Neglect Matters
What you need to know about neglect;
a guide for parents, carers and professionals
Neglect Matters

This guide tells you:
1) What neglect is
2) What children and young people need
3) How to recognise neglect (signs and symptoms)
4) The consequences of neglect
5) Where to go for help.
What is neglect?

“The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.”

Neglect erodes the child’s resilience. It makes a child or young person lack self-worth.

Neglect is about the relationship a parent/carer has with their child.
What do children and young people need?

**Physical Care:**
1) To be clean
2) To be warm
3) To have clean, well-fitting clothing
4) To live in clean comfortable accommodation
5) To have nutritious food
6) To have regular dental checks
7) To have medical care when needed

**Development (to learn):**
1) To attend nursery/school regularly
2) To have access to books and toys
3) To have opportunity for play and to develop social skills
4) To have support with reading, writing and learning at home
5) To be supported to experience success and achievement
6) To have targeted help when the child has additional needs

**To be loved and wanted:**
1) To feel safe and securely attached to one or more person
2) To have a stable home environment
3) To feel valued and have a sense of belonging
4) To understand who they are and where they come from
5) Support to develop friendships
6) To have praise and encouragement to build esteem
7) Support to help the child regulate their behaviour and emotions through positive role models

**To be safe:**
1) To be protected from unsafe adults
2) To be protected from exposure to danger at home and in the community
3) To have clear and consistent boundaries
4) To be properly supervised
5) To be helped to understand potential dangers in the community
6) To be protected from harm from social media, phone, computer, Facebook, Twitter etc.
How to recognise neglect:

Physical Care:
1) The child or young person frequently looks unkempt and has poor personal hygiene
2) The child or young person is unnecessarily exposed to the cold due to a lack of warm clothing and bedding
3) The child or young person regularly has unclean, ill-fitting clothing that is not suited to the weather conditions
4) The child or young person is given food that lacks nutrition or is being under or over fed
5) Regular dental checks are missed causing signs of decay
6) Medical appointments or follow up on treatment are missed when needed
7) The child or young person has frequent accidental injuries.

Development (to learn):
1) Attendance at nursery/school is irregular and children are often late
2) The parent/care giver does not promote the child’s access to books and toys
3) The parent/care giver restricts opportunities for play and to develop social skills when their own needs come first
4) The parent/care giver limits support with reading, writing and learning at home as their own needs come first
5) There may be lots of changes in care and an environment that creates behavioural problems in the child
6) The child or young person experiences feelings of worthlessness which creates sadness and anger
7) The child or young person lacks stable and secure friendships
8) There is a failure to ensure children are supervised by trusted and known adults
9) There is a failure to help the child or young person understand danger and risks to them from an unsafe home environment, or in the community from strangers, road safety, exposure to drugs and alcohol, fire and water hazards
10) There is a failure to recognise and take action when a child or young person is exposed to social media without adequate parental controls.
The consequences of neglect:
Babies under 1 year are statistically more at risk of dying from neglect.

0-5 years:
- Failure to thrive, stunting, poor height and weight gain
- Developmental delay, not meeting milestones e.g. not sitting, crawling
- Pale skin, poor hair and skin condition
- Understimulation, head banging, rocking
- Language delay
- Emotional, social and behavioural difficulties e.g. frequent tantrums, persistent attention seeking or demanding, impulsive or watchful and withdrawn
- Frequent attendances at A&E
- Persistent minor infections

5-11 years:
- Poor concentration and achievement at school
- Speech and language delay
- Aggressive/withdrawn
- Emotional, social and behavioural difficulties as above
- Frequent attendances/admission to A&E
- Isolated or struggles to make and keep friendships
- Problems with taking turns and negotiation

11-18 years:
- Poor physical co-ordination/dexterity
- Is bullied or bullies others

Long Term Effects: Young people who experience the cumulative effects of neglect are most at risk and can result in:
- Taking it out on yourself
- Taking it out on others
- Substance use
- Eating and sleeping disorders
- Mental health difficulties/self-harm
- Criminality and violence
- Anti-social behaviours
- Problems with intimacy and separation
- Suicide
Where to go for help

If you have any concerns about the safety or welfare of a children or young person, contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 020 8921 3172 or email mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

If you would like some family help and support, please contact:
- Greenwich Families Information Service on 020 8921 6921 or email fis@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
- NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 (freephone) or text 88858 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

If you are a child or young person you can get help and advice about a wide range of issues from Childline.
Childline is free, confidential and available any time, day or night. Call 0800 1111 or visit www.childline.org.uk to talk to a counsellor online, send Childline an email or post on the message boards.
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For more information on the LSCB’s strategy on neglect, please visit the Greenwich LSCB website:
www.greenwichsafeguardingchildren.org.uk

NSPCC registered charity numbers 216401 and SC037717

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For further information, call North East Lincolnshire Council Communications and Marketing Team on 01472 325 960

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