuals working with children must always do what is best for their welfare, and ensure they are protected from harm** (section 11 of the Children Act 2004). This applies whether they are providing services to them directly themselves, or others are providing these.

Working Together guidance says that all services and organisations working with children and young people must:

- be clear about who does what to make sure that services for children are keeping them safe;
- name someone at senior level to take a lead on what the organisation does to keep children safe;
- name a professional to support others in their duties for keeping children safe;
- have a culture of listening to children, including taking account of their views to improve services;
- have arrangements for sharing information;
- have safe practices for appointing staff;
- have arrangements to manage allegations; and
- have appropriate training and supervision for all staff that need it.

#### What can I expect?

In all sorts of different services working with children you should expect to know who the lead professional is for you to go to on any child protection matters.

You can expect to be far more involved in the future, with services wanting to listen to what you and other children think could be done to make things better for you.


You can expect that information about you will only be shared with people who need it in order to keep you or other children safe.

You can expect that people working with you will have been checked to make sure that they are safe to work with children.

You can expect that people working with you will have been given training in how to keep children safe.

You can expect that people working with you will pass on any concerns they have about you to children's social care or the police. They should explain to you why they are thinking of doing this.

You can also expect that any allegations of abuse will be taken seriously, and looked into by the proper authorities (that is usually children's social care and/or the police; or sometimes the NSPCC).



**All types of schools, academies and colleges** have a crucial role to play in identifying concerns about children. They are in a good position to do this early, and must safeguard and promote children's welfare by:

- having a named senior member of staff taking responsibility for child protection issues (including giving advice and support to other staff; linking with children's services; and, working with other organisations);
- taking part in planning where a child needs protection; and
- making sure that guidance is being followed when new staff are being appointed (section 175 of the Education Act 2002).

Schools should report a concern to others (to local authority children's social care or the police) if:

- they think a child is being kept off school all the time;
- it seems that a child is not being properly cared for (that is, properly fed, clothed or treated when ill or injured);
- a child's behaviour or language suggests that their awareness of sex is way beyond what it should be for their age;
- there are strangers hanging around outside the school; or

- a child is harming themselves (sometimes this is a sign that they may be suffering abuse).

### **Early years/childcare providers:**

Working Together guidance says that early years/childcare providers have to:

- make sure that they have procedures for keeping children safe from harm;
- give staff training to help them to recognise when children might be suffering abuse or neglect; and
- name a lead practitioner for keeping children safe and linking, as appropriate, with local authority children's social care (section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006).

### **Health professionals:**

Working Together guidance says that health professionals (such as doctors, nurses, health visitors and those working in mental health, alcohol and drugs services and health settings) are very well placed to see children and families; and, where appropriate, to help children with issues about their safety and welfare.

To do this better:

- bodies that have been set up to manage the health service (these are called the NHS Commissioning Board and the





Clinical Commissioning Groups) need to work closely with Local Safeguarding Children Boards;

- all providers of health services should make sure that they have an expert professional (like a named doctor or nurse) in place with a special role in keeping children safe from harm. They should be available to give advice and support to other health professionals; and
- all NHS-funded services will be required to make sure that staff are appropriately trained in keeping children using their services safe from harm

Health professionals should report a concern to others (to local authority children's social care or the police) if:

- they see injuries to a child that cannot be explained as an accident;
- a child isn't growing at the rate they should be;
- a child doesn't seem to be getting the care that they need;
- they see a child that keeps harming themselves (sometimes this is a sign that they may be suffering abuse);
- they see signs of domestic abuse or violence in the home; or
- a parent keeps bringing a child

into hospital or a health centre in order to get attention for themselves.

