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Parenting Handbook

A **GUIDE FOR PARENTS & CARERS**
in East Dunbartonshire



Delivering for Children
& Young People in
East Dunbartonshire

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the East Dunbartonshire Parenting Handbook - a guide for parents and carers of children and young people of all ages in East Dunbartonshire.

Your job as a parent is one of the most difficult there is - it can be both challenging and rewarding. Bringing up a family is an experience which brings both enjoyment and stress and many families experience some difficulties from time to time.

When additional pressures come along, these can make a hard job nearly impossible. At these times it may be hard to think about what help or information you might need. It is often the way difficulties are handled that can make a difference to your children, both now and in the future.

There is no such thing as the perfect parent. However, there are some things that can make it a less stressful and more rewarding experience. The purpose of this handbook is to highlight some of these.

What is the handbook about?

It is hoped this handbook can offer some ideas and information to help you find your way through what can be a maze of issues and advice. It gives contacts and further information you can follow up when you are deciding how to deal with your worries and difficulties.

Who will receive this handbook?

Copies of this handbook will be issued to parents and carers and will also be made available online. This handbook is one aspect of family support offered by the Delivering for Children and Young People Partnership.

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POSITIVE PARENTING

Being a parent can be very rewarding and enjoyable but sometimes it can be challenging. One of the most stressful parts of being a parent is dealing with your child's behaviour.

It is often easy to point out where a child is going wrong and forget to notice the things that go right. By doing this you are giving your child attention for the unacceptable things that they are doing, rather than for the good things you would prefer them to do. Praising your child for good behaviour can help to build your child's confidence, self-esteem and help them feel good about themselves. It will make your child feel happy, loved, wanted and secure. A sense of self-esteem is your child's best protection from other difficulties.

Parenting positively is about bringing out the best in your child by listening, praising and encouraging their efforts, noticing and rewarding good behaviour. Encourage desirable behaviours and if negative behaviours happen, remain calm and use fair,

logical consequences that match the problem behaviour.

There are a number of strategies that can help you to cope with children's behaviour and you can contact your GP, health visitor or school nurse for further information and support.

Also, the Triple P Positive Parenting Programme is offered to groups of parents as well as on a one to one basis. If you would like further information about the type of support available and programmes running in your area you can contact the Triple P Co-ordinator (see contacts).

- Children need a safe, supportive and nurturing environment in which to learn and develop their skills
- Assertive discipline involves being consistent and acting quickly when a child misbehaves
- Children are individuals and develop at different rates
- Parents have to recognise that they have needs and when these are met it is much easier to be patient, consistent and available to their child



Contacts

- Your health visitor
- Triple P Team 0141 578 8694
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk
- Children 1st 0141 418 5670
www.children1st.org.uk



- Diversity is all about differences. Diversity means variety. We are all different - visibly, physically, socially, culturally and sexually. Diversity means variety, but not everyone values and respects the differences in society
- Equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination are fundamental human rights
- Your child is protected by the Human Rights Act, the Disability Discrimination Act, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, the Sex Discrimination Act and the International Convention of the Rights of the Child



Contacts

- One Scotland 0131 244 0095
- Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland 0131 651 6371
- Enable Scotland 0141 226 4541
- ParentLine Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- LGBT Youth Scotland 0845 113 0005
www.lgbtyouth.org.uk
- Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland 0845 604 5510
www.equalityhumanrights.com
- Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) 0808 1000 143

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Although we're all different we all have the right to equal respect, access, opportunity and justice, so there are laws in the UK to prevent discrimination, on all levels. If you feel you or your child has experienced discrimination your local authority, local organisations and the legislation are there to help you.

According to the definition of equal opportunities in the Scotland Act 1998, consideration is given to the following key equality groups: Younger and older people; Women; Black and Minority Ethnic People, including Gypsies/Travellers; People with disabilities; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People (LGBT); Religion and Beliefs.

