

Safeguarding for School Leaders



EMKAN SCHOOL
CONFERENCE 2023

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What is Safeguarding?



Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding means: protecting children from abuse and maltreatment. preventing harm to children's health or development. ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.

Safeguarding?

Proactive

“Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes”

Policies / Governance

Health and Safety

Building a safe Environment

Children with disability / special Educational needs

Whistleblowing

Safer recruitment

Online safety

Attendance

Child Protection

Reactive

Protecting children from violence,
exploitation, abuse, neglect

Law

Legislation

Policies

Social Protection

Government Agencies

EXECUTIVE REGULATIONS OF CHILD PROTECTION LAW KSA

This Law aims to achieve the following:

1. Ensure implementation of Islamic rules (sharia), laws or international conventions to which the Kingdom is party, which preserve the Child's rights and protects him/her from all forms of abuse and negligence.
2. Protect the Child from all forms and manifestations of abuse and negligence that he/she may be exposed to it in the surrounding environment (home, school, neighborhood, public places, care and education institutes, foster family or governmental and private institutions or the equivalent), whether abuse or negligence is committed by the child Guardianship, Authority or Responsibility over the Child of any form, or by any other Person.
3. Ensure the rights of the Child who is exposed to abuse and negligence, by providing the necessary care.
4. Raise awareness of children rights and empower children to claim their rights especially the rights related to protection from abuse and negligence.

How does the law impact your school?

A child is defined as '**anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday**'.

Child: Every human being below the age of eighteen.

Abuse: Every form of child abuse or exploitation, or the threat to do so, including:

- Physical Abuse: The child's exposure to bodily harm or injury -
- Psychological Abuse: The child's exposure to mistreatment that may cause him psychological or health damage.
- Sexual Abuse: The child's exposure to any kind of sexual assault, abuse or exploitation

Negligence: Non-provision of the child's basic needs or failure to do so, including: physical, health, emotional, psychological, pedagogical, educational, intellectual, social, cultural, and security needs.

Policy



Why is Safeguarding Children Important?

It's clear that safeguarding is an essential practice to ensure that all children **reach their potential** and are **protected from harm**.

- **Every Child Matters** was a UK government initiative that aimed to encourage services to work together to safeguard children.
- **Being Healthy:** children are entitled to enjoy good physical and mental health and live a healthy lifestyle.
- **Staying Safe:** children should be protected from harm and neglect.
- **Enjoying and achieving:** children should get the most out of life and develop the skills for adulthood.
- **Making a positive contribution:** children need to be involved with the community and society and not engage in anti-social or offending behavior.
- **Economic well-being:** children should not be prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

Why is Safeguarding Children Important?

Many schools do not report child sexual violence

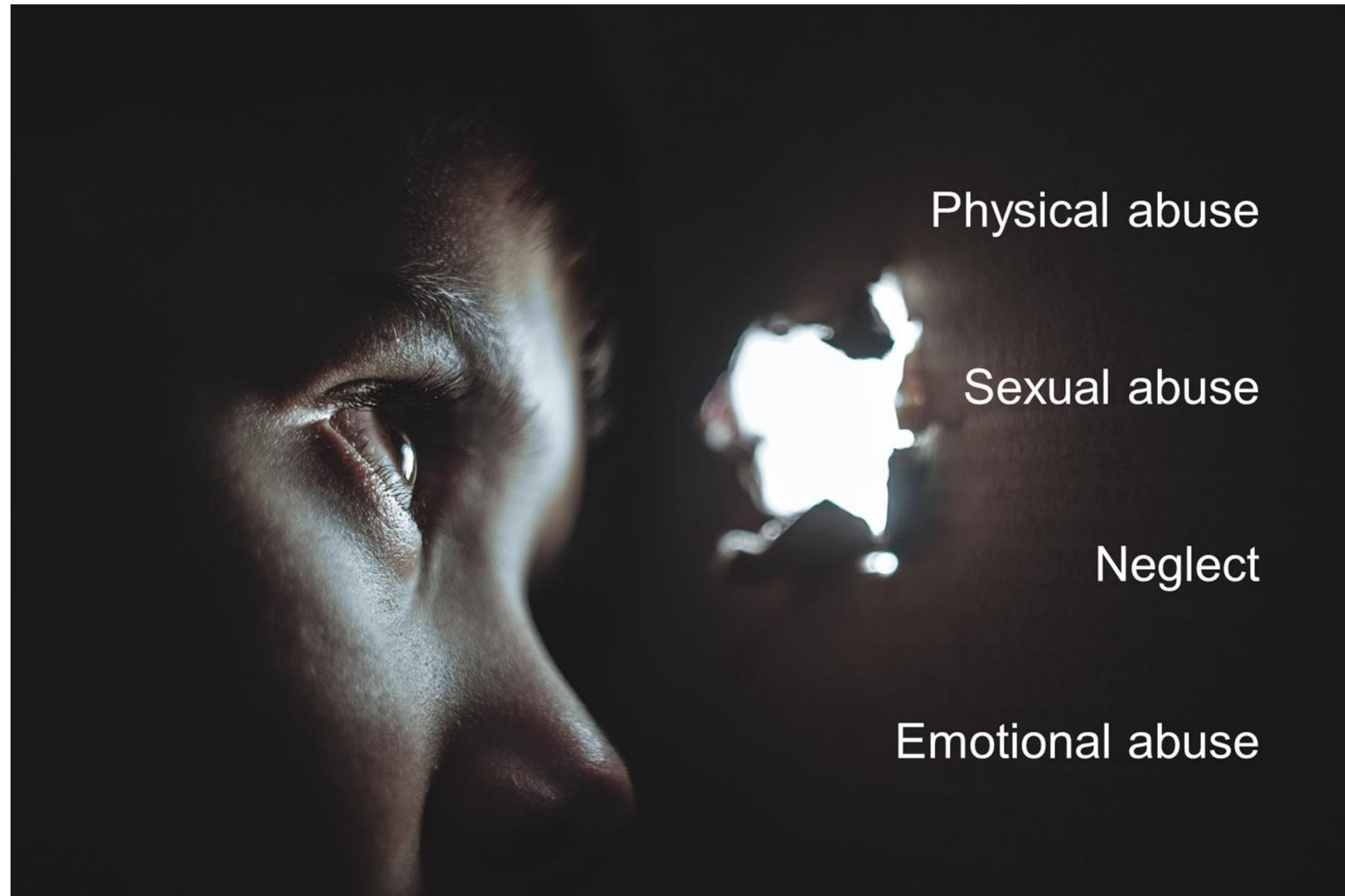
Sharjah Social Service Department, said that the child protection section received a total of 10,155 calls at its hotline number 800700 during last year.

