



Kirklees **Safeguarding Children Partnership**



Working with Parents who misuse Alcohol and/or Drugs

Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB) is a statutory body which is independently chaired and consists of senior representatives of all the principle stakeholders working together to safeguard children and young people in the area.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is an agreement between partner agencies of the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board and Kirklees Safeguarding Adults Board to support families affected by parental misuse, or suspected misuse, of alcohol and/or drugs.
- 1.2 This agreement is for professionals in all agencies that work with families in Kirklees.
- 1.3 This guidance supports professionals from different disciplines and agencies in working together to share knowledge and expertise, assess the needs of children (including the unborn) and families, and provide the necessary support to ensure those needs are met. Professionals can, and should, work together to support families as issues *begin* to emerge, and support families to prevent problems from escalating.
- 1.4 All professionals must adhere to the West Yorkshire Procedures for:
 - [Unborn/Children of Drug Misusing Parents](#)
 - [Unborn/Children of Alcohol Misusing Parents](#)

2. Professional Responsibilities

- 2.1 Professionals in all services have a responsibility to:
 - **work with professionals in other agencies** to support children and their families. This includes the duty to **share information** with other agencies about assessments of risks to unborn/ children and work that is being done with the family;
 - **consider the impact** an adult's drug and alcohol misuse on unborn/children;
 - discuss the impact of drug and alcohol misuse **with the adult** and provide harm reduction advice, signpost to treatment services as appropriate and follow up;
 - take whatever action is necessary to **ensure unborn/children are safe**, in line with West Yorkshire Procedures; and
 - keep **accurate records** of all your contact with families, the advice you provide, actions you take and the reasons for it.

3. Working with Other Agencies and Professionals

Sharing Information

- 3.1 All professionals have a statutory duty to share information with other agencies to ensure that children and families receive the support they need. The wellbeing and safety of a child overrides the commitment to maintain confidentiality to a client.
- 3.2 Professionals need to use their professional judgement about information to be shared. Information needs to be shared for specific purposes and professionals must be clear

about what they are expected to do with the information they have shared or received. Information must be accurate, up-to-date and shared securely and in a timely fashion.

- 3.3 Professionals should inform families of information that is shared between agencies, and why it is being shared, and ensure that verbal information sharing is followed by written communication. Professionals may wish to share details of assessments of risks to children and/or plans developed with adults to address risk.
- 3.4 For more detail about the circumstances in which information can and should be shared with other agencies, please see the West Yorkshire Procedures:

[Information Sharing and Confidentiality](#)

- 3.5 If in doubt, ask for help!
- If you are still unsure about whether to share information, please seek advice from a named safeguarding professional or manager within your organisation.
 - If you cannot obtain information from another agency and feel that a child's safety is being jeopardised, escalate to a named professional or manager.
- 3.6 Verbal information sharing should be confirmed by written communication, and agencies should keep clear records of decisions to share information.

Joint Visits

- 3.7 Professionals should consider conducting home visits with professionals from other disciplines to broaden their assessments of family need and to co-ordinate the delivery of services for families. Further information about joint visits is available from: [Joint Visits Guidance](#).

SWANS

- 3.8 SWANS is a multi-agency service that supports pregnant women who are affected by drug/alcohol use and/or domestic violence and agencies work in partnership to protect the safety and well-being of parents, children and the unborn. Partnerships include KSCB, Children's Services, Safeguarding Adults, Kirklees Domestic Violence Team, Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust, Lifeline Kirklees, OnTRAK, Probation, SWEET Project, West Yorkshire Police (Safeguarding Team), Children's Centres.
- 3.9 Professionals can receive information or make a referral to Support for Women and Ante Natal Services (SWANS) by contacting Hayley Wimpenny on 01484 225911, (mobile) 07968 745869 or emailing SWANS@kirklees.gcsx.gov.uk.
- 3.10 The SWANS information sharing agreement and leaflets for professionals are available from the [Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board website](#).

4. Assess the Impact of Adult's Substance Misuse on Children

- 4.1 When adults have issues relating to drug and alcohol misuse, **all professionals** have a responsibility to consider how unborn/children living in the family home may be affected. This assessment provides the opportunity to offer support to the family.
- 4.2 Resources such as the Drugs, Alcohol and Parenting Workbook (resource available from [Exchange Supplies](#)) can assist with this assessment work.
- 4.3 The Single Assessment (Part 1) / Early Help Assessment should be used if you feel a child may benefit from additional services. Professionals can find out if a child is already subject to Early Help and/or find out more about the Early Help process by contacting the Early Help Access Team.
- 4.4 If in doubt, ask for help! Professionals who need information about:
- Impact of substance misuse on an adult's functioning should contact Lifeline;
 - Early Help assessment process should contact the Early Help Access Team;
 - Whether to make a referral to Children's Social Care should contact Referral and Advice for a consultation.

5. Discuss Safeguarding Concerns with Service Users

- 5.1 All professionals have a responsibility to discuss the impact of drug and alcohol misuse with the adult. These conversations can be difficult, but adults generally respond better to professionals that are open and honest about their concerns.
- 5.2 Professionals should aim to develop an open relationship with substance-misusing parents that keeps the safety and wellbeing of the child at the centre and tries to appreciate and understand a parent's background and experience. Parents and professionals both need to be clear about improvements that need to be made, how the family can and will be supported, and the consequence of not complying with plans.
- 5.3 All professionals should discuss ways that parents who misuse substances can reduce harm to themselves and others, and signpost people to services that may assist them.

6. Take Whatever Action is Necessary to Safeguard a Child

- 6.1 All professionals have a responsibility to take whatever action is necessary to ensure children (including unborn) are safe.

6.2 If an assessment indicates that a child has additional needs:

- (that can be met by a single agency) professionals must signpost to the relevant service and to preventative support via health, children’s centres, schools and/or targeted youth support;
- (that need a multi-agency response) contact the Early Help Access Team to find out if there is an existing support plan in place and:
 - contact the Lead Professional to join the Team Around the Family (TAF); or
 - commence the Single Assessment Part 1 / Early Help process.

6.3 All professionals have a responsibility to follow up referrals and/or efforts to signpost families to services. Adults and children may need to be supported to access appropriate treatment and/or advice.

If a Child is at risk of significant harm, professionals must follow the procedures and contact the [Duty and Advice Team](#).

What to do if you are worried about a child:

- Kirklees Duty and Advice Team **01484 456848**
- Kirklees Emergency Duty Service 01484 414933 (outside office hours)
- NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000, email help@nspcc.org.uk , text 88858 (free service), or complete [online form](#)

<p>Lifeline Adults misusing substances Telephone: 01484 353333 (24 hrs a day)</p>	<p>On Trak Adults misusing alcohol Telephone: 01484 437 907</p>
<p>Early Help Early Help Access Team Tel: 01484 456823 Email: earlyhelpaccesssteam@kirklees.gov.uk</p>	<p>Change Grow Live / The Base Young Persons/Young Adults Drug/Alcohol Service Telephone: 01484 541589 www.changegrowlive.org</p>
<p>Support for Women and Ante Natal Services (SWANS) Telephone: 07968 745869 Email: SWANS@kirklees.gcsx.gov.uk</p>	<p>Community Links Dual Diagnosis Service – (Mental Health and Substance Misuse) http://www.commlinks.co.uk/</p>

WY Procedures – Children of Drug Misusing Parents	WY Procedures – Children of Alcohol Misusing Parents
WY Procedures - Information sharing	Early Help / Single Assessment
Drug & Alcohol Services in Kirklees	Drugs, alcohol and parenting workbook