Age

Society can have negative attitudes, stereotypes and myths about youth, ageing, younger and older people. These attitudes and beliefs can lead to both younger and older people being socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised.

Gender

Sexism arises from common stereotypes of male and female roles in society. Sexism can be experienced in and out of the home leading to discrimination including serious forms of physical or psychological abuse. The Sex Discrimination Act is there as a legal framework for promoting gender equality and the Equality Act 2006 introduces the Gender Equality Duty, which places a statutory duty on public authorities to produce a gender equality scheme and promote gender equality.

Race

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a positive duty on public authorities to eliminate racial

discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations. This includes schools, so the curriculum and the teaching in our schools reflects racial diversity and will have clear processes for handling, reporting and watching out for racial incidents. This act looks closely at the effect of action and not the intent.

Black and Minority Ethnic people may experience discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, religion or ethnic origin.

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act says it is against the law for any service provider (including schools, businesses and organisations) to treat disabled people less well than other people because of their disability. It also means they should make reasonable adjustments to make their services suitable for disabled people to use.

There are a large number of people within East Dunbartonshire who have some form of disability, including physical and learning disabilities.

Sexual orientation

We live in a diverse country with a lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender community. Diversity should be welcomed and reflected across all services. It is not acceptable that anyone is targeted for abuse or discrimination because of their sexuality or the sexuality of their parents, carers or family members.

Religion and belief

Children, young people and families should be able to live in an environment where the religious and non-religious beliefs of all individuals are respected. They should not be treated less favourably than others because of their actual or perceived religion belief or non-belief.



CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Government, Local Authority and Health Board give a wide range of support and advice for children with disabilities and their parents and carers.

Legal protection

Your child is protected by law. The Disability Discrimination Act says it is against the law for any service provider (including schools, businesses and organisations) to treat disabled people less fairly than other people because of their disability. It also asks them to make reasonable adjustments to make their services easy to use - like ramps or disabled toilets so that disabled people can use them too.

Health

From the start, your GP and local Health Service are there for you. They'll give the help and advice you need to discover and assess your child's needs. They'll help you plan the treatment, therapy, equipment and ongoing medical care that your child may require.

Benefits

There are several benefits that you may be entitled to. For further information and advice contact Welfare Rights Service and Department of Work and Pensions.

Extra support

East Dunbartonshire Council may be able to provide extra support for you and your child. There are many local, national and international organisations and charities specially set up to give further help, advice and support to people just like you so make contact.

- Your child is protected by the Disability Discrimination Act
- Children with disabilities are recognised as having additional support needs
- You may be able to receive financial help to assist with caring for your child



Contacts

- Your GP, school nurse or health visitor
- Your child's nursery or school
- www.enquire.org.uk
- Social Work Department 0141 775 1311
- Welfare Rights 01387 266888
www.welfarerights.net
- Department of Work and Pensions
www.dwp.gov.uk



CHOOSING CHILDCARE

Choosing childcare and early education is a big step for you and your child. You can find out about childcare and early education services in your area from your local Childcare Information Service. You are entitled to a funded part-time place for your child, broadly speaking, from the beginning of the school term starting after their third birthday.

Early education and pre-school services can differ, as can individual childminders, nurseries, and nursery classes or out of school care services. Try and give yourself enough time to visit several possible options in your area to get a good idea of what could suit your child. You are the expert on your child - trust your feelings.

All services are subject to regulations and are generally inspected by the Care Commission once a year. All services will receive a grading mark which indicates the level of quality of the service. The education aspect of nursery provision for children aged 3-5 years is also subject to inspection by HMIE. Reports on both inspections are available on the appropriate websites or can be obtained from the childcare provider.

What type of childcare is available?

Registered childminders look after children usually on their own and within their own home. Childminders can offer a high level of adult attention, particularly for very young children and can often be flexible about the hours that they work. Many childminders have now obtained a professional childcare qualification.