### **Adult social care services:**

- Professionals working in adult social care need to be alert to any children in the family who may need help or protection in their own right. Children can sometimes become distressed, or face harm, where there are mental health issues, drugs or alcohol problems, or violence in the home.
- Some children are the main carers in their families. As a result, they can lose out on their childhood and have many of their own needs ignored. Whilst adults have a right to have their needs assessed (Recognition and Services Act 1995 and the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000), it is important that account is also taken of what needs the child has, under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Adult social care teams should report a concern to others (to children's social care or the police) if:

- the level of alcohol or drugs use by adults in the home is threatening the safety and welfare of children;
- a mental health illness raises some doubts about the parent's



ability to safely and responsibly care for their children (of course this doesn't mean that everyone assessed as having a mental health illness cannot be a good parent);

- the main carers for children are becoming too old and frail to carry on looking after them;
- the children have themselves become so much the carer that they are missing out on important parts of their childhood, like playing, learning, or spending time with friends;
- it appears that children have pretty much been left to fend for themselves; or
- it appears to them that a child has needs (possibly due to the parent's disability or learning difficulties) that they are not getting help with.

### **Housing services:**

- Professionals working in housing, or with people who are homeless, may be aware of some of the poor conditions that children are living in. This could be affecting their health and development. The law says that housing authorities must take account of the impact of poor housing on children's health and safety (Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004).

- In addition, the Working Together guidance says that housing authorities have an important role to play in helping to keep vulnerable young people safe (such as young people leaving care or who are pregnant).

Housing should report a concern (to children's social care or the police) if:

- they think that children are being used in selling drugs, sex or for other crimes;
- the welfare of children will be affected by poor living conditions (such as when it's damaging their health or stopping them growing as well as they should be);
- the state of a house/flat that a child is living in is so dangerous as to be putting them at risk;
- it appears that there is no responsible adult caring for the children; or
- they receive complaints about 'anti-social' behaviour from neighbours, and it seems that the children are out of control.

### **Police:**

Working Together guidance says that the police, in carrying out their work have a duty to have special regard in keeping children safe and to promote their welfare (this means doing what is best for the child).



- Abuse and neglect can often involve offences against children. These require sensitive handling. The police will therefore work with other organisations, like children's social care, when investigating these. The police will usually have their own specially trained officers, highly skilled in child protection work. Their expertise is often vital in helping to find out what is happening to children.
- The police often hold important information about children who are at risk of harm. They can also expect other organisations to share similar information with them. The key, as the guidance suggests, is 'working together' so that children can get the help and protection that they need.
- The British Transport Police have an important role in keeping children safe. They often come into contact with children who have run away from home, school or care. Sometimes, these children will have run away in order to get away from things that may be harming them. The British Transport Police too must act sensitively, to help keep children safe.


If the police have any concerns about the welfare and safety of children they can themselves act upon them in order to keep children safe.

The police should report a concern to others (like local authority children's social care) if:

- they think that parents aren't fit to look after their children due to drugs or alcohol;
- children are being left to fend for themselves;
- a child is running away and putting themselves at risk;
- children have offending behaviour;
- adults, gangs, or older children are using children to commit crime;
- there is domestic violence (or abuse) going on in the home; or
- children are seeing things of a sexual nature well beyond their years.

#### **Prison Service:**

- The Prison Service also has a responsibility to identify prisoners who may pose a risk to children. They must let children's social care know when such prisoners are released or transferred into their area. They must also let the police know where released prisoners (who were sentenced for over a year) are now living.
- The Prison Service must carefully think about stopping or limiting contact between any prisoners



and their children where there is a risk. They can open prisoner's letters, or listen in on their phone calls, when they think this is necessary for keeping children safe.

### **Probation services:**

- Probation services work mainly with adult offenders, but some of their work also brings them into contact with children.
- Many adult offenders are also parents with family responsibilities. In making plans there needs to be a balance between supporting good contact with families and managing any risk of harm that contact might pose. This should always be based upon doing what is best for children.
- Those working with adult offenders will also know that some have a record of offences against children. Where adult offenders are thought to be a risk to children, those supervising them need to make sure that the risks are managed.

### **Young Offenders Institutions:**

- Like any other child, children detained in Young Offenders Institutions (YOIs), because they have been charged with or sentenced for a criminal offence, should be kept safe from harm.

