



# ONE MINUTE GUIDE: Child Protection Conference

## What is a Child Protection Conference?

A Child Protection Conference is a meeting held when multi agency enquiries lead professionals to believe that a child may be **at risk of significant harm**.

## What is the purpose of the Conference?

- To bring together key members of the child's family with relevant professionals to clarify how change can be introduced to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- To plan the actions required to help achieve this change.
- To agree the contingency plan if nothing changes for the child.

## Who is involved?

The social work assessment will identify the members of the child's family network who will be supported to attend the conference:

- The family - they have the best knowledge of the child or family.
- Professionals who have involvement with the child and his/her family including:
  - Carers
  - Midwives
  - Social worker(s)
  - Schools
  - Mental Health Workers
  - Housing
  - Police
  - GPs
  - Probation
  - Drug and Alcohol Support Services
  - Any other support services, as appropriate
- Older children will be supported to contribute to at least part of the meeting if they wish to, or their views will be shared in the meeting by those attending.

In accordance with '[Working Together](#)' guidance it is expected that all invited professionals will attend the conference and will have prepared and shared their report with the family in good time ahead of the meeting.

## What support will the family receive in the Conference process?

- The social worker will support all relevant family members to participate in the conference process including fathers who do not live with their children, where this is appropriate. Exceptionally a conference chair may need to formally exclude a parent (if for example bail conditions prohibit contact with other family members) - in such circumstances the conference chair will plan with the social worker and parent how their views will be represented in the conference and how they can be included in the co-production of a plan for the child.
- Support will be provided to family members to ensure they are well prepared for the meeting and able to fully participate in the discussion and planning. This will only be possible if they have full access to all of the information and understand what is being discussed.
- The meeting should honestly and openly explore the concerns and challenges affecting the family without blame or judgement, whilst recognising strengths and promoting high expectations about people's contribution to make things better.

## Agency Reports

The CYSCP report template will be sent to professionals with the invitation to conference. There are strict timescales in relation to submission of reports and reports being circulated prior to the meetings. You will be informed of these with the invitation to a conference. <https://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/resources/cyscp-documents-resources/7>

***All agencies should share their reports with the family before the day of the conference, so that they can reflect upon what has been said, highlight any errors and seek the support of an advocate if desired.***

## Why is it important for families to receive this information in advance?

- They can participate with a clearer view about what they wish to say.
- The meeting is much more likely to start on time.
- Discussions will be more focused and analytical enabling more specific and effective plans.
- Family members are at a significant disadvantage if they are not aware what is in a report until the meeting.

- Absorbing new information during the meeting may make families feel overwhelmed, angry or upset by the process and they will be less able to contribute to the discussion or planning.

## What are the timescales for Child Protection Conference's?

- In accordance with statutory guidance all Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) need to be held within **15 working days** of the strategy discussion that initiated the S47 multi agency safeguarding enquiries that evidenced risk of significant harm.
- Review Child Protection Conferences need to be held within 3 months of the ICPC and then at least every 6 months until such time that conference determines that the child is no longer at risk of significant harm.

## Plans arising from conference

- If the conference agrees that the child is at continued risk of significant harm, the meeting will confirm a clear protection plan with a focus on the **outcomes** which need to be achieved for the child.
- Agreement will be made about the key professionals who will form a **core group with the parents** to implement and develop the plan.
- If the conference determines that the child is not at risk of significant harm the meeting will discuss with the parents whether the family need any ongoing support either through a **child in need plan or Family Early Help Plan**.
- A written copy of the plan will be sent to parents and all other conference participants **within one working day of the meeting**, and developed by the core group, which will meet **within 10 working days of the ICPC and then at least every month**.
- Where English is not the family's first language the social worker will plan with the family whether there is need for an interpreter. Where an interpreter is required the written record of the meeting will also be translated for the family.

## Where do I go for further information?

Please visit the [CYSCP website](#) for up to date information and latest news.

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