Nurseries can care for children aged birth-5 years and can be open to provide part-time or full-time childcare and education. They can be provided by both the local authority and the private sector.

Nursery schools and classes are provided by the local authority and are situated in schools.

Playgroups are generally managed by local parents and provide sessions of play and education for children aged 2-5 years on a part-time basis.

Some playgroups and private nurseries may work in partnership with their local authority to provide free, part-time pre-school education places for 3-4 year olds. Children are cared for by a range of professional early year's workers and within a group setting.

Out of school care services are for school-age children to play and learn and have fun in groups. They are usually based in or near schools.

Children are cared for within a group setting and by a range of early year's staff. Some out of school care also provide breakfast clubs and holiday play schemes.

- All registered childcare in Scotland must meet national standards set out by the Care Commission under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2004
- Childcare Information Services (CHIS) hold lists of all registered childcare services and can provide you with a copy of Top Ten Tips for Childcare
- Talk to other parents, personal recommendations can be helpful
- Make a list of questions and take them with you when you visit each centre
- Good childcare staff expect you to ask questions and will be happy to answer them
- Ask to see the most recent Care Commission or HMIE inspection report



Contacts

- East Dunbartonshire Council Childcare Information Service
0141 570 0091 www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk
- East Dunbartonshire Council Early years Helpline 0141 578 8707
- Care Commission 0141 843 4230 www.carecommission.com
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE)
www.hmie.gov.uk
- National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) 01484 407070
www.ndna.org.uk
- Daycare Trust 0845 872 6251 www.daycaretrust.org.uk



CHILDREN LEFT ALONE & BABYSITTING

Children left alone

There is no law in Scotland that states at what age a child can be legally left alone. However, it is against the law to leave a child in circumstances that are likely to put them at risk.

Leaving children alone places them at risk of harm. It can be a lonely and frightening experience. Babies and very young children should never be left in the home alone, whether asleep or awake, even for a few minutes.

If your child is on their own in another room, remember to check on them regularly. Be aware of the time.

The police and/or the Social Work Department will take action if they think that a child has been neglected by being left alone.

Neglect happens when a parent or carer fails to meet the child's basic needs of food, shelter, security, attention or protection from exposure to danger.

Babysitting

Babysitting is a very big responsibility. It is recommended that this should be left to adults - a person who is 16 years old or over.

If you rely on a person who is under 16 to look after your children, whether or not you are paying them, if anything happens either to them or your children, you could be liable.

As with choosing any child carer, you should satisfy yourself that the person is able to take care of your children in your absence. This includes someone who will make sure your children are fed, changed and kept safe and someone who can deal with difficulties if they arise.

When leaving your child with the carer, provide them with a contact number where you can be reached in case of an emergency.

- Children rely on their parents for their safety
- Never leave a child alone in the home
- Children are not ready for the responsibility of looking after other children
- Plan whom you could contact for emergency care
- Select your babysitter carefully and make sure that they know how to contact you in case of an emergency



Contacts

- Strathclyde Police 0141 532 4400
- Social Work Department 0141 775 1311
- Social Work Out of Hours 0800 811 505
- Law Society of Scotland (Children's Law) 0131 226 7411
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk



CHILD PROTECTION

If you are worried about a child, or suspect that a child is being abused or harmed in some way, you must do something.

Many people are unsure what to do, where to go, or are afraid of what will happen if they tell. By voicing your concerns, you could help prevent a child being abused or harmed.

If you see behaviour that is of concern, or if a child or young person tells you something, you need to take them seriously and speak to someone about it. This could be a teacher, your GP, a health visitor, a social worker or a police officer.

To ensure the child gets the best help possible, give as much information as you can about the child. Describe what you saw or heard and what concerned you.

If you think the child is in immediate danger, you should phone the police straight away.

Children are harmed in many different ways. Most abuse to children occurs within the family and is carried out by someone that they know.

Parenting is not always easy and very few adults harm children deliberately. Often, when harm does happen families need support, not punishment or the removal of their children.