Staff in YOIs must be able to recognise, and know how to act upon, concerns that children in detention are being harmed or are at risk of harm. These concerns could be about things happening to the child during their detention or about abuse that happened in the past. The staff in the YOI will need to work out whether they should inform children's social care so that these concerns are looked into in more detail.

- Each YOI should also have a manager whose job is to be responsible for making sure that its policies for keeping children safe are working and that all staff understand what they must do to keep children safe. These policies are reviewed every year. This manager too will be the contact with local authority children's social care to help make sure that children are protected and they have any help that they will need when they leave the YOI.

### **Youth Offending Teams:**

- Youth Offending Teams work to try to help children stop offending. They are made up of different agencies working with children who get caught up in crime. They should have a lead person responsible for keeping children safe.



- Local authorities must make sure that children and young people detained or questioned by the police have an 'appropriate' adult to protect their interests (section 38 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998).

### **UK Border Agency:**

- The UK Border Agency, which is responsible for immigration, has a duty to keep children safe and promote their welfare (section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009). This includes considering whether returning a child and their parent/s to their country of origin is in their best interests. They should only do so if they are sure that it is, and can be satisfied that there are proper arrangements for the child's care and upbringing.

### **Cafcass:**

- The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) looks after the welfare of children who are involved in care and family cases that are dealt with by the courts. They give independent advice to the court about what is best for the child's interests. If they are involved with a child, they have a right to see social work and other records kept by a local authority, and to be invited to any meetings that take place to make plans for the child's care and/or protection.

### **Armed Services:**

- Local authorities have a responsibility for keeping the children of service families safe whilst in the UK (these are children whose parents are in the army, navy or air force). The Ministry of Defence is responsible for this when families are serving overseas.
- The local authority should make sure that they know who they should make aware, within the armed forces, whenever a child of someone in the armed forces has been put on a child protection plan.



# LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARDS (LSCBs): 4



You may have heard about Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) in your area, but you might not be sure what they do or what they are for.

LSCBs are made up of local services and organisations working with children (for example, police, youth justice, education, health and children and adult services). The LSCB makes sure that all those working with children in the local area work together to keep the children safe and promote their welfare. They co-ordinate the work that is done to make sure it is as effective and useful as possible.

Working Together guidance spells out the important role given to LSCBs (section 13 of the Children Act 2004). The work of the LSCB includes bringing different local services together to look at whether:

- children and families are getting the help they need, including early help;
- local services are doing what the law and guidance say they should be doing to help keep children safe;
- the quality of work done is of the highest standard;
- lessons are learned for the future when children have been harmed in their area; and

- local training is helping different professionals to keep children safe.

To try to make sure that LSCBs are even more independent in future, the Working Together guidance says that the LSCB Chair should be independent and appointed by the Chief Executive of the local authority.

## 5 “LEARNING AND IMPROVING” SECTION IN WORKING TOGETHER



To improve the child protection system it is vital that there is learning from what has happened. The Government is keen to see the child protection system in this country become better at looking at the quality of their services and learning from what they and others have done. Professionals and organisations should share things that have been done well and carry out an independent review when things have gone wrong.

The sorts of review that are sometimes needed are called:

- **child death reviews** (for when a child has died);
- **serious case reviews** (for child abuse and neglect cases where a child dies or is seriously harmed);
- **incident reviews** (where an incident is less serious but there are still lessons to be learned; and,
- **practice reviews** (when practice in one or more agency needs looking into)

Whenever a review is carried out:

- there should be a clear purpose to carry on improving and learning (including learning from what works in keeping children safe);
- the approach taken should be kept to only what is necessary;

- it must be led by someone who is independent, if a serious case;
- professionals must be fully involved without fear that they will be blamed for everything that might have gone wrong;
- families, including children, should be invited to give their views. The review should make sure that the child is at the centre of the process;
- serious case review reports must be published ; and
- improvement must be lasting (by having regular follow ups to check that findings from reviews are having a real impact for children). LSCBs are responsible for this.

## WHERE CAN YOU GO TO GET HELP **6**



**You can always talk to someone at your local children's social care department.** Check your local council's website or telephone directory for details.

