

Child Protection Conferences – A Guide for Young People

What is a Child Protection Conference?

This is a meeting that is held when there are worries about your safety.

Who goes to the Child Protection Conference?

The people who are usually invited include your parent/s or carers, family doctor, school nurse, teacher, someone from the police and your social worker. There will be others who you don't know. Your invitation letter will list everyone invited.

Can I go to the Child Protection Conference?

Some young people do come to their meetings – every one and every situation is different. Your social worker should talk to you about this.

If you are coming you can bring someone with you to act as your “supporter”. They don't need to say anything; they will be there just for you.

If you decide not to attend the meeting, you can still let the meeting know what you think by writing a letter or in other ways

that you may decide with your social worker. You could also ask someone you trust to speak for you.

Whether or not you decide to come to the meeting, your social worker can arrange an advocate for you – that is someone from a children's rights group. You can tell them what you want to say and they will make sure your views are heard at the meeting.

What if there is someone else I would like to be invited?

This depends on who it is. Please talk to your social worker about this.

What if there is someone I do not want to attend?

The chairperson who is in charge of the meeting can decide not to invite someone to the actual meeting if they feel that this person could threaten others or disrupt the conference. Please talk to your social worker about this; they will let the chairperson know what you think.

What happens at the Child Protection Conference?

If you decide to go to the conference, this is what will happen:

- The person in charge of the meeting is known as the “chairperson” – their name will either be on the invitation letter or your social worker will tell you their name. They will meet with you before the meeting to explain what will happen and answer any questions you may have.
- Other people who come to the meeting will have written down why they are worried about you. Everyone will read what they have written before the meeting starts. You will also see what has been written and be able to say in the meeting what you think about it.
- At the start of the meeting everyone will be asked to say who they are.
- Your social worker will explain why there are worries about your safety. You and your

family will be able to say what you think about these things and tell people at the meeting if you think there is anything that may help.

- Everyone at the meeting will say what they think about these worries and the chairperson will also ask you and your parent/s what you think.
- You will leave the meeting knowing what decisions have been made.

What kind of decisions are made?

If the people attending the meeting agree that you are at risk of being harmed, they will decide whether or not there should be a Child Protection Plan. This plan lists what needs to happen to make things different and how long it should take. You will get a copy of the plan either by post or from your social worker.

How often does the social worker check that I am ok? Can I talk to them at any time?

All the people who will be working with you and your family will meet again within ten days of the conference. This will be a smaller meeting. It will plan the help your family needs to make sure that you are kept safe. You can also attend this meeting if you would like to.

You can talk to your social worker at any time – their name, address and telephone number will be on your invitation to the meeting or your social worker will give you a card with their telephone number printed on it.

How long will the Child Protection Plan last?

Times will vary. The Child Protection Plan will end when the people at the conference decide that you are safe and will remain

safe without any further help from people outside of your family.

What if I am not happy with the meeting?

You can talk to your social worker, the chairperson or contact our Complaints Officer.

If you wish to speak to the Complaints Officer you can ring either: **0845 034 9471**
or FREEPHONE (answer phone)
0800 515 875

or

social.complaints@northyorks.gov.uk

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please ask us.

Tel: 01609 532917

Email: communications@northyorks.gov.uk

