



**NEGLECT CAN  
BE PREVENTED**

**LET'S  
TALK ABOUT  
NEGLECT**

**If you think a child  
is in immediate  
danger call 999.**

If you are worried  
about a child call **101**  
or the Children's Hub  
on **01429 284284 /**  
**01642 130080**  
(Out of hours  
**01642 524552**)

**LET'S  
TALK ABOUT  
NEGLECT**



**YOU CAN BE  
THEIR VOICE**

## What is neglect?

Neglect is when a child's basic needs are not being met, such as not having enough food or clothing, or not being properly supervised or kept safe. Neglect can also mean a child is not getting enough love, attention, or support. Not going to school regularly or getting the medical care they need are some other signs of neglect.

There is no single cause for neglect. Sometimes problems and life circumstances 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:

- Seeing or hearing scary behaviours between adults, including domestic abuse.
- Having parents or carers who have experienced neglect or abuse in their own childhood, use drugs or alcohol, have a learning disability or mental health needs.
- Living in poverty and not having enough money to pay for essentials such as food or clothing, or having a lack of support from friends and family.

## What are the effects of neglect on a child?

Neglect can stop children from thriving and developing as they should. It can lead to:

- problems with **brain development** and long term effects on their physical or **mental wellbeing** which continue to impact them into adulthood
- getting into **dangerous relationships** or having difficulty with relationships later in life, including with their own children
- **taking risks**, like running away from home, using **drugs** and **alcohol** or **breaking the law**
- a higher chance of having **mental health problems**, including **depression**

It is important to spot the signs of neglect as early as possible so that the child and family can be supported and the impact of neglect can be reduced.

## Did you know?

Children in the North-East are **two times** more likely to be living with neglect than children nationally.

Children across Teesside are **three times** more likely to be living with neglect than children nationally.



**YOU CAN MAKE  
A DIFFERENCE**

## What are the 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:

### Physical Signs

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

### Health and Development Signs

- Body issues such as poor muscle tone, prominent joints, weight or growth issues.
- Medical or dental issues such as missing appointments, or not being given the correct medication which can result in regular illness or infections.
- Poor language skills or difficulties with friends and peers.
- Tiredness or repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision.
- Skin issues such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm.

### Housing and Family Signs

- Living in a home that is dirty or unsafe, and being left alone for a long time.
- Taking on the role of carer for other family members.

### Changes in Behaviour

- Becoming clingy, aggressive, obsessive, withdrawn, depressed or anxious.
- Finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities, missing school.
- Showing signs of self-harm, using drugs or alcohol, developing unusual eating habits.