Social workers and other professionals get involved when parents may be unable to protect their child from harm and need some help. In some cases the police will investigate with social workers to help protect children and decide whether an offence has been committed against a child.

Information you share is treated as confidential. However, keeping children safe is the paramount objective of all agencies and information will be shared if a child is considered to be at risk of harm.

- Parents are responsible for their children's safety
- It is everyone's job to make sure children are alright
- Professionals become involved once concern is reported to them
- Professionals want to work in partnership with families



Contacts

- Strathclyde Police 0141 532 4400
- Social Work Department 0141 775 1311
- Social Work Out of Hours 0800 811 505
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- Child Protection Line 0800 022 3222



GOOD ORAL HEALTH

Mouth care is important from birth and good dental habits established early can help children to keep their teeth and gums healthy for life.

Teeth form before birth and start to appear at around six months. It is important to start tooth-brushing as soon as teeth first appear. Children begin to lose their first teeth when they are around 6-7 years old, this process is complete with the loss of the second molars when they are about 11-13 years old. Permanent teeth begin to appear at around 6-7 years of age. Your child will have a full set of teeth when they get their third molars (or wisdom teeth) when they are about 17-22 years old.

Parents often overlook the importance of first teeth because they will be replaced by permanent teeth. However, as well as being important for eating, teeth play a crucial part in speaking, self-confidence and self-esteem. If children are brought up to care for their teeth, it should stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives.

In theory mouth care should be quite simple - don't allow children to have sugary things too often and make sure their teeth are brushed well twice a day. In practice it's not that easy, the way sugary products are advertised and promoted can make it difficult to limit them. Most of us lead busy lives and sometimes it's easier just to give in to pester power.

Remember, good mouth care comes from watching other family members look after their own teeth and gums.

- Water is a good thirst quencher between meals.
- Try well-diluted fresh fruit juice in a cup at mealtimes.

- Golden Rule - never give a sugary drink last thing at night.
- Get into the sugar-free habit. Put more fruit, vegetables and bread based snacks on your shopping list.
- If you are confronted with sweet treats at the check-out, offer easy alternatives like an apple, tangerine or breadstick.
- Don't ban sweets, but keep them for straight after a meal.
- Make sure that children brush their teeth twice a day with a family fluoride toothpaste containing fluoride.
- Children under the age of 2 should only use a smear of toothpaste and those under 8 a pea sized blob. Children will need your help with brushing until they are at least 7 years old.
- When they are older still check they are doing it properly.
- Gums may bleed when brushed. If this happens, it is due to disease in gums and to tackle this, it is recommended to brush gently, but really well. If bleeding persists ask your dentist for advice.
- Ask your GP/chemist if you can have sugar-free medicines.
- Register your child with a dentist as soon as you can and take them to see their dentist (children can be registered with a dentist from birth). Let them get used to going. Don't wait until they have problems or are in pain.
- Everyone should visit their dentist regularly.
- All children attending a nursery within East Dunbartonshire have the opportunity to participate in a recognised tooth brushing programme.

- Every child has the right to a healthy mouth and a nice smile
- By the age of 5 more than half of all Scottish children have some form of dental disease
- Frequent intakes of sugary snacks and drinks will damage teeth
- Be firm - try to give healthier sugar-free snacks and drinks in between meals
- Let children enjoy their sugary things at mealtimes
- Sugary snacks and drinks at bedtime are especially damaging to teeth
- Brush teeth at least twice daily with a family toothpaste containing 1000ppm fluoride
- Register your child with a dentist and keep regular appointments
- Encourage and support your pre-schools and schools to promote healthy sugar-free snacking



Contacts

- Health visitor, school nurse, GP or dentist
- British Dental Health Foundation
0845 063 1188
www.dentalhealth.org.uk
- If you require dental care or advice out of hours you should contact NHS 24
08454 242424
www.nhs24.com
- <http://kidshealth.org/parent>



TOILET TRAINING & BEDWETTING

Toilet training

Your child is more likely to learn control if you are relaxed and calm about it. Remember your child will learn at their own pace and that praise, rather than telling them off, will help.

