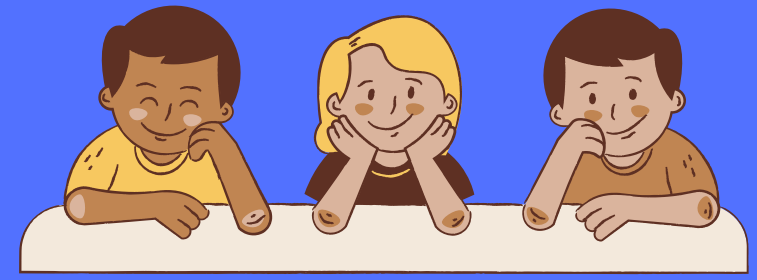


# Multiagency Briefing: Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.



This briefing is based upon information published by the [NSPCC](#)

## Types of neglect

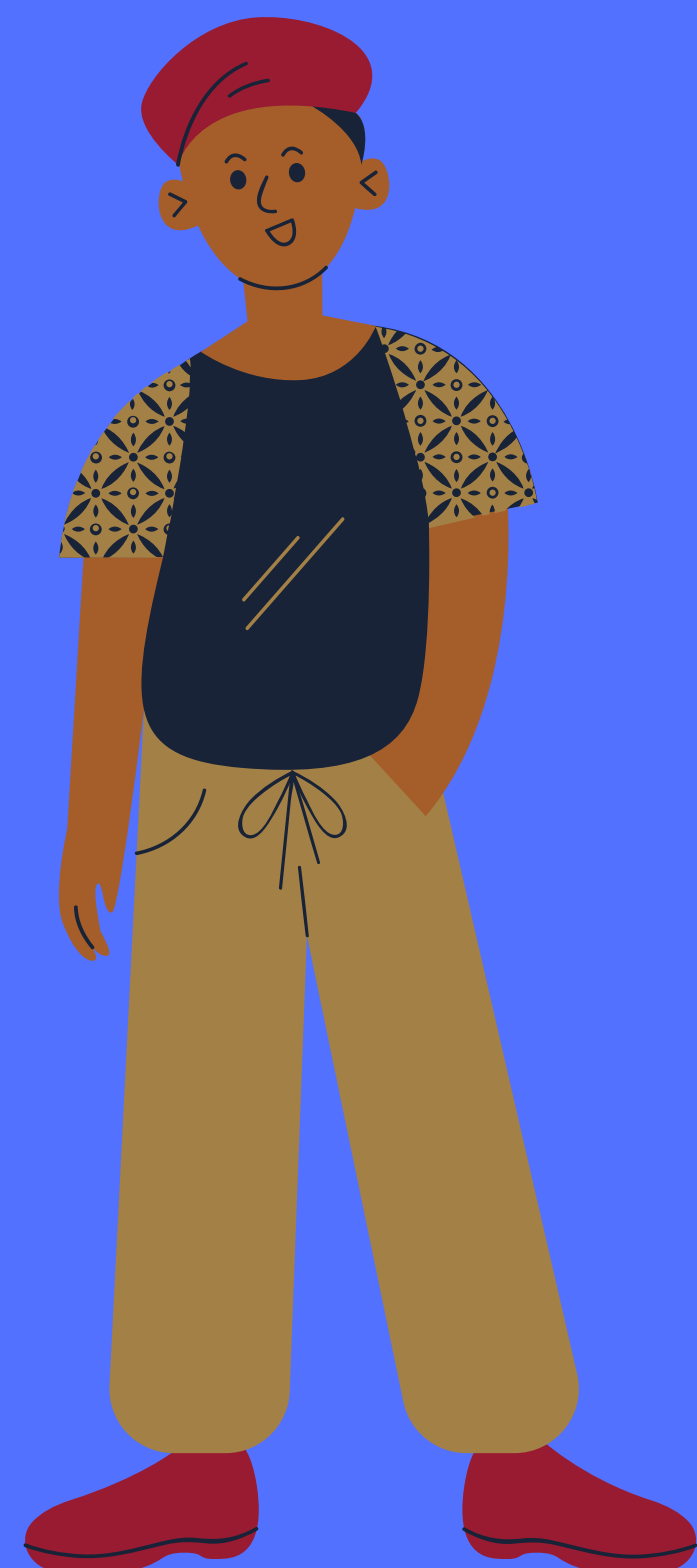
Neglect can be a lot of different things, which can make it hard to spot. But broadly speaking, there are 4 types of neglect.

**Physical neglect:** A child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter, are not met or they aren't properly supervised or kept safe.

**Educational neglect:** A parent doesn't ensure their child is given an education.

**Emotional neglect:** A child doesn't get the nurture and stimulation they need. This could be through ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them.

