

Remember

- You have a right to be safe.
- You have a right to be listened to and taken seriously.
- If you don't understand don't be afraid to ask.
- Children are rarely taken away from their home.

This leaflet was given to you by:

Name:

Agency:

Phone Number:

You can use the space below and the next page to make notes to discuss with the people you know and trust.

Questions I have

Questions I have (continued)

My worries at the moment

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Social Work Department
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Balivanich
Isle of Benbecula
HS7 5LA

Tel: 01870 602425

Social Work Department
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Sandwick Road
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2BW

Tel: 01851 703773

Social Work Department
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Castlebay
Isle of Barra
HS9 5XD

Tel: 01871 810431

Childline
0800 11 11

Social Work Out of Hours
01851 701702

This and further information
leaflets available at:
www.cne-siar.gov.uk/childProtectionCommittee

**Information
for
Children and**

**About Child
Protection
Investigations**



**WESTERN ISLES
CHILD
PROTECTION
COMMITTEE**



Introduction

All children have the right to be kept safe and looked after properly. It is everyone's job to make sure this happens. Anyone who is worried about you should tell a teacher, health visitor, family doctor, school nurse, social worker or police officer. Many people such as parents, grandparents or children themselves report worries about the care children get.

This leaflet explains what will happen if someone has reported that they are worried about you.

Why are adults worried about you?

Adults may worry about you if they think you are being harmed in any way at all. Examples of harm would be if:

- someone hit, kicked, punched, burned or scalded you;
- someone spoke to you inappropriately in a sexual way (face to face, on a mobile phone or computer);
- someone kissed or touched you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable;
- someone constantly criticised or ignored you, or made you feel frightened or unhappy a lot of the time; or
- you are living in the same house as another person who has hurt a child in the past, or you see a lot of the person.

Adults may also worry if:

- you are not being properly fed, clothed, or kept clean;
- you are being left on your own or are asked to look after younger children; or

- your health is not being looked after properly and you are not being taken to a doctor, dentist or hospital when you should.

Sometimes children or young people behave in ways that might make an adult think they were being harmed, although they do not know for certain.

What happens next?

If someone is seriously worried about you they will tell a social worker or police officer and it is their job to make sure you are safe and looked after properly. Most of the time they will want to meet the person looking after you first to talk about:

- their worries about you;
- your safety; and
- arranging to meet you to ask you what you think about the worries.

They will also want to ask for permission to speak to you and adults who know you well, such as other members of your family, your teacher, doctor or school nurse.

Who will talk to you?

A social worker or police officer (or sometimes both) will want to speak to you and the person looking after you together. You could also meet with them:

- on your own; or
- with another adult you know and trust.

This could be with a relative, your teacher or someone else who knows you well.

What you and other people say will be written down by the social worker or police officer and the notes will be kept on your file. You can ask to see them.

Where will this happen?

- At home
- In school
- In a room in the local social work department or police station
- Other suitable local venues.

Workers know you and your family may be worried and upset. They will try to help you and your family during this time. The workers will want to understand what your life is like, and to check if you are safe and looked after properly.

Will I be taken away from home?

Children are usually best looked after by their own family. Social workers will work with your family to keep you at home, if possible.

Your family needs to be able to keep you safe and look after you properly. If this is not possible, you may need to be looked after away from home. The workers will listen to what you think before they decide what should happen. If there is a member of your family who can look after you, for example a grandparent, aunt or uncle, they may be asked to do so. If this is not possible, a foster carer will look after you in their home. There is also a Children's Home in Stornoway.

If you have to live away from home the aim would be:

- to keep you safe; and

- to work with everyone concerned to get you back home as soon as possible is that is what is best for you; and
- to help the person who usually looks after you do so properly, so you can go home as quickly as possible, if that is what is best for you.

What will happen next?

When the social worker has spoken to everyone involved, they will speak to you and the person looking after you to talk about what will happen next. This could be:

- No further action;
- Offering you and the person looking after you help to keep you safe; or
- A meeting called a child protection case conference to plan what is needed to keep you safe and looked after properly.

There are separate leaflets to tell you about case conferences and other child protection issues. All leaflets can be found at www.cne-siar.gov.uk/childProtectionCommittee

Where can I get help?

If you think you need advice, you can speak to:

- Your guidance teacher;
- Or other people you know and trust;
- Childline (phone: 0800 1111, calls are free); or
- Your local Social Work Department (see overleaf).
- Family member or friend you have a close relationship with.