Between the ages of 3-4 years your child is likely to be dry during the day with the odd accident.

Remember, this is often not an instant change but a gradual process. Do not start toilet training while your child is unwell.

Children may be ready for toilet training when they can:

- Say they are wet or soiled, or want to go to the toilet.
- Wait, or control the urge to wet or soil.
- Show an interest in the toilet, or a desire not to wear wet or soiled nappies.

Learning to use the toilet takes time. For some children it might be a matter of weeks for others it could be a number of months before they are totally dry.

If your child is at nursery - work together with the staff to ensure a consistent approach. Follow the same toileting routine every day and explain the toileting steps to your child. For example: tell an adult, go to the bathroom, take down your pants and sit on the toilet, ask for help if you need it, flush the toilet and wash your hands afterwards.

Use a potty or toilet with a seat ring and a step. Encourage your child to sit on the toilet but do not insist if they refuse. Praise and reward your child (e.g. a star or sticker chart) for following the steps and for any successes.

Stay calm if your child accidentally wets or soils. If toilet training becomes upsetting wait a few weeks and try again.

Bedwetting

It is not easy to know why some children take longer to be dry at night than others. However, bedwetting is not due to laziness or lack of will power.

Although this may be stressful for both you and your child try not to lose your patience. It is rare for a child to wet or soil on purpose.

If, after the age of 7, your child often wets their bed, the problem may be caused by a number of things. Talk to your child and reassure them that other older children experience this too.

Discuss any concerns about your child with your GP, health visitor or school nurse they can give you practical help and advice.

- All children are different and don't worry if your child is faster or slower than others in terms of their development in this area
- Try not to rush toilet training, children will show signs that they are ready to start
- Bedwetting may be a sign of a health problem but more often your child will learn to control their bladder at their own pace
- Always seek advice from your GP, health visitor or school nurse if you are worried about these issues



Contacts

- Your GP, health visitor or school nurse
- Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence (ERIC)
0845 370 8008
www.eric.org.uk



SLEEPING ROUTINES

Sleep patterns in babies

It is normal for young babies to wake at night to be fed. It is a gradual process for babies to learn to sleep in a routine like adults do. It takes time for them to learn to have longer periods of sleep at night and less during the day.

All babies are individual and will need different amounts of sleep and guides are available to give a rough idea what you can expect. There are a few helpful hints that you can follow to help establish a routine:

- Make sure the room in which your baby sleeps is comfortable, well ventilated and a constant temperature.
- Have a suitable place for your baby to sleep.
- Develop a bedtime routine.
- Put your baby to bed awake.
- Establish the differences between night and day.

Sleep patterns in older children

There are a number of strategies you can use to prevent problems at bedtime. These include:

- Set a regular time for your child to go to bed.
- Develop a routine which involves preparing your child for going to bed.
- Once your child is settled read a story, say goodnight and leave.

In the morning praise your child for following the steps of the bedtime routine.

Sometimes children may have difficulty accepting a new regime especially when moving out of a cot and into a bed. If a child gets out of bed, stay calm and return them immediately ignoring all protests. If your child gets into bed with you again immediately return them to their own bed.

Your health visitor or school nurse can provide additional advice on sleeping routines. Alternatively, Triple P has a number of approaches to deal with this situation and if you would like more details speak to a member of the team.

- Babies, like adults, need different amounts of sleep
- Lack of sleep can make you as a parent, tired, irritable and less patient, so rest when you can
- Be realistic about what you achieve round the house
- Establish a bedtime routine, set a regular bedtime and be consistent
- When dealing with a problem remember you might have to put up with a short period of even greater difficulty before things improve



Contacts

- Your GP or health visitor
- Triple P Team 0141 578 8694
- Sleep Scotland 0131 651 1392
www.sleepscotland.org
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- NHS 24
08454 242424
www.nhs24.com
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk



TEMPER TANTRUMS

Temper tantrums are common with young children

As your child grows in confidence they can sometimes have a temper tantrum to let you know that they are unhappy about something. If a child is tired, hungry or bored they may have a temper tantrum.