Reports of peer-on-peer sexual abuse rose by 71% between 2013-17

Many children don't understand consent

Almost one quarter of girls aged 15 to 19 worldwide (almost 70 million) report being victims of some form of physical violence since age 15

Four Main Categories of Abuse



How is Safeguarding Relevant to My Role?



Everyone has an **important role** to play in safeguarding children, even if you don't recognize it at first.

You may be the lifeline that a child needs, whether you see the child for an hour, a day or 7 days a week. Consider the following questions:

Do you know the children and/or their family better than other professionals? If so, the child may be more likely to trust you with their concerns.

Do you spend a lot of time with the child? If so, you may be the first person to spot the warning signs or identify that something is wrong.

Do you know what the warning signs of abuse are? A child may be relying on someone like you to spot that something is wrong and take action to look after them.

Do you work in a support role? Then you may be well positioned to offer help to the child or family.

Do you work in a role where children are visible to you? You may spot something in day-to-day life that needs investigating,.

Categories of Child Abuse

There are **4 main categories** of abuse that warning signs and indicators generally fall into.

These are:

- **Physical Abuse**
- **Emotional Abuse**
- **Sexual Abuse**
- **Neglect**

However, these are not strictly defined boundaries and sometimes a child may be experiencing abuse from more than one category

Physical Abuse

Physical Abuse may involve:

- **Hitting, shaking or throwing**
- **Poisoning**
- **Burning or scalding**
- **Drowning or suffocating**

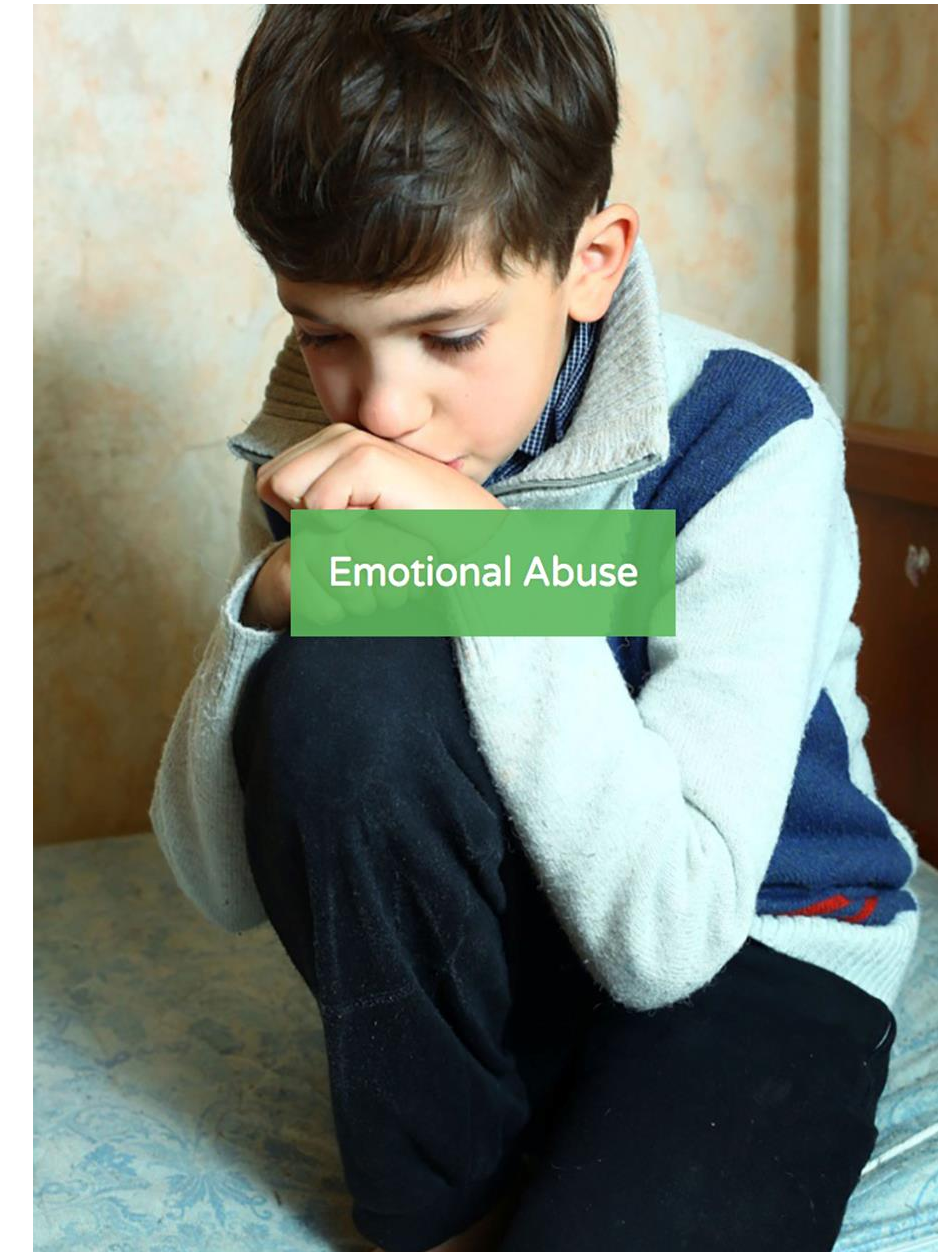
Or otherwise , causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or caregiver fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in the child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause **severe and persistent** adverse effects on the Child's emotional development.

