Safeguarding and Child Protection

Newsround

Child Neglect

NSPCC Learning has published a report exploring the barriers and challenges multi-agency safeguarding professionals face when identifying and tackling child neglect.

The report finds that professionals are confident in identifying neglect but often feel powerless to support children and families due to a lack of local services and resources.

The report also calls for greater recognition of the importance of teachers and schools in recognising and responding to neglect and recommends that education is made the fourth statutory safeguarding partner, alongside healthcare, local authorities and the police.

Too little, too late: a multi-agency response to identifying and tackling neglect

Online Harm

NSPCC Learning has published a Helplines insight briefing exploring responses to children experiencing online harm and abuse. It is based on contacts to Childline and the NSPCC Helpline in 2023/24.

Insights on responses to children experiencing online harm and abuse

When a child experiences abuse or harm online it can be challenging to know the best way to respond.

Responses from school

Children and young people who contacted Childline about their experiences of online harm had a range of experiences from their schools. This included the school being heavily involved in dealing with the online situation through liaising with parents and the police, delivering class assemblies about online safety and acting on any bullying associated with the online activities.

"I'm feeling anxious and very self-conscious. A few years ago, a video was leaked of me naked. The police became involved and stopped the video from circulating. My school tried to support me by giving a talk to the entire year group and informing them that anyone who distributes the video is committing a crime. My school also allowed me to do my classwork in a different place, until I was ready to gradually return to class. I started to get bullied about it, but the school put a stop to it. The whole incident had a big negative impact on me. I've been feeling anxious, self-conscious and triggered when people bring it up. I find it helpful to have reassurance and someone to speak to in helping me forget about what happened." Girl, aged 15, Childline

"I spoke to the school counsellor yesterday. I told them about sending nudes to a 17-year-old guy. The counsellor told me that they had to tell the safeguarding teacher and my mum. The school also emailed the guy's school and they're going to talk to a teacher there about it. I'm worried that the guy will find out that I reported him and stop talking to me. I didn't expect the school to make such a big deal out of it. My mum was fine with me but upset that I hadn't come to her myself. She's said that I can't see the guy anymore and keeps checking my phone."

School Responses

Even when they received support and proactive responses from their school, some young people also shared concerns about stigma and emotional impact following their experiences of online harm

"I've recently been harassed online by people from my school. They've been threatening me with sexual assault and violence. My friend noticed that a boy was being inappropriate to me and told a teacher. Then I let everything out. The school told the police and I've been talking to the police too. I felt really anxious about it, but they've been really nice. I feel like I'm annoying them though. I also feel like people will think I'm to blame and that I should have done more to stop it. The school have been supportive though and have split me up from the boys who were threatening me."

School Responses

Unfortunately, some young people did not have the same experience, with some reporting that the school told them that there wasn't anything they could do about an online situation, making the young person feel distressed and alone.

"I have an issue with a boy in my school. He is going to distribute a picture of a girl's private parts and tell the whole school that it's me, even though it isn't. I'm really worried about going to school. My school have said they can't do anything about it, so my mum is going to talk to them about it. I'm not sure if this is something I could go to the police about."

Child mental health

The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH) has published a blog post on the mental health consequences of school anxiety and emotional based school avoidance (EBSA) in children. The blog discusses potential causes of school anxiety and EBSA and looks at the influence on: anxiety and depression; social isolation and loneliness; and low self-esteem and self-efficacy.

[What are the mental health impacts of school anxiety and emotional based school avoidance (EBSA)?](#)

Harmful sexual behaviour

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has published a report which summarises key findings from their research project on harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) in schools.

Outlines interventions and themes.

Designated safeguarding leads need time, training and support to tackle HSB in schools.

There is a need to work in effective partnerships with other agencies, parents and carers to tackle HSB.

Everyone's safer: supporting effective leadership responses to harmful sexual behaviour in schools (PDF)

💻 Free webinars on child sexual abuse

Join over 650 professionals who booked one of our free webinars on identifying and responding to child sexual abuse in September. Our popular series continues this month, with engaging one hour sessions such as how to use our Signs and indicators template in practice.

Our upcoming free webinars include:

- **16:00-17:00, 23rd October**

  Spotting the signs and indicators of child sexual abuse
- **16:00-17:00, 13th November**

  Supporting parents / carers when their child may have been sexually abused
- **09:00-10:00, 19th November**

  Speaking to children about sexual abuse

Check the CSA Centre website to see all our upcoming free events. Reserve your free spot to avoid missing out.