



7 MINUTE BRIEFING: Neglect

Neglect remains **the most prevalent form of child maltreatment in the UK** (Action for Children 11 July 2016). Neglect cause great distress and harm to children and leads to poor health, educational and social outcomes in the short and long-term. In some case, neglect will be a causal or contributory factor in childhood deaths. Neglect impacts adversely on children's ability to thrive. It is harder for children to make secure attachments, attend and achieve at school and enjoy good health and wellbeing. There may be an impact on adult life and subsequent parenting

Questions to consider:

- What might you observe in a child who was being neglected?
- What might a child who was being neglected tell you?
- What might you observe in parents who were neglecting their children?
- What might they say?
- What might they do?

6. Remember

'poverty is not a predictor of neglect: it is a correlate of neglect'.
(DiLenonardi, 1993, in Horwarth, 2007)
The majority of people living in deprived circumstances parent their children effectively, but it is a lot harder.
Deprivation can interact with other stress factors resulting in children's needs not being met adequately.

5. Newham Tools

The NSCP promote the use of the NSPCC Graded Care Profile (GCP2), as it is a standardised and evidenced based assessment tool for evaluating the quality of parental care. The use of this tool is a vital component to the successful implementation of this strategy. GCP2 will continue to be embedded across the borough as part of the NSCP priority to improve the quality of professional assessment which is referenced in the 2020-2022 development plan

Information / Links:

<https://www.newhamscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Neglect-Strategy-March-2020.docx.pdf>

1. Background

Neglect is an issue in Newham both in the child protection arena and local learning reviews.
The definition of neglect is complex, as it is not as evident as other forms of abuse. Professionals have to rely in part on their own standards to make a judgement.
The NSCP's vision is to reduce the incidence of Neglect of children in the Borough and further to reduce repeat incidents. We want to get it 'right first time' and then help families to keep the improvements going. That everyone has an agreed understanding of what Neglect is, how it affects the development of children and young people and together we establish an agreed and effective approach.

Types of Neglect

Neglect can take many forms and the main categories are as follows:

- **Physical neglect:**
- **Educational neglect:**
- **Emotional neglect**
- **Medical neglect:**
- **Nutritional neglect**

2. Why it matters

Preventing those early difficulties from escalating and becoming 'chronic and entrenched', which lead to families regularly requiring interventions from statutory services. Neglect has lifelong consequences for children, which can be fatal, and affects the global development of children. Neglect can also lead to difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships, lower educational achievements, and increased risk of substance misuse.

3. Information

Neglect is not a one-off, dramatic event, but rather an accumulation of issues over time. It can happen to children of all ages, including teenagers.

Adolescence (twelve to eighteen) – neglect is likely to have an impact on the young person's ability to form and maintain friendships and positive relationships.

4 Information

Pre-birth – for example if a mother neglects or harms her own health during pregnancy this could affect the development of the unborn child.

Infancy (birth to two years) – a baby's growth and development is critically linked to their basic physical needs (milk, food, clothing, etc.) being met.

Pre-school (two to four years) – most children of this age are mobile and curious about the world around them and it their lack of understanding of dangers that means they need close supervision to ensure their physical protection without which a child could suffer serious harm

Primary age (five to eleven) – developmental challenges for this group of children could be exhibited through poor attendance at school, which in turn could exacerbate developmental delays resulting from neglect such as cognitive, social, behavioural and emotional.

If you are worried about a child young person or family contact:

The MASH number is 0203 373 4600 and the Emergency Duty team number 020 8430 2000