Tantrums in public can make you feel stressed. Getting angry is normal, but it does not help.

You can help by:

- Taking a deep breath and keeping calm.
- Sometimes ignoring their demands.
- Being consistent.
- Checking to see if there is a reason for the temper tantrum.
- Talking quietly and calmly explaining your reasons for saying "no".
- Walking into another room, ensuring your child is safe, to allow everyone to calm down.

If you always give in to your child's demands, they will learn to have a tantrum every time you refuse to give them what they want. It is important to remember that there may be some physical reason for the tantrum. Some attention or comfort may be all that is needed.

Praise your child for calming down. Remember, always reward good behaviour.

If you are concerned that your child is having frequent temper tantrums, or you are concerned about their behaviour, then discuss this with your health visitor or GP.

- Temper tantrums are very common with young children
- Keep calm
- Getting angry is a natural reaction but it's better to talk than to shout - try not to let your anger show
- Praise your child for good behaviour
- Praise your child for calming down



Contacts

- Your GP or health visitor
- Triple P Team 0141 578 8694
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk
- Children 1st 0141 418 5670
www.children1st.org.uk



PLAY & LEARNING

Playing is a natural way for your child to learn about the world around them. Children learn through play at home, at nurseries and playgroups, with their friends, at school and beyond.

Play is a big part of your child's development and you have an important role.

Early learning through things which happen everyday

Children who are helped or praised when they express themselves freely through play tend to be more able to adapt, learn skills and do better at school. As a parent it's important to spend time playing with your child providing interest and interaction. Involving children in daily activities such as shopping, laying the table or cooking will provide 'real life' ways for children to learn. From birth your child begins to learn through play about using their senses, meeting people, talking and moving.

Of course safety is most important, so please see the chapter in this booklet about health and safety. Also see the chapter about babysitting as these carers have a role to play too.

Early education and childcare provision

Pre-school education can give your child a really good start in learning and in getting on with other children.

There is a range of pre-school provision available for children aged 3-4 years in East Dunbartonshire including playgroups, partnership nurseries and local authority provision. You can find out more about this by calling the East Dunbartonshire Council Helpline 0141 578 8707.

School years

Primary schools recognise and value play and use it as a learning tool throughout the school day. At home your child will begin to play more on their own or with friends. But it is still important to be part of your child's play, as well as any hobbies, artistic or sporting interests that they may develop as they grow. Giving your child time and helping them is of even greater value than new toys or games and playing with them means that you are part of their personal social and emotional development.

As they grow older you will need to set ground rules about playing outside and visiting friends. Encourage your child to socialise and meet with others whilst making sure that you know where they are and that they are fully aware of dangers to their safety.

As children, we all enjoyed playing - perhaps we still do! Learning to play again with your child can be great fun. It will bring you closer to your child and play a vital role in preparing them for a full and active life.

- Children of all ages learn through play
- Play is an important part of your child's development
- Early childhood experiences affect children's views on learning
- Children need a safe and supportive place where they can play, learn and develop
- There are all sorts of groups and programmes in your area to help your child to play and learn
- As a parent you have an on-going role in your child's play and learning



Contacts

- East Dunbartonshire Council Childcare Information Service
0141 570 0091 www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk
- East Dunbartonshire Council Early Years Helpline 0141 578 8707
- Scottish Pre-School Play Association
0141 221 4148 www.sppa.org.uk
- Scottish Out of School Care Network 0141 564 1284
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
- East Dunbartonshire Council Switchboard 0141 578 8000



