



Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB)

Making a Good Referral

1. Before ringing First Response (FR- Staffordshire) / Safeguarding Referral Team (SRT – Stoke-on-Trent) are you clear what your concerns are and have you spoken to the parents/ carers about your concerns?
2. Have you talked to parents/carers about consent? For opening an early help assessment (EHA), parental consent is needed. For child protection referrals consent is not required but it is important wherever possible to be open and honest with the parents that you are making a child protection referral except in certain circumstances where such action could put the child or others at greater risk.
3. Before making any kind of decision, have you shared your concerns with your own organisation's designated safeguarding lead (DSL)? LSCB Joint multi agency policies and procedures emphasise the importance of sharing your concerns with your internal DSL before making a referral.
4. Do you need to seek professional advice from outside of your organisation? i.e. the local support team (Staffordshire) / co-operative working hubs (Stoke-on-Trent)? If you are a school in Staffordshire have you sought advice from the education safeguarding advice line?
5. Along with your organisation's designated lead, have you explored what you can do to support the child/ young person/ family as a single agency? Have you had that conversation with the parents/ carers/ child around early help?
6. If you aren't able to do it alone, have you considered bringing in the support and expertise of other agencies by using an EHA? Do you know if any other agency has already opened an EHA? Contacting your LST or cooperative working hub or just speaking to another agency such as a health visitor, nursery or school may tell you if this has happened.
7. What is the nature of your concern? It's really important to gather as much information as you can that will help demonstrate why your concerns have met the threshold for significant harm. This may include historical information such as EHA's, the involvement of other agencies (past and present), previous concerns, particularly if children are known to have lived in other areas.
8. How do you know you have all the information? In order to make an appropriate child protection referral and to help the call taker at FR/ SRT it's important to have as much information as possible and using the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) will act as a checklist before you pick up the phone. (You'll also need to fill this in and send it to FR/ SRT **within 24 hours but within a maximum timescale of 48 hours** after you've made the referral). So make sure you have the basics which include contact details for the parents/ carers. Think about what information you have that demonstrates who the parents are? How do you know that the adults in front of you are the child's parents, particularly that of the father? Have you got information on other family members that may act as a safe haven for the child (ren)?

What about significant others such as other known men that are associated to the family? Ensure that all known risk indicators along with any protective factors are included in the MARF. The impact on the child of any particular concern should be considered.

9. Again before ringing FR/ SRT – have you considered the level of intervention as laid out in the relevant LSCB thresholds documents? What level is the child at and what evidence do you have that demonstrates this?
10. Now that you have all the required information make sure you allow yourself enough time to be able to share the information with FR/SRT. Call takers will need to discuss your concerns and the information you present very carefully and this may lead to other questions being asked. Always keep a record of your call and the name of the person you spoke to and be clear about any next steps before ending the call.

Important contact numbers

Staffordshire

Local Support Teams:

<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/health/childrenandfamilycare/FamiliesFirstPartners/getintouch.aspx>

First Response 0800 13 13 126

Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours Service) 0345 604 2886 / Mobile: 07815 492613

Education Safeguarding Advice Line (Schools only) 01785 895836

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB)

01785 277151

Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) - <http://www.staffsscb.org.uk/Professionals/Thresholds-and-CAF/Thresholds-and-Early-Help.aspx>

Stoke-on-Trent

Cooperative working hubs 01782 232200

Emergency Duty Team 01782 234234 (outside office hours 1700 to 0830)

Safeguarding Referral Team 01782 235100 (Office hours)

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board (SCB)

01782 235863

www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk

Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) -

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/safeguarding-children/professionals-folder/procedure-manuals/c---man-individual-cases.en>