

Neglect

Definition of neglect:

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and /or psychological needs, likely to result in the impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy... (as result of maternal substance abuse)

Neglect erodes the child's resilience. It makes a child or young person lack worth".

(Working together to safeguard children 2023)

Every child needs:

- clothes that are clean and warm and shoes that fit and keep them dry
- enough to eat and drink
- protection from dangerous situations
- somewhere warm, dry and comfortable to sleep
- help when you're ill or you've been hurt
- love and care from your parents or carers
- support with your education
- access to healthcare and help with medication if needed.

1 in 10 children have experienced Neglect (NSPCC 2021) and Neglect is a factor in 60% of safeguarding practice reviews.

Neglect strategy:

Are you aware of the Neglect Strategy and do you consider potential neglect when you have concerns about a child? The strategy and resources to support you are on the [West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership website](#). This contains a toolkit to support your in practice:

- Howe's model of neglect
- Day in my life tools
- Analysis
- Chronology
- Child/Parent Observations
- Neglect Matrix
- Neglect Forum
- Neglect Champions.

Tackling neglect:

Here are some top tips to help you tackle neglect:

- make sure you use language that can be understood in conversation, plans and as part of an assessment

- share the chronology you have put together with the family, with a colleague or a champion to inform your decision making
- think of ways to discuss the issues you are concerned about with parents/carers
- be mindful of the level of understanding of the family and adjust your language accordingly
- use tools/resources to organise your concerns
- if you have been working with the family for a while and feel you are no longer making an impact try visiting with a colleague to develop a new way of talking about the same concerns.