

CHILD NEGLECT

What is Child Neglect?

Child neglect is a form of abuse and is an ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is in fact the most common form of child abuse. Child neglect can take different forms which makes it more difficult to spot the signs, however the 4 most common signs are:

- **Physical Neglect** - A child's basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter, are not met or they aren't correctly supervised or kept safe.
- **Educational Neglect** - A parent who does not allow a child to receive appropriate educational needs.
- **Emotional Neglect** - When a child doesn't receive nature or stimulation they require. This could take the form of ignoring, humiliating, intimidating, or isolating.
- **Medical Neglect** - This form of neglect occurs when a child isn't given the opportunity to receive health care, this includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations.

How does it happen?

Child neglect could occur for several reasons, parents/ guardians may be trying their best however due to financial difficulties are failing to meet the basic needs of the child, or parents/ guardians maybe abusing drugs or alcohol.

Another reason for child neglect could be down to the parents/ guardians suffering with their physical or mental health.

Regardless of these reasons, its important to know that **child neglect is NOT ACCEPTABLE!**

What is the impact?

Neglect changes childhood, children who have been neglected can experience short – term & long – term effects, which can include:

- Problems with brain development
- Taking unnecessary risks, abusing alcohol & drugs, committing crimes
- Developing relationships with undesirable individuals
- Unable to build meaningful relationships in later life.
- Increased chance of physical and mental health issues

Where can I find more information?

Here are some links to useful information:

NSPCC | UK children's charity - www.nspcc.org.uk

Childline - www.childline.org.uk

The Children's Society | UK children's charity www.childrensociety.org.uk

What to look out for?

Child Neglect can be difficult to spot, identifying one of the above signs does not mean a child is suffering from neglect, however if you notice multiple signs that are noticeable over a period this could indicate a serious problem, signs to look out for:

- **Poor appearance & hygiene** - Being smelly or dirty, being hungry and thirsty, having unwashed clothes, wearing the same clothes continually, not having the correct clothes given the time of the year.
- **Health & development problems** - Looking underweight and malnutrition, body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints, regular illness or infections, poor language or social skills, untreated injuries, and fatigue.
- **Housing & family issues** - Living in unsuitable conditions, not having access to basics such as heat and water, being left alone or unattended over long periods of time, tasking the role of a care for others in the family.
- **Change in behaviour** - Becoming needy & clingy, becoming aggressive and confrontational, being withdrawn and isolated, changes in eating habits, displaying obsessive behaviours, signs of self-harm, alcohol and drug use.

What to do if I have concerns around a neglected child?

- If you have immediate concerns, you should call the police on 999 with no delay.
- Alternative, if the concern is not immediate call the police on 101.
- Wolverhampton Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - 01902 555392

Alternative support

NSPCC - 0808 800 5000 or help@NSPCC.org.uk

Childline - 0800 1111

The Children's Society - 0300 303 700