



NCASP

NORTHUMBRIA CHILDREN AND ADULTS
SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP

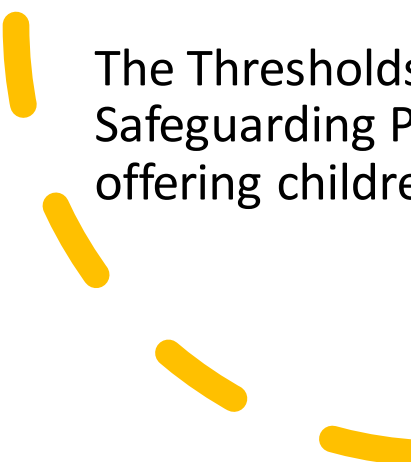
Thresholds of Need



Why do we need a thresholds document?

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out a clear expectation that local agencies will work together to identify children, who require help or protection, and to provide support as soon as problems emerge.

The Thresholds of Need document supports professionals working with children, when faced with a decision about their safety and wellbeing.



The Thresholds of Need document has been developed by the Northumberland Children and Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP). It is a collaborative document and drives our shared ambition of offering children, young people, their families and carers the right help at the right time.

Changes

The previous Thresholds of Need document dates from 2018.

The changes in this Thresholds of Need document reflect:

- Working Together 2018 and our ambition of offering the right help at the right time.
- The updated partnership arrangements in Northumberland.
- Updated processes, including the use of the multi-agency referral form (MARF) and good practice about consent.
- The commitment to embedding the Signs of Safety practice approach.



To support practitioners, the document uses clear and accessible language and examples are given for guidance and context only. We want to move away from fixed definitions and checklists and encourage the use of professional judgement.

Feedback around the revised Thresholds of Need document includes:

- It is full of helpful examples
- It uses more accessible language - everyone using the same terminology
- It is easy to read and less ambiguous
- It is more relevant to issues families are experiencing now
- It reflects Signs of Safety

How are agencies using the document?

It is a common myth that the Thresholds of Need document is only for use by social care staff. It is an essential part of multi-agency working and should be used by all professionals.



0-19 Services

The Thresholds of Need document is an essential tool for discussing initial concerns about a child and their on-going support needs. It is an excellent tool for case supervision discussions and is used by the safeguarding team to inform the advice they give to 0-19 staff, who are raising concerns about specific cases. The safeguarding team use these discussions and the document as part of their review of policies and procedures.

Primary Care

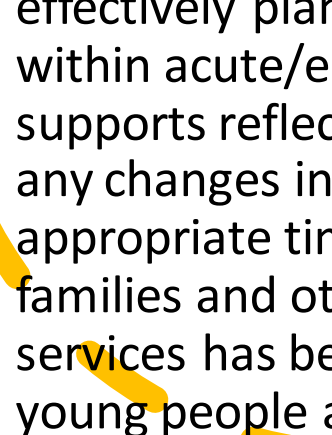
The Thresholds of Need document offers a clear framework for primary care staff to support decision making when there is a concern. When a GP or practitioner has worked with a family and has increasing concern, we use the document to consider the level of support that could be available and have a discussion with our safeguarding lead about what needs to happen.



Education

The Thresholds of Need document is a valuable tool for each Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to use in schools. It is a clear guide for the wide range of circumstances that may be identified within an education setting. DSLs refer to the document when considering the next steps and in their preparation for meetings with colleagues. When a DSL is dealing with a situation where they may need to speak to parents to get more information or make a referral, it is helpful to have this document, using language agreed by all partner agencies.

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust



The document is being used alongside all routine clinical assessment tools and supports staff to effectively plan to address need. Staff are using the document whether care is planned, on-going or within acute/emergency situations. For staff who receive safeguarding supervision, the document supports reflection about the situation for a child or family, the progress that has been made and any changes in risk or protective factors. This means it supports robust action planning with appropriate timescales. The document also supports staff to clearly communicate with the children, families and other professionals. This has helped staff when a referral to agencies for support or services has been required. Using clear language enhances our joint working and helps children, young people and their families understand our assessments and rationale for our actions.



Children's Social Care: First Contact

The new Thresholds of Need document is used daily by the team. We use it when triaging new referrals, where we are concerned there may be potential risk to a child. The document is also used when discussing concerns with partners, when they are concerned about a child or young person. The accessible wording and presentation of information helps us to do this.

Children's Social Care: Early Help and Locality Teams

The document helps children's social care staff to understand the different levels of risk and identify which, if any, professional/agency should be involved. It is also used in multi-agency meetings or discussions to make decisions about the most appropriate level of intervention for families. This also helps inform professionals about the right support at the right time.



Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

This document is a great awareness tool used by children and young people service (CYPS) clinicians when thinking through necessary actions for a concern that they are aware of. The document is easy to navigate around with useful prompts for consideration and has clear signposting contacts as necessary. This is a great resource to have at hand in addition to CNTW's tools.

Frequently asked questions

Q1. Is there a separate unborn thresholds document?

No. The updated document includes unborn children and anyone below the age of 18 years, who lives in Northumberland.

Q2. Where can I find the Northumberland Thresholds of Need document?

You can find it in North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual - Core Procedures [CLICK HERE](#).

Q3. Are the examples in the document rules or guidance?

The examples are not exhaustive and are to help guide you, please use your professional judgement and seek guidance from your safeguarding lead, where needed.

Q4. Is the document only for social workers to use?

No. The document should be used by all professionals working with children, young people and their families.

Q5. Is the document only to be used to make referrals to social care?

No. You should use the document in your daily work to inform planning and decision making. For example in case discussions, supervision, or team meetings. You should use the document alongside other assessment tools available to you.



Top Tips

Use the document in your day-to-day practice.

Know your safeguarding lead. Speak to them for support, guidance and reflection.

Remember that the document is complementary to existing Northumberland procedures.

Always consider issues of consent when sharing information with other agencies.

Always think about the impact on the child. What tells you that something is a strength, safety or a worry?



Useful information

Thresholds of Need document [CLICK HERE](#)

Northumberland's Children's Services Procedures Manual - [CLICK HERE.](#)

North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual - [CLICK HERE.](#)

Signs of Safety SharePoint resources [CLICK HERE](#)

Signs of Safety Tri.x resources [CLICK HERE](#)

Learning Together for Signs of Safety partnership training [CLICK HERE](#)