

# Young People - Information about Child Protection Conferences



This handout is intended to explain Child Protection Conferences to children and young people who have been invited to attend.

## **What is a Child Protection Conference?**

This is a meeting arranged by your social worker when people working with you and your family are worried about your safety. The meeting is about what needs to be done to keep you safe.

## **Who will be at the Conference?**

You are the most important person at the conference and your social worker will talk to you about attending. You may want to come to part of the meeting, or not at all, and this is okay. You may want to come and just listen and this is okay too.

You may want to bring someone with you but this needs to be an adult and could be a relative or someone you trust. If you don't want to come to the meeting, you may want to tell your social worker your views, the Chair (the person who organises the meeting) will also offer you the opportunity to speak with them before the meeting and they can answer any questions you might have. You could also meet with an advocate who would be able to share your views for you at the meeting, and your social worker could organise this for you. The advocacy service provides support to young people when Children's Services are involved. Your views are very important, whether you go to the conference or not.

The people at the meeting must consider your wishes and feelings when they are thinking about how to make you safe. Many people that you already know will be at the Conference including your parents or carers, and maybe another member of your family. Some of the adults who work with you will be asked to come including your social worker, school nurse and someone from school. There will also be people there who you haven't met before that may be able to help. The Chair leads the meeting.

## **What will happen before the Conference?**

Your social worker will talk to you about the report they have written about you and can answer any questions you have about the meeting.

## **What will happen at the Conference?**

The Chair will ask everyone to introduce themselves. The people at the conference will share all the important information about your life and your family – what they are worried about and what is going well. After each person has finished speaking the Chair will ask you if there is anything you want to ask or say. It is really important that you say what you think would make you safer and feel happier. You may need to leave for part of the meeting but you will be told this before the meeting starts.

The Chair then asks everyone what needs to change for you to be safer and asks people to agree to take action to make those changes happen. This is called a plan and is written up and shared with everyone that attends the meeting.

If the people at the conference think that you are at risk of significant harm (not safe) and this is likely to continue they will call this plan a Child Protection Plan.

All West Berkshire Child Protection Conferences are audio recorded. The recording is kept safely in your child records held in the Quality Assurance & Safeguarding files. It will not be sent out to the people who came to the conference. It might be used though to type a record of what was said in the meeting if the Court ask for it or it is needed as part of a complaint.

If needed, families can ask for a typed copy of what was discussed via the Chair using the following e-mail address: [cpadmin@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:cpadmin@westberks.gov.uk).

### **What happens if I need a Child Protection Plan?**

A group of people, decided at the conference, will spend time helping you and your family make things safer for you. They are called the Core Group and they will meet regularly to make sure the Child Protection Plan is keeping you safe. After a few months there will be another Child Protection Conference to see how things are going.

### **What happens if I do not need a Child Protection Plan?**

The plan from the conference will make sure that you can still get all the help and support to make your life better but you will not have another Child Protection Conference, unless there are concerns in the future.

### **Can the Conference decide I will be taken away from my parents or carers?**

Only a Court can order that children no longer live with their parents/carers. Most children who have a Child Protection Plan stay at home. The Conference decides what plan is needed to keep you safe and how everyone will work together to make sure that happens.

### **What if I do not agree with the Conference decision?**

You have the right to complain if you are not happy about what people have done. People will listen. You can talk to your social worker or ask to talk to the Chair. There is also an email address that you can use to email your social worker or the Chair about anything you would like to say: [listen tome@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:listen tome@westberks.gov.uk).

You can also make a complaint via the following e-mail address : [ccsc@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:ccsc@westberks.gov.uk).

### **Equal opportunities:**

West Berkshire Council is committed to equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation. If you need this information in a different format, such as audio tape or in another language, please ask an English speaker to email the Complaints Manager at [ccsc@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:ccsc@westberks.gov.uk)

