WHAT IS A CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCE?

A Child Protection Conference is a meeting that takes place between parents, carers, multi-agency professionals including social care, when professionals involved with a family are worried that a child is or likely to be at risk of being harmed. You should have attended a strategy discussion which is a professionals meeting held prior to an Initial Child Protection Conference gain your view on if a Child Protection Conference should be convened.

A Child Protection Conference is chaired by an Independent Chair, this person has no management responsibility for the children's social worker.

The Child Protection Conference is held to share information about a child and their family, discuss concerns and strengths to assist in creating a plan to help achieve safety, and promote a child's wellbeing and development.

THE OUTCOME

The Chair will ask for a multi-agency recommendation on if a Child Protection Plan should be implemented. The Chair is responsible for the final decision. This decision is based on the recognition of a child being at risk of or is likely to suffer significant harm.

If threshold is agreed for a Child Protection Plan, a plan will be agreed under one of the following categories:
Neglect, Emotional, Physical or Sexual Abuse

Future meeting dates will be set, this includes a Review Child Protection Conference initially 3 months and then reviewed 6 monthly (new born babies will also have a meeting within a month of birth)

You will also attend regular Core Group meetings every 4-6 weeks with a core group of professionals who will support to develop and progress the Child Protection Plan. The first meeting will be within 10 working days of your conference

The Child Protection Plan will end when it is agreed that sustainable safety has been achieved.

Remember it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard.

Essex County Council

CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

A Guide for Agencies



We Care Book Collection from Essex County Council

BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

All professionals invited to the conference are asked to write a report before the meeting. This report should be shared with family and other professionals attending 2 days before and Initial Child Protection Conference and 5 days before a Review Child Protection Conference.

A link to this report can be located on your invite or on the Essex Safeguarding Children's board (ESCB) website

Your report will now form part of the minutes for the Review Child Protection Conference so it is essential it is completed and shared ahead of the meeting so there is a recording of your view.

If you can not attend you still need to provide a report and where possible see if a colleague can attend in your absence.

You should also receive copies of reports from Social Care and other agencies attending the conference.

If you are in regular contact with the child then consider sharing your report with the child and also gaining their views so that their voice can be heard at the conference.

WHO ATTENDS?

All professionals who are working with or may have been involved with the family will be invited to attend. This will include agencies like:

- Social Care
- Health Visitor / School Nurse
- School / Nursery / College
- Police
- GP
- Housing Provider
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Mental Health Services
- If appropriate the child may attend some or all of the meeting, if not their views will be gained and shared in the meeting

CAN MY COLLEAGUES ATTEND?

Where possible we would like one representative from each agency to attend, so families are not overwhelmed. Where necessary as more than one of you have a role with the family then additional people can attend. If you would like a colleague to observe a conference, please check with the Chair and family that this will be suitable.

DURING THE MEETING

It is the role of the Chair to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to share their view throughout the meeting. So be prepared to be asked your thoughts and answer questions.

The meeting will focus on

- What are we worried about?
- How does it impact the child?
- What is going well for the family?
- What do we need to know more about - Grey areas
- What needs to change so everyone feels the child is safer - The Plan
- If you're attending a Review Conference it will also look at the progress that has been made on the existing plan.

Once everyone has shared their information the Chair will ask everyone to complete the safety scale, asking family and professionals from 0-10 how safe they feel the child is.

The Chair will support you and professionals to develop a plan of how to increase safety and wellbeing for the child and the family.

