



Child Protection Conferences

A guide for children and young people



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1. What is the child protection conference

This is a meeting which is being held because of worries that you may not be safe. This could be because you have been hurt. Or you may be upset or unhappy because of things you have seen or heard at home. Your parent or carer might not be managing to look after you as well as they need to.

How we keep a record

The chair will put together a plan during the meeting and finish it straight afterwards. The summary and plan will be sent out to the adults in your family who have come. The social worker will go through at least some of it with you too, so you know what the plan is.

Where the conference will be held

There have been changes in how meetings have been held in Haringey. Your conference is likely to be held in a room, with family members, the chair and maybe some other professionals there. Other people will join on videolink. But the meeting could be a video conference only. The social worker can tell you more about this.

2. Who comes to the meeting

Parents and carers

The adults in your family who look after you are asked to come.

Can I come?

If you are 10 or older the social worker will talk to you and see if you want to come. You might come to part of the meeting, or all of it. If you want to come, the social worker will discuss this with your parents and with the chair, who is in charge of the meeting. Some of the meeting might not be about you and you would not normally be there to hear about other children in your family.

The social worker will put you in touch with an **advocate** from Barnardo's. An advocate is independent and will be working for you. They can come with you and support you at the meeting. You can ask to bring someone else with you if you want to, but the chair will need to agree before the meeting whether they can come, as this person will hear all your family information.

Conference chair

The chair is a manager who is a qualified social worker, but is not part of your social work team. Their job is to run the meeting, and follow child protection procedures.

The chair will give everyone at the meeting a chance to speak and will help to build a plan of what needs to happen. They are responsible for the final decision about whether the plan is called a child protection plan.

Social worker and social work manager

You have already met your social worker as this is the person who made an assessment with you and your family. The social worker will come to the conference to talk about the work they have been doing with you and your family.

Sometimes the social work manager attends the conference.

You may meet a new social worker in the meeting if your family needs support.

Who else might come to the meeting

Education: If you are at school or another child is at nursery, these will be invited.

Health: The school nurse will be invited, and if there is a child in the family under 5 years old, a health visitor will be asked too.

Your GP will be invited to share relevant health information. They often send a written report rather than coming to the meeting.

Police: Someone from the police attends. They send the chair written information for every conference, and this is shared in the meeting.

Other professionals working with you and your family would be invited.

They will be asked to share information, and to discuss how they can help. They will take part in making decisions and making a plan.

Reports and contribution forms

You and your parents or carers will be asked if you would like to fill in a contribution form before the meeting. You can say what you think is working well, what you are worried about

and what changes or support would be helpful.

All the professionals invited to the conference write a report as well. They share how they support you and your family, what they think is working well, what they are worried about and what changes or support they think would be helpful. The social worker writes an assessment.

Each professional is responsible for their own report and for sharing it with your parents (and sometimes with you). The police only share their report at the meeting.

3. What happens at the meeting

The chair will settle you into the conference room and answer any questions you have before anyone else joins you.

The chair asks everyone to introduce themselves at the start of the meeting.

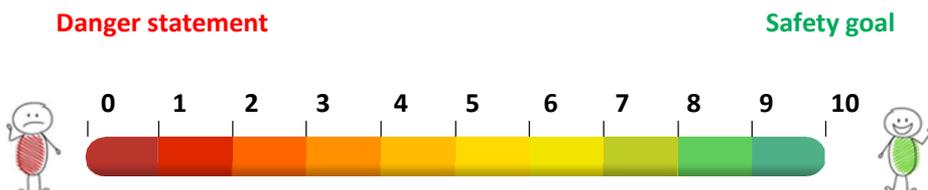
You may be coming to just part of the meeting, and the chair will make sure they organize it so you can take part and share what you want to.

During the meeting, they will ask the social worker to read out the *danger statement* from their assessment and explain why the conference is needed.

They will ask everyone what they think, what works well in the family, what are the worries and what support might be needed. The chair will ask what would help to keep you safe and well.

Using a *scale*

Everyone in the conference will be asked to use the scale below to think about how safe you are.



The plan

The plan is extremely important. In the meeting, a plan is made about what needs to happen next. This will be a list of things which will help you, and things which will support the adults who care for you to keep you safe and to look after you. Everyone will think about what things may help. It is important the plan is right for you and your family.

Decision making

At the end of the conference the adults who are there will be asked to give their views. A decision will be made whether you need a child protection plan to keep you safe and well. The chair will confirm the decision and note it on the conference summary.

If the decision is that you are at risk of *significant harm*, then the plan is called a child protection plan.

4. What happens afterwards

The summary and plan will be sent out to adults who were invited. It will have the reports and contribution forms with it. The social worker will share the decision with you, as well as the parts of the plan you should know about.

If a child protection plan is made there will then be **core group** meetings every month. Family and professionals will meet to look at the plan. They will look at whether the actions on the plan have moved on, and if the plan is helping to keep you safe and well cared for.

The social worker will visit you at least every 2 weeks, usually at home. They will need to see you on your own.

If you have a child protection plan, a review conference is held about three months after the first conference. Any further conferences must be held every six months or less.

5. How to prepare for the meeting

The social worker will talk about the meeting with you and answer any questions. Please do ask your social worker about anything you are not sure about.

The social worker will put you in touch with an advocate from Barnardo's. If the advocate is not able to work for you at the first meeting, they can do that if there are more meetings. They can answer questions and help you think about how you want to be involved in the conference.

Please tell the social worker if you have needs they should know about, so they can support you in the best way possible.

Please do think before the meeting about anything you want people there to know. It would be very helpful if you fill in the contribution form (although you do not have to). The advocate can help, or your social worker, or they can ask someone at school to help. You can also share what you want to say in other ways, for example you might want to write a letter or draw a picture. The chair will talk to you before the meeting if you are happy with that.

6. Your right to complain

The chair will try to deal with any concerns you have about the conference. You can ask to speak to them or write to them after the meeting if you want to share something. You can also ask the social worker to contact Barnardo's advocacy service to get in touch with you - or you can contact them yourself (see below). They are independent and can help you make a complaint.

Barnardo's:

Freephone: 0800 085 8287

Telephone: 020 8768 5058

Email: advocacy2@barnardos.org.uk

Or if you want to do this directly, you can email

cpcentraladmin@haringey.gov.uk

or use the online feedback form at

<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/contact/council-feedback/childrens-social-care-complaints-procedure>

or call 020 8489 3424.

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