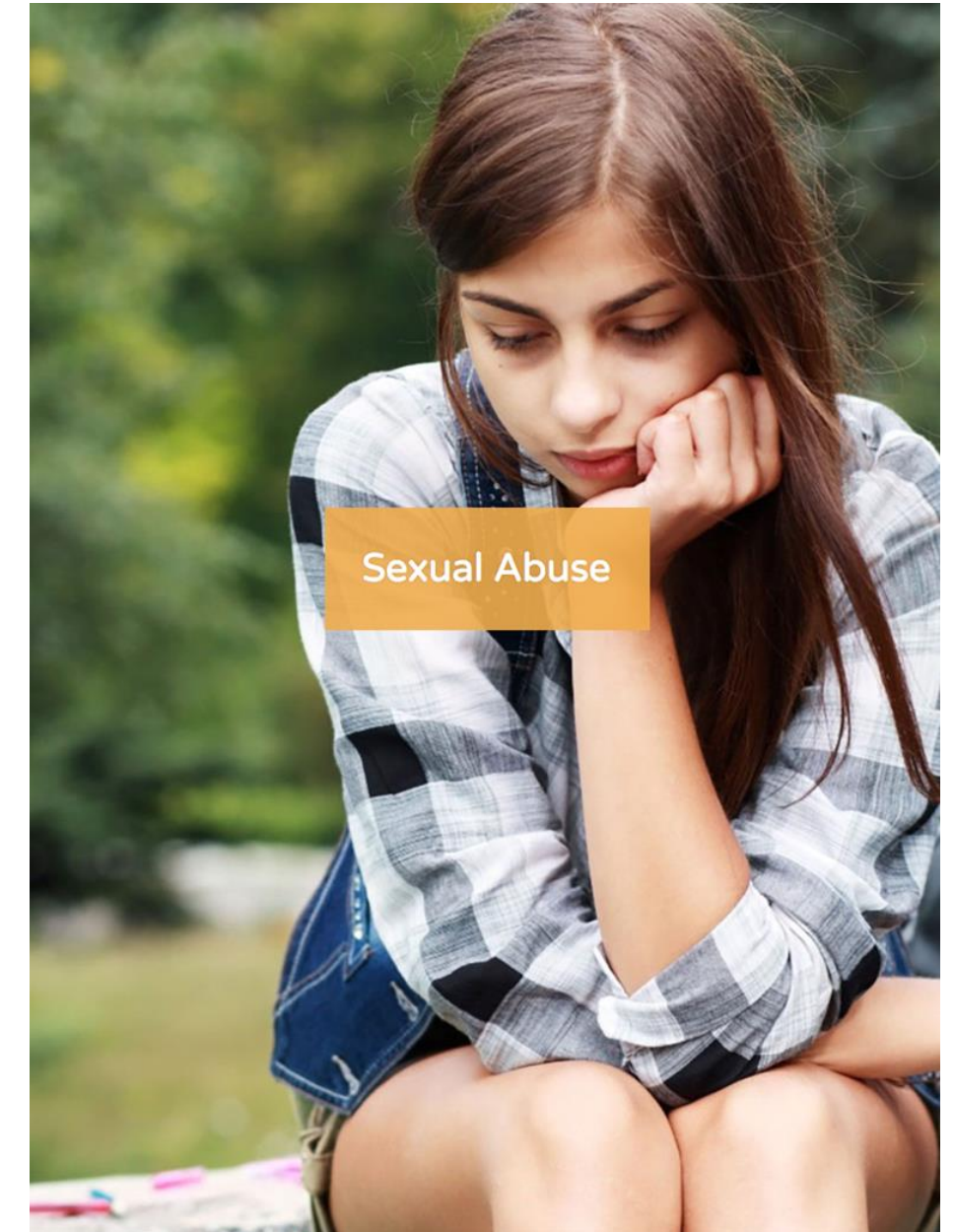
- A level of emotional abuse is involve in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as over-protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction..



Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse involves forcing and enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, inappropriate images, watching inappropriate activities, encouraging children to behave in inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.



***Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males.
Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.***

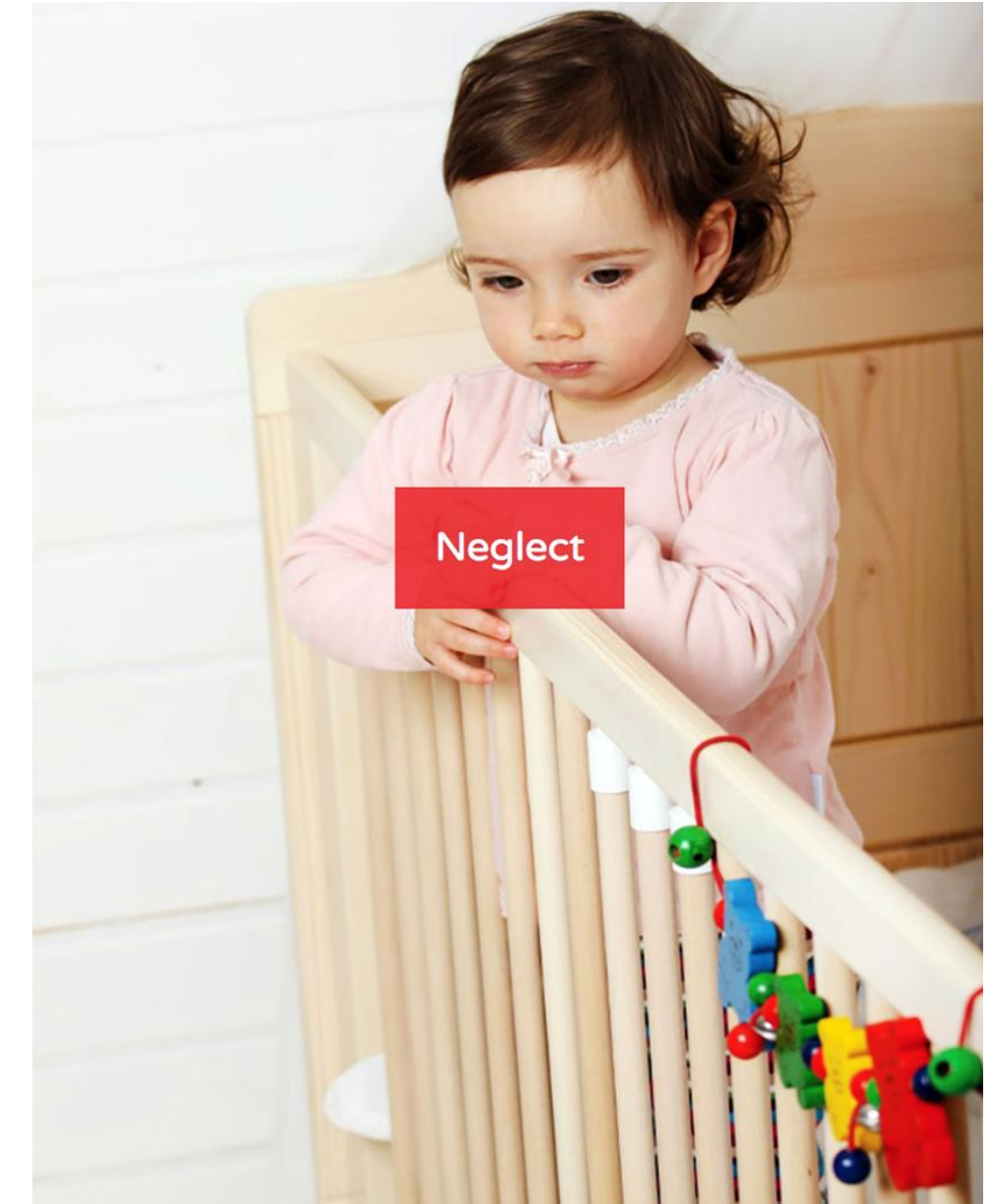
Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic **physical and/or psychological needs**, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or caregiver failing to :

- **Provide** adequate food, clothing and shelter and basic necessities.
- **Protect** a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- **Ensure** adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers).
- **Ensure** access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

