

Acute Training Solutions

Safeguarding of Children Advanced - Child in need or child protection

Read each case and decide if it is a 'child in need' or 'child protection' matter and give your reason for your decision.

1	A health visitor concerned about the child of a 19 year old single mother who has a heroin habit which is well controlled. The child's father is in prison for assaulting the mother and is due to be released in six months time. Home conditions are good and the child is always well dressed, clean and taken to clinic regularly. The mother has little family support as her parents have moved away and her only sibling is in care. Recently the child has lost weight for which there is no apparent medical reason and the mother has started to miss appointments with the health visitor and substance misuse worker.	
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2	A referral from the midwife at a maternity unit: mother and baby admitted by ambulance after complications when the father tried to deliver the baby at home. The pregnancy was concealed from all agencies. The couple planned to deliver the child themselves and then move area as her other children have been removed and placed in long-term care. This was their first child together. Ambulance staff reported that the couple had the necessary baby equipment and that the home conditions appeared good.	
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3	An anonymous caller states that her neighbour's children aged 2, 6 and 12 are out late at night. They are often dirty and inappropriately dressed and have asked her for food. Last week the 2 year old was found wandering along the main road alone at 10pm. The parents said to be constantly arguing and the police have been called to domestic disputes. The neighbour has seen the mother with a black eye.	
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4	A social worker visits a family who has asked for help managing their 8 year old son's behaviour. The home conditions are very dirty and chaotic with piles of rubbish and household items stacked up in the living room and empty bottles of alcohol are strewn across the floor. The 3 year old daughter is sitting on the floor sharing a bowl of cereal with 4 scrawny kittens. The social worker hears whimpering and finds a baby sitting in a car seat amongst the rubbish. The parents blame each other for the home conditions and the father is threatening to leave.	
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5	A school refers a 13 year old girl who regularly leaves school at lunchtime with a man. She often returns with money or CDs and is very subdued. They have noted scars on her arms, she is losing weight and her school work is suffering. Yesterday she told staff that her mum's boyfriend has moved in, she doesn't like him very much and he looks after her and her younger sister when her mother is at work. When speaking to the mother she says the man is her boyfriend and he is a supply teacher. The mother is a police officer who works shifts and she has told the school staff to mind their own business, as they don't need any help.	
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6	A nursery worker refers a 3 year old who often comes into nursery with bruises for which parents always have a reasonable explanation. The child is very active, but the number and frequency of his injuries is much higher than the other children. Today he has bruising around the left ear and linear marks on his upper arms, which his mother said his brother had caused them when fighting.	
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7	You care for a 6 year old child with autism. His behaviour can be very unpredictable. One day, when returning the child to his home, you witness him punching his younger brother. His mother tells him to stop and she mentions to you that this happens a lot and she is worried that he may harm his brother one day. She also mentions that she worries a lot at night time as they share a room and that she is concerned he may try to hurt him.	
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8	You provide respite care for a 6 year old girl once a week. As you knock the door to return the girl home you hear the mother shouting aggressively at her younger sibling. You are aware that social services were previously involved with the family.	
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9	You have been helping a young family for just over a year by caring for their 3 year old daughter with an undiagnosed condition affecting her physically and intellectually. You find it difficult to engage with the mum at first as English isn't her first language and she sometimes seems to struggle with conversations. However she has started to open up and you are able to have little conversations with her. They have just had a second baby who is now 2 weeks old and in perfect health but both parents look exhausted. As you are dropping the child back home one day you notice the mother limping. You ask if she is ok, she smiles awkwardly and says she fell down the stairs.	
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10	You are aware that the 5 year old boy you care for has a hearing impairment and is supposed to wear his hearing aids at all times. Often doesn't have them in when you collect him. You ask the dad why he hasn't got them in and he says that they are broken and waiting for an appointment to fix them. This goes on for several weeks. You have also noticed that there never seems to be any toys in the house and he seems to be eating and drinking the wrong things. Sometimes his dad says he won't eat, but when you offer him food he just wants more and more – it is obvious that he is hungry. One day when you enter the house to collect him you notice an open bottle of medicine on the coffee table in the living room, the top is nowhere to be seen.	
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Prioritisation

You are a child protection social worker, these 10 cases have all been passed to you today. In which order will you priorities the cases to be managed first to last.

Remember the definition of significant harm.

Priority	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Case no.										