

About Learning Difficulties

Some people have what is known as a 'learning difficulty'.

This means that they don't always learn things in the same way as other people or sometimes they take longer to learn new things. Usually they will need extra help and support to learn and understand.

When these people are younger the teachers and other people caring for them usually notice that they struggle to learn and understand as most other children do. Sometimes they can get extra help in their class and sometimes they go to a different school.

People with learning difficulties often find it hard to learn the same way as other people do and sometimes they might not be able to

understand and learn to do things well enough to keep children well cared for and safe. Even with lots of help and support sometimes they just can't understand or remember what they need to do.

Adoption

Adoption means belonging to and growing up with a new family when you cannot live with the family you were born into.

More About Alcohol

Sometimes grown-ups drink something called alcohol. Alcohol can sometimes make people behave in a different way.

Sometimes it might make them happy but sometimes it makes people sad or angry.

It is not safe for children to be around adults who drink a lot of alcohol.

This is because when they are like this they often struggle to look after themselves so they aren't able to look after children properly or keep them safe.

It's a grown-ups job to look after children and keep them safe but if the grown-up has had too much alcohol they can't do this properly.

Who are birth parents?

Birth parents are the people who made you. Everyone has a **birth mother** and a **birth father**.

A Birth Mother is the person who carries you in their tummy for 9 months and then brings you into the world.

Domestic Violence

Everybody should feel safe in their own homes, both grown-ups and children.

It is a parent's job to protect their children and keep them safe. When grown-ups hurt each other this can be very scary for children to see or hear.

Sometimes children are not looked after properly when the grown-ups are hurting each other, this is called Neglect.

About Drugs

There are lots of different kinds of drugs and different reasons why a person might take them.

There are some drugs that we can get from the doctor to help us get better when we are poorly. These drugs are ok because the doctors know they are safe.

There are also drugs that are not safe. These drugs change how people think, feel and behave.

Drugs sometimes make people behave in a different way, make them sad, happy, tired, full of energy, angry and aggressive, or see and hear things that aren't real. Sometimes, it makes them feel lots of different feelings very quickly, this is known as mood swings.

When parents take drugs that aren't safe, it makes it more difficult for them to look after their children.

Foster Carers are.....

People who want to look after children who are not able to live with their birth mum or birth dad, or any of their relatives.

Foster carers are not known as 'forever families' but they can look after children until they are old enough to look after themselves. But often it is days, weeks, months or years.

When you are in foster care your surname (birth family name) does not change.

Mental Health

When you have poor mental health it changes how your mind works.

Everyone has both mental (mind) and physical (body) health. They go together and can't be separated. You can't have one without the other.

It is important to look after both your physical and mental health.

Some people have poorly bodies that we can see, such as a broken leg or a runny nose. Some people have poor mental health which you can't see because it is in your mind, which is in your brain in your head.

Mental health is about how we think and feel and how we see and understand the world.

Mental health affects how we behave on our own and with other people.

When people have poor mental health it changes how their minds work, how they think, feel and behave. They might make poor or different choices, they may be very happy, very sad, and they might say and do things that they usually would not do.

Having poor mental health makes it harder for someone to look after themselves and keep themselves safe. It also makes it harder to do the job of Mum or Dad.

Neglect

Neglect happens when someone doing the parenting job for a child, is not able to do basic things a child/young person needs to be able to develop and grow, as we would expect.

This does not happen once or twice but happens most of the time.

This is what children/ young people need..

Enough food to keep you well and healthy

A warm comfy house to live in

Clothes and shoes that fit and keep you warm and dry in winter and cool in summer.

A safe place to be with a parent who can protect you from getting hurt.

Medical attention when you need it, visits to the dentist and/or opticians and you need to be taken care of when you are sick.

Love and care.

Time to play and relax.

Help to get to school and encouragement to do well.

If a child/young person does not have most of these things most of the time, it could mean that they are being Neglected.

'Professionals' are people who are involved with children, they can be Social Workers, police officers, health visitors, school teachers, nursery nurses or midwives.

A SGO

A Special Guardianship Order is made by a Judge so that a child can be looked after and cared for by someone who is not their birth parents. This can be a family member or a family friend.

Even though they are not the child's birth parents, they will do the job of mum or dad for the child until they are old enough to look after themselves.

If parents do not attend Family Time

Sometimes it can be very hard for birth parents to see their children and become attached to them when they know deep down that they will not be able to care for them as

they grow up into adults. Most birth parents want to be able to look after their children and watch them grow up into adults but sometimes the things they have to change is just too much for them to cope with, and so sometimes they stop trying.

Sometimes birth mums and dads decide that if they continue to see their children they will have even more hurt feelings when they have to say their final goodbye. So, to protect themselves from this hurt they decide to stop seeing the children before they become too attached. This doesn't mean that birth mums and dads don't love their children.

Foster to Adopt

When a child is not able to live with their birth parents, other family members are looked at to see if they are able to care for the child.

Sadly there were no family members who were able to care for (child) and keep her/him safe.

The professionals agreed that the Social Worker would work with (birth parents) to see if they were able to do the job of mum and dad to (child).

It was agreed that to keep (child) safe, when (child)he/she was born he/she would go to live with foster carers.

Because of (birth parent's) history it was agreed that (child's) best plan would be 'fostering to adopt'.

Foster-to-adopt is when children live with a special foster family who hope that one day

they will be able to adopt their foster child(ren).

This meant that (child) could live with his/her new family straight away and get to know them before his/her plan was made.