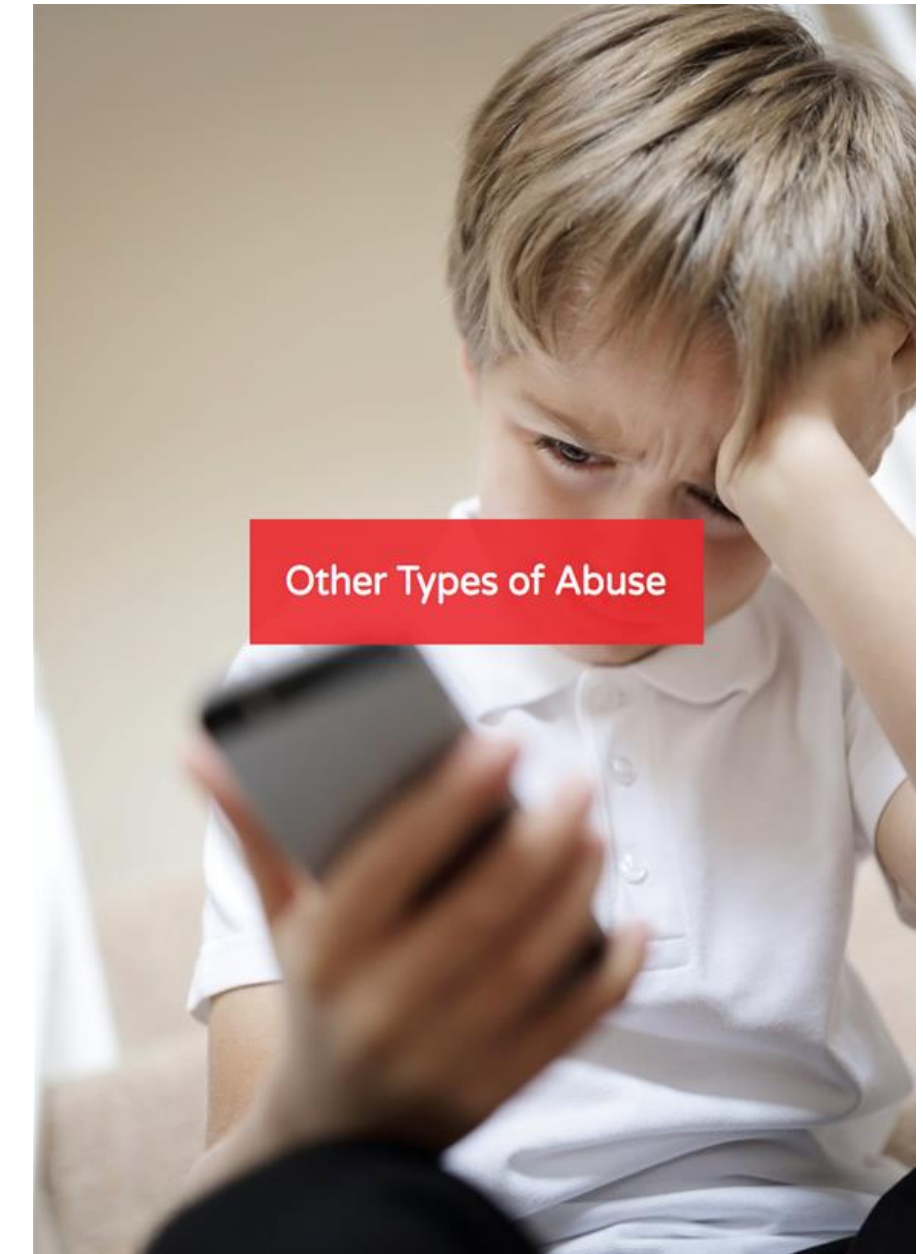


Other types of Abuse

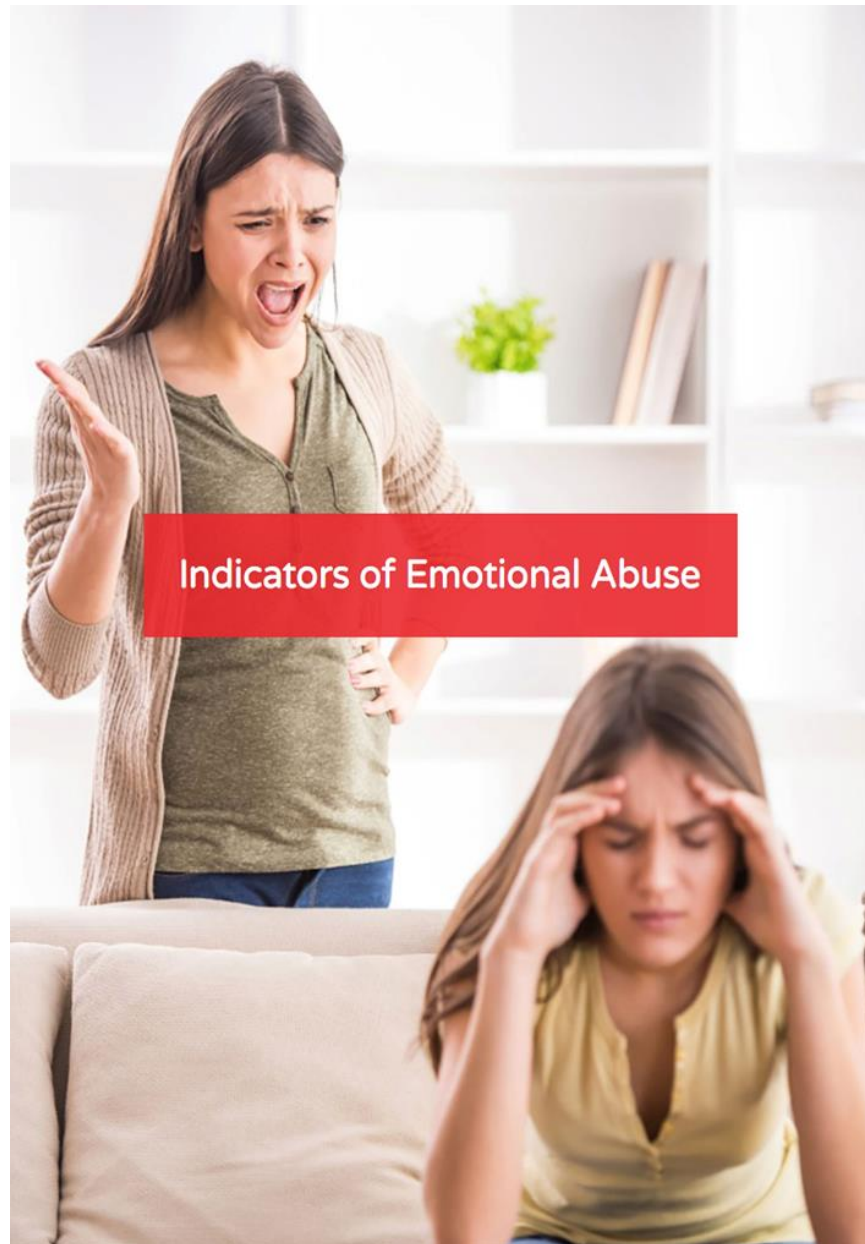
In addition to the four main types of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect) there are other more specific types of abuse to which children can be subject.

Below is a short summary of each type of recognized abuse:

- **Domestic abuse** - harmful and controlling behavior between adults which the child sees, hears or is implicated in
- **Online abuse** - abuse that occurs on the internet and is often hidden, such as via social media or gaming.
- **Bullying** - including cyber-bullying this is any undermining behavior which hurts the child.
- **Child sexual exploitation** - the child is exploited for sexual purposes by others, often gangs.



Indicators of Emotional Abuse



Indicators of emotional abuse that are a cause for concern include:

- You witness the child being shouted at unnecessarily.
- The child is being unfavorably compared to another child.
- There are high expectations of the child.
- The child is made to feel worthless or inadequate.
- Excessive and/or frequent punishments.
- Name calling.
- Delayed language development.
- The adult is hostile towards the child.
- The child is ridiculed, blamed, frightened or threatened.
- The child overreacts when they make a mistake.