**Medical neglect:** A child isn't given proper health care. This includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations.



## Effects of Neglect:

Neglect changes childhood. Children who've been neglected might experience short-term and long-term effects. These can include:

- problems with brain development
- taking risks, like running away from home, using drugs and alcohol or breaking the law
- getting into dangerous relationships
- difficulty with relationships later in life, including with their own children
- a higher chance of having mental health problems, including depression.

Any child can suffer neglect. But some children and young people are more at risk than others. These include children who are born prematurely, or have a disability or complex health needs, are in care, or are seeking asylum.

Other problems and life circumstances including domestic abuse, substance misuse, mental health, poverty and lack of support, can make it harder for parents and carers to meet their child's needs. When one or more of these issues occur, it can put a child at risk of neglect.

# Signs of Neglect

Neglect can be really difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there's a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:

## Health and Development Problems:

- anaemia, medical or dental issues
- body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
- missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
- not given the correct medicines
- poor language or social skills
- regular illness or infections
- repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision
- skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
- thin or swollen tummy
- tiredness
- untreated injuries
- weight or growth issues.

## Housing and Family Issues:

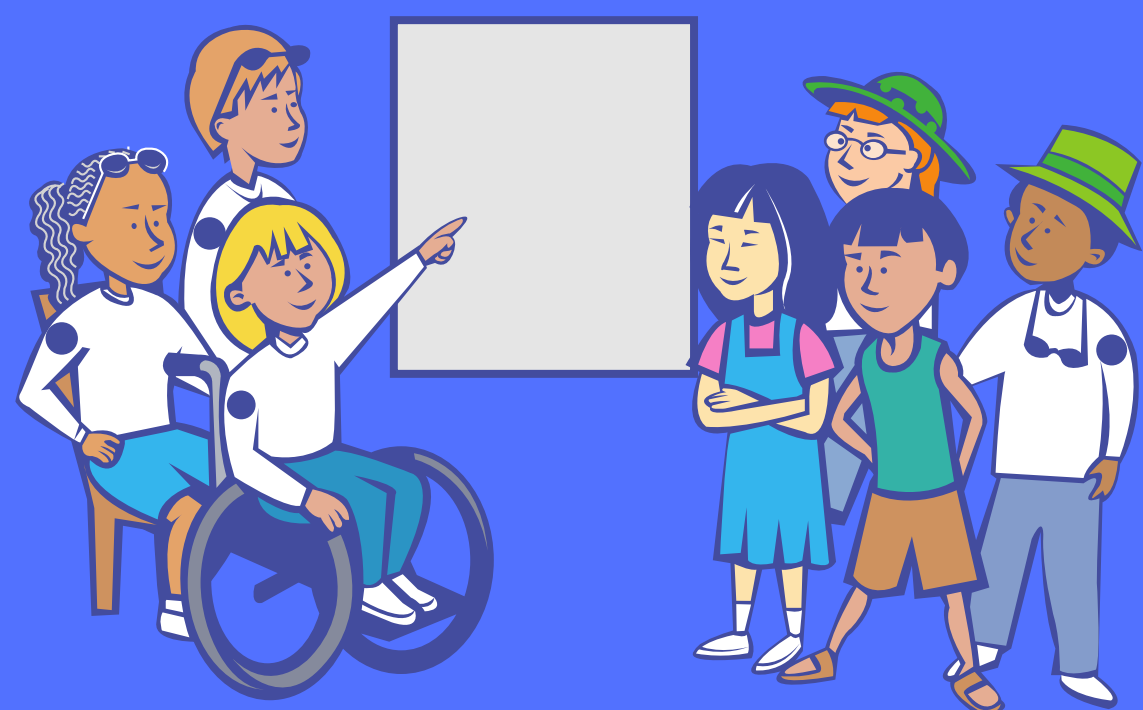
- living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
- being left alone for a long time
- taking on the role of carer for other family members
- being left with an unsuitable carer

## Poor Appearance and Hygiene:

- being smelly or dirty
- being hungry or not given money for food
- having unwashed clothes
- having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter
- having frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants.

## Change in Behaviour:

- becoming clingy
- becoming aggressive
- being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
- changes in eating habits
- displaying obsessive behaviour
- finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
- missing school
- showing signs of self-harm
- using drugs or alcohol.



## What to do if you are concerned:

- **Speak to your Agency Safeguarding Lead**
- **Complete an Early Help Assessment**
- **If you have concerns about a child's welfare, or believe they are at risk of harm, contact Hillingdon MASH to make a safeguarding referral on 01895 556 633 or by email to [lbhmash@hillington.gov.uk](mailto:lbhmash@hillington.gov.uk)**
- **Outside of office hours, please call the Emergency Duty Team on 01895 250 111.**