- Eat regularly and include bread, pasta, cereals, rice or potatoes at every meal
- Eat some form of fruit and vegetables at each meal, aim to eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day
- Limit foods high in sugar such as sweets and chocolate
- Limit foods high in fat such as crisps, chips and pastries



Contacts

- Your GP, health visitor or school nurse
- Healthy Living Advice Line 0845 278 8878
- www.eatwell.gov.uk
- www.5aday.nhs.uk
- www.healthscotland.com

HEALTHY EATING

A healthy balanced diet contains a variety of foods including plenty of fruit and vegetables, plenty of starchy foods such as wholegrain bread, pasta and rice, some protein-rich foods such as meat, fish, eggs and lentils and some dairy foods. It should also be low in fat (especially saturated fat), salt and sugar.

If you become more active and eat healthily, you and your family reduce the risk of health problems, now and in the future. Eating well is about having a wide variety of foods. It doesn't have to mean completely stopping eating what you usually have and enjoy. Nor does it mean having to spend more money on food.

- Being overweight can create emotional and social problems such as bullying, lack of inclusion in play and lack of confidence.
- Junk food contains high levels of fat, sugar, salt or additives. It also usually has low levels of nutrients and it delivers short bursts of energy which fade quickly. If children are eating junk food they have to eat more to keep up their energy levels, which means they can put on excess weight and risk becoming obese.
- 60 minutes of exercise each day is enough to strengthen bones and muscles and prevent children putting on weight. Many children are active simply by playing outdoors or walking or cycling to school or nursery.

Feeding your baby

Breast milk is the healthiest way to feed a baby and provides all the nutrients that a baby needs for healthy development in the first 6 months.

If you choose not to breastfeed, infant formula is the only alternative to breast milk. From 6 months old, you can gradually introduce solid foods to your baby so that by twelve months, solid foods become the main part of your baby's diet, with breast or formula milk making up the balance.

Contact your health visitor for advice about feeding your baby. Further information can also be found in 'Ready Steady Baby' and 'Ready Steady Toddler'.

Toddlers and young children

Although toddlers and young children should be encouraged to eat the same food as adults they should have smaller portions appropriate to their size. Remember to include a wide variety of foods in their diet every day.

Older children

As children get older it may be harder to encourage them to eat a healthy diet and many teenagers have a diet with a high fat content including junk foods and fizzy drinks.

You can help by encouraging them to eat a healthy breakfast, drink plenty of water providing them with low fat health snack foods such as fruit and vegetables and encouraging an active lifestyle.

A checklist for a healthy lifestyle

- Encourage your child to be more physically active and aim for an average of 60 minutes of physical activity per day.
- Limit the time spent watching television or playing computer games to less than two hours per day.
- Provide meals and snacks at regular times.
- Separate eating from other activities such as watching television or doing schoolwork.
- Encourage your child to listen to their body - to heed signs of hunger and to recognise when they are full.
- Instead of offering food as a reward, try alternatives such as giving stickers, going to the cinema, a new book or toy, or having a friend to stay overnight.
- Avoid pacifying a distressed child with sweets or food - find out what is troubling them - listening and a big hug may be all that they need.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Parents should encourage their children to be more active!

Many children don't take enough exercise these days. Experts suggest 60 minutes of accumulated activity, which makes you slightly out of breath on most days of the week.

Unfortunately in today's convenience society and world of computers it just doesn't happen. The problems stacking up for the future are overweight children, diabetes and many other health risks.

The answer - get active!

When people become more active they start getting benefits straight away. Their heart and lungs become stronger and their level of fitness improves. Many kinds of exercise also help to tone muscles helping you look more toned up and feel stronger. Exercise also burns calories which can help with weight control and prevent young people from becoming overweight in the first place.

On your doorstep

Physical activity needn't involve sport. Simply playing with a ball in the back garden, in a safe street or in the local park is a great start. Walking to school rather than insisting on a car journey is also a great idea. Schools are now trying to encourage this by promoting safe walking routes to schools and cycle tracks around towns as an alternative way of getting around.