Other types of Abuse



Further types of abuse include :

- **Child trafficking/modern slavery** - this encompasses a wide range of circumstances that involve forcing, coercing or threatening a child to commit a criminal offence, benefit fraud or to use as forced labor.
- **Grooming** - activity either online or in person which builds a child's trust for the purpose of exploiting them.
- **Harmful sexual behavior** - this is inappropriate and potentially abusive activity that occurs between children of different ages or from different backgrounds.

It's really important to remember that every child is different and may display different signs and disclose different information.

What's the most important is that you understand how to recognize that abuse or neglect has occurred, listen to the child and know what to do next. It is far less important to be able to label the type of abuse.

Physical Abuse

It's important to note that not all physical injuries are a sign of physical abuse, however, children are prone to accidents and often get cuts, bruises, burns and broken bones as part of their development.

Physical injuries become a cause for concern in the following situations:

- If the injury is **somewhere unusual**, such as bruising on the inner thighs or upper arms.
- If the injury **looks suspicious**, such as if a bruise looks like a handprint or belt mark.
- If the injury **cannot be accounted for** by either the child or their caregiver.



How a Concern May Come to Your Attention

There are **several ways** in which you may be **alerted** about a concern.

You may witness something firsthand, such as **physical injuries or behavioral differences** in a child, or you may have concerns about the way **another adult is behaving** towards a particular child.

- **Sometimes** a parent, professional or other adult may alert you to something they have seen.
- **Sometimes** you may overhear someone voicing their concerns, such as parents talking in the school playground.
- **Sometimes** a child may tell you directly that they are being abused. They may tell you the half story in confidence and may unexpectedly blurt something out.

No matter how a concern comes to your attention it's essential that you know how to respond appropriately.



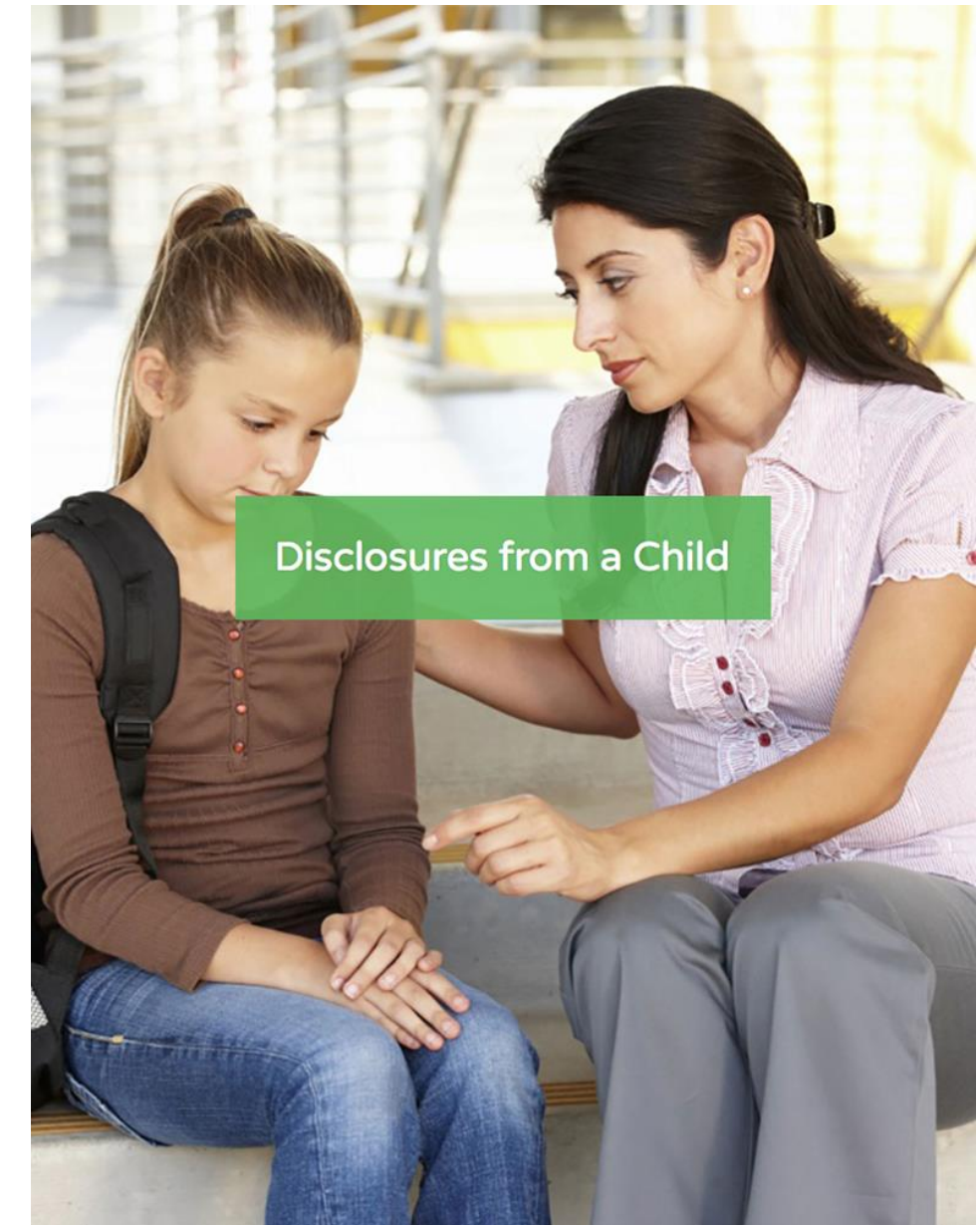
Disclosures from a Child

Sometimes it can be difficult to decide **how best to respond** to a child who discloses information to you, or if you find **your emotions** are prone to getting in the way

