

Your guide to:

Social Care Services For Children And Families

This leaflet tells you about our social care services for children and families.

Our main aim is to support families so that they can stay together. We work with children, their parents, relatives, carers and other organisations to help you find solutions to your problems. Whatever your age, you can contact us in confidence if you think you need help.

Children and Young People

If you are a child or a young person, we may be able to help if:

- You are having problems at home and need someone to talk to;
- You have a disability and need to know about services that may help you;
- You are caring for an adult at home and need help to cope; or
- You are about to leave care and need some advice.

We want young people to take part in how we make decisions that affect them. We will do this by:

- Talking and listening to every child or young person about the plans being made for them;
- Group discussion with children and young people who have shared experiences;
- Seeking views whenever we are planning new services or changing existing ones.

We recognise that all children are individuals with opinions of their own; they have the right to be heard and to influence their care, and our services.

Families

If you are a parent, relative or carer, we may be able to help if:

- You need advice or assistance in caring for your child;
- Your child has a disability and you want to know what services may be available;
- You need information and advice about private fostering.

If you feel that you or your family, or a particular child or children needs help, contact your local Social Care children and family team (see “Important contact details” for telephone numbers).

The duty social worker may be able to give you the information or advice you need straight away.

We want to provide services which stop family problems and breakdowns happening in the first place. We try to offer help at the point where problems might start to happen.

Services

Our services include:

- An assessment of children in need and their families;
- Extra support for families with particular difficulties;
- Advice on caring for your child, and details of other local and national organisations or groups which might be able to help;
- Foster carers for young people who are unable to live at home;
- Advice to young homeless people aged 16 and 17 and for young people leaving care.

Looking After Children

If you have children who are not able to stay at home, we will try to help you make arrangements with other family members. They may be able to help care for the children for a limited time. If this is not possible, or appropriate, we will help to make other arrangements.

Very occasionally we have to ask the courts for authority to remove a child from their family.

This could mean that a child is placed in a foster home. We will always work with families to develop the best plans for children.

Children In Need Of Protection

If a child appears to be in danger or at risk of abuse, we have a legal duty to make enquiries about the child, either on our own or, in more serious situations, with the police.

If we are still concerned about the child's welfare, we will involve colleagues from other agencies, such as the police, Health and Education Services.

We might hold meetings with parents and other agencies. The child's name might be put on the Child Protection Register in which case a plan to protect the child will be made.

If you are worried about a particular child or children, please contact us to discuss your concerns. A separate leaflet "Child Abuse – Reporting Your Concerns" covers this in more detail.

Social Care – Children and Family Teams

Huntingdonshire Children and Families Team **0845 045 5203**
(covers Huntingdon, St Ives, Ramsey, Sawtry and St Neots)

Fenland and East Cambridgeshire Children and Families Team **0845 045 5203**
(covers Ely, Soham, Burwell, Littleport, Wisbech and Whittlesey)

Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Children and Families Team **0845 045 5203**
(covers Histon, Milton, Sawston, Fulbourn and Cambridge City)

Other Useful Numbers

Emergency outside office hours number
Children's Freephone Complaint Line

01733 234724
0800 056 0603

More Information

This leaflet is a brief outline of our services for children and families.
If you would like more information, please telephone Children's Social Care at our
Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre on 0345 045 5203

Or see our other leaflets:

Services for children with disabilities
Child abuse – reporting your concerns

For more information on **Fostering or Adoption** tel: 0800 052 0078

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