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The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Boards are keen to raise awareness of Safeguarding, how to report cases of abuse and neglect against children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect as part of a local Safeguarding Awareness month.

Abuse can happen anywhere, by anyone, some signs of abuse and neglect are obvious, others are hidden and members of the public can help by spotting signs of neglect or exploitation of children they see regularly, or noticing signs of self-neglect in an adult who has care and support needs, perhaps someone who is frail because of age or poor health.

Behavioural signs of adult neglect can include: becoming quiet and withdrawn; being upset or angry for no obvious reason; looking unkempt, dirty or thinner than usual; sudden changes in character such as appearing helpless, depressed or tearful; physical signs such as bruises, wounds, fractures or other untreated injuries; the same injuries happening more than once; not wanting to be left by themselves or alone with particular people; being unusually light-hearted and insisting there's nothing wrong.

Behavioural signs of child neglect can include: poor appearance and hygiene - they may be smelly or dirty, have unwashed clothes or seem hungry; health or development problems - such as untreated or repeated injuries, poor muscle tone, thin or swollen stomach, tiredness or faltering weight or growth; housing and family issues - living in an unsuitable home, being left alone for a long time, taking on the role of carer for other family members.

Dr Russell Wate, Chair of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Boards said: "After over 25 years working in safeguarding, I have seen the absolute trauma that happens when we don't protect our children and vulnerable adults.

"We must do everything we can, not just as professionals. but also members of the public, to safeguard children and adults at risk. The Safeguarding Boards are the glue that holds agencies together to make this happen, by challenging agencies, and by listening to children, young people, adults and their carers, who tell us their experiences and how we can do better. Safeguarding is everyone's business, we must do this together."

Here in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough we have many dedicated professionals who work hard to protect children and adults at risk, from abuse and neglect.

Prior to 2017, there were separate and well established Children's and Adult Safeguarding Boards in Cambridgeshire

and Peterborough, but in 2017 these Boards joined together to be more efficient and effective.

The boards are made up of statutory partners from Cambridgeshire Police, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group and the local authorities, as well as other members from key agencies such as the emergency services, health services, education, organisations who work with offenders, care providers and the voluntary sector.

Their aim is to work in partnership to safeguard children and adults at risk from abuse and neglect and they use external inspections including Ofsted and Peer Review to confirm they are effective, with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough having been cited as good.

Throughout this month, agencies across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will be working to raise awareness of safeguarding. There will be events for professionals and members of the public – such as at local Hospitals, and information will also be available at local libraries, which will be promoted on social media.

In the meantime, if you have any concerns about someone, please contact your local authority:

- For Cambridgeshire call 0345 045 5202
- For Peterborough call 01733 747474
- If someone is in immediate danger call 999.
- If contact is made early enough, it might be possible to prevent harm and exploitation of a child or adult from taking place

You can find out more information on our website: www.safeguardingpeterborough.org.uk
(<http://www.safeguardingpeterborough.org.uk>).