What's important to remember, however, is that you need to respond **thoughtfully and sensitively**. The best response involves:

✓

- **Being calm and level-headed:** don't let your emotions take over and allow the child to see that you are panicked, angered or shocked.
- **Reassuring the child:** let them know that they were right to tell you and they're not to blame and thank them for being brave.
- **Listening well:** give the child chance to speak, don't rush them and listen carefully to everything that they say.
- **Not keeping secrets:** don't promise the child that you'll keep their disclosure to yourself. Instead, say that you're going to get help from someone else as it's your responsibility to keep them safe.
- **Keeping a record of what was said:** take factual, accurate notes and store these somewhere secure.



How Not to Respond

Your instinct upon hearing a disclosure may be to feel intense emotions of **anger, anxiety, sadness or distress** but it's of **vital importance** that you don't display this to the child.

The child has chosen to speak to you because they trust you and you must maintain the same.

You should also try not to:

- × **Make assumptions** about what the child is experiencing.
- × Let the child think that you **don't believe** them.
- × **Ask leading questions** and put words into the child's mouth'.
- × Describe the potential abuser using **negative words**: the abuser may be someone that the child loves.
- × Make **promises** that you won't be able to keep.
- × Interview' the child with too many questions: this is the **responsibility of social care**.



How to Report an Incident



Most organizations have a Child Protection or Safeguarding Children Policy which will tell you what to do should you have a concern. Make sure that you are familiar with the procedures it recommends.

Myths About Abuse

1. Most abuse is perpetrated by a stranger	False
2. Abuse is more prevalent in lower income or poorly educated families	False
3. Most victims of abuse will tell someone without prompting	False
4. Abusers fit common stereotypes and are easy to identify	False
5. Sexual abuse is the most common form of abuse	False

Leadership Responsibilities

1. Does your school have a nominated child protection lead and deputy?
2. Is the nominated child protection lead trained and supported to enable them to carry out their role?
3. Does everyone know who the nominated child protection lead and their deputy are, and how to contact them?
4. Do the safeguarding and child protection leaders keep up to date with the latest child protection news and developments?
5. Does your school have a named governor or trustee for safeguarding and child protection?
6. Have all your governors or trustees undertaken child protection training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to carry out their responsibilities?

Leadership Responsibilities Policies & Procedures

1. Do you have a written safeguarding and child protection policy that sets out your commitment to keeping all children and young people safe?
2. Does your school have clear written procedures for responding to child protection concerns?
3. Have all school staff and volunteers read, understood and agreed to follow your safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures?
4. Do you have a policy and procedures for recording and storing information about child protection concerns?
5. Do you take appropriate steps to keep children safe online?
6. Does your school have a whistleblowing policy and procedures, which set out the steps you will take if wrongdoing is reported?

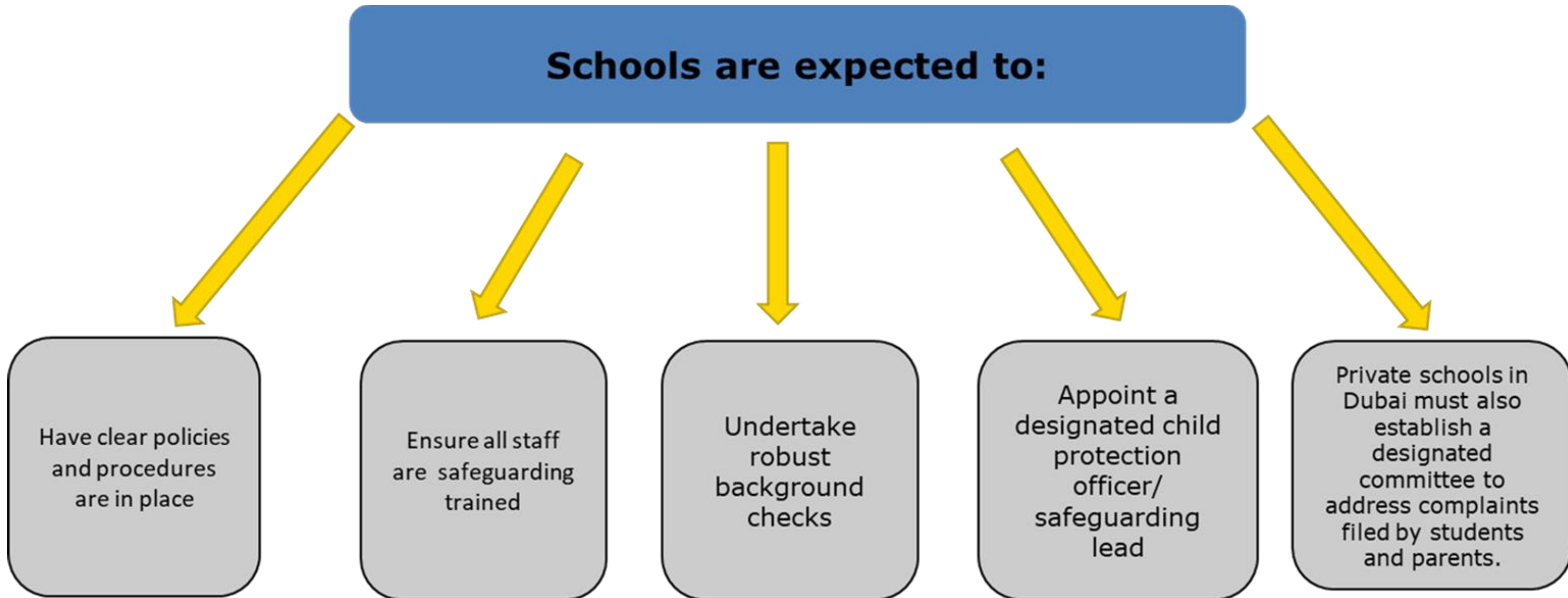
Leadership Responsibilities Child Protection Concerns