**You can also ask your local children's rights** or advocacy team for advice and assistance. Check your local council's website for details.

### **Other useful contacts:**

**CHILDLINE** (if you need to talk to someone confidentially about problems you are having or worries that you might have about other children)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
0800 1111

**NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN (NSPCC)** (for expert advice about child protection)

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
0808 800 5000

**CHILDREN AND FAMILY COURT ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICE (Cafcass)** (provides information to help children and young people understand what happens in court)

[www.cafcass.gov.uk/children.aspx](http://www.cafcass.gov.uk/children.aspx)  
0844 353 3350

[www.cafcass.gov.uk/teenagers.aspx](http://www.cafcass.gov.uk/teenagers.aspx)

### **CHILD EXPLOITATION AND ONLINE PROTECTION (CEOP)**

(provides useful advice about keeping children safe online)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

**ACTION FOR CHILDREN** (provides help for vulnerable and neglected children, young people and families)

[www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk)  
0300 123 2112

**CORAM CHILDREN'S LEGAL CENTRE** (provides good free legal advice to children)

[www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)  
08088 020 008

**OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS DIRECTOR (OCRD)** (for help and advice on your rights if you are living away from home at a school or in care)

[www.rights4me.org](http://www.rights4me.org)  
0800 528 0731

**VOICE** (provides advocacy and advice to children in care or living away from home)

<http://www.voiceyp.org/young-peoples-zone/advocacy-getting-help> 0808 800 5792

# 7 ANNEX A

## Thoughts from children and young people:


### **The Children's Rights Director asked children and young people what they thought social workers should do to help keep them safe:**

- be qualified (and, preferably, have some experience of being a parent yourself);
- be trustworthy and able to share information appropriately;
- be good listeners;
- be good at explaining what is happening (including where children have difficulty communicating or speaking);
- avoid asking the same question over again;
- be ready to answer children's questions;
- be able to tell when a child doesn't want to talk about something;
- be available and see children often (children are not going to want to talk to you if you don't make the effort to get to know them first and build up some trust);
- be willing to take action rather than putting things on file;
- make children aware of dangers;
- be more protective of primary-age children;

- keep an eye out for dangers;
- do more home visits and see that children are OK;
- see the children away from their family;
- don't ask parents if you can speak to the children; and
- do fun activities so the child will open up.

### **The Children's Rights Director asked children and young people what they thought teachers should do to help keep them safe:**

- check that children are eating at school and aren't too hungry;
- talk to parents and build a relationship with them;
- don't tell the parents what a child has said – it could make things worse;
- be someone they can trust;
- don't tell other teachers what they've told you;
- be someone that deals with it straight away, not six days later;
- be careful how you word things – don't annoy parents the child has to go home to;
- look for children who are withdrawn or who start bullying others; and
- don't get too friendly to try to get children on your side.



**The Children's Rights Director asked children and young people what they thought school counsellors should do to help keep them safe:**

- give children advice on how to deal with things; and
- give leaflets and phone numbers of helplines.
- The Children's Rights Director asked children and young people what they thought childcare staff should do to help keep them safe:
- keep an eye out for children; and
- speak to children's social care services if a child is dirty or hungry.

**The Children's Rights Director asked children and young people what they thought health visitors should do to help keep them safe:**

- chat to parents – build up a relationship with them;
- communicate with social workers;
- call round out of the blue;
- look round the house; and
- look in the fridge and cupboards.

**The Children's Rights Director asked children and young people what they thought doctors should do to help keep them safe:**

- tell people if you're concerned; and
- do more home visits to see what the home is like.

**The Children's Rights Director asked children and young people what they thought the police should do to help keep them safe:**

- keep an eye out
- share information
- pop into schools so the kids get used to you and trust you
- interview children wearing plain clothes – have your badge with you

**A young person made the point that:**

- 'Information can keep you safe, depending on whether you listen to it or not.' ('Messages for Munro', Children's Rights Director, Ofsted, 2011)