1. Are all your staff and volunteers able to recognize the signs of abuse and neglect?
2. Are all staff and volunteers confident about reporting child protection concerns?
3. Do all your children and young people feel comfortable about raising concerns with an adult? Are they confident that they will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately?
4. Does your school have measures in place to prevent and respond to all forms of peer-on-peer abuse, inside and outside school?
5. Does everyone in your school know what to do if they find inappropriate or harmful content on a school computer or device?

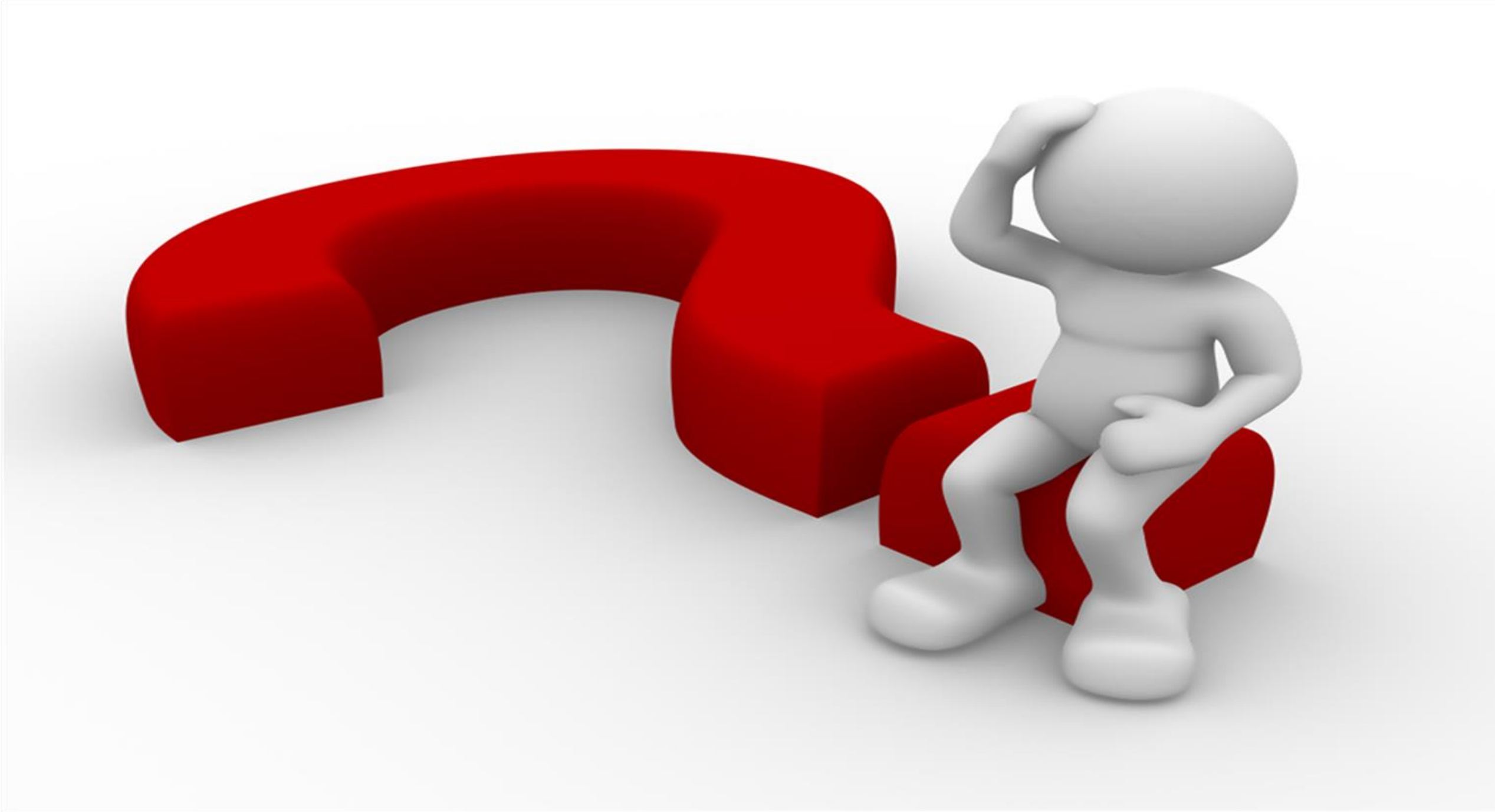
Leadership Responsibilities Supporting Children & Families

1. Does your school have a culture of mutual respect and support?
2. Do you proactively promote mental wellbeing and encourage children to talk to an adult if there is ever anything worrying them?
3. Are safeguarding and child protection issues embedded throughout the school curriculum?
4. Does your school have a proactive and accessible pastoral support system for all children and young people?
5. Do you actively promote services such as Child protection centre Sharjah for children and young people who want confidential support and/or who feel unable to talk to adults in school?

What should school do?



Any Questions?



THANK YOU!

A silhouette of a person sitting and reading a book, set against a background of a sunset or sunrise over a field. The text is overlaid on this image.

**An investment in
knowledge pays
the best interest.**

Benjamin Franklin

Thank you for joining me

What will you do next?





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