A walk in the park

Walking is a great form of exercise and just about anyone can do it. Why not visit a local park and try one of the organised walking trails that are clearly marked out. The great thing is that many parks have things to see on the walks including local wildlife, trees and flowers. To get the best benefit

walk briskly so that you feel slightly warm and breathe faster. But you should never be out of breath. If you are, take it a bit easier!

There are many walk and cycleways in East Dunbartonshire as well as the famous West Highland Way including the Forth and Clyde Canal Towpath, Clyde, Kelvin and Allander Walkway, Campsie Glen Woodland Walkway, Forest Walks in Lennox Forest, Lennoxton and the Railway Walkway. Also, located in beautiful landscapes, Mugdock Country Park offers an exciting visit and great day out for all the family, with 750 acres of unspoilt countryside.

Opportunities in your local community

There are many opportunities to get active within East Dunbartonshire and a wide network of council and voluntary organisations are on hand to provide information on local opportunities.

The Active Schools Network aims to offer children and young people the opportunities and motivation to adopt active, healthy lifestyles, now and into adulthood. The Active Schools Team are responsible for developing and supporting an infrastructure for Active Schools within the school and wider community. They can provide excellent links from your child's school to local physical activity opportunities. There are three leisure centres within the area, all providing quality sporting facilities and programmes for the local community. The wide selection of programmed activities and special events mean there is something for everyone.

The many local sporting clubs across the authority also provide the chance to further your families participation on a regular basis.

- Children today are much less physically active than they once were and many don't take enough exercise to keep them healthy
- Many children now routinely travel to school in the car or by bus - just a generation ago they would almost always have walked
- There are growing concerns over the increase in childhood obesity and its link to a lack of physical activity
- Parents should show a good example by encouraging physical activity and making it part of their own healthy and active lifestyle
- There are hundreds of ways for young people to be more active and opportunities for outdoor activities and sport everywhere



Contacts

- Email: ActiveSchools@eastdunbarton.gov.uk
- www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk
- www.mugdock-country-park.org.uk
- www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/leisure



SAFETY INSIDE & OUTSIDE THE HOME

As part of learning and development, many children will have accidents. Parents and carers can take steps to avoid these incidents turning into a serious injury.

The most common type of accidents experienced by children often involve falls, slips and trips. Other accidents takes place when children run or walk into hard objects, grab at items of interest, or explore objects by putting them into their mouths and either swallowing or inhaling. Most accidents occur where children spend most of their time.

What causes accidents to happen in the home?

Where there are potential hazards within every home such as hot water, household chemicals, stairs, fireplaces, matches, alcohol and sharp objects such as knives or scissors. Features in the home such as balconies, spiral or open staircases, ponds, glass doors or open plan kitchens can all increase the risk of accidents happening.

How to reduce the risk of accidental injury

Very young children should never be left unsupervised and as they get older need careful guidance about what danger is and how to keep themselves safe.

Consider using a variety of child safety items such as: socket covers; safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs; cupboard and drawer locks. It is recommended that items such as cleaning materials, glass and breakables, knives, other sharp kitchen tools and medicines are kept well out of reach, preferably in a locked cupboard. If possible, keep under lock and key. If you suspect a child has swallowed medicine or fluids such as bleach seek immediate medical attention.

Ensure your child does not play with toys that are unsuitable for their age, especially if the pieces are small enough to choke on.

Pets, even trained and good natured animals can sometimes behave aggressively and you should never leave your child alone with a pet.

Accidents don't always happen

Many accidents that happen to young children, such as injuries from falls or drowning could be avoided with adequate supervision.

If you are visiting friends or relatives, keep a closer eye than usual on your child as their house may not be as child friendly as yours. Look out for dangers such as knives sitting on counter tops, drugs such as painkillers left within reach, or open windows. Check that the garden is secure and there is no access to ponds or pools.

It's important to always be aware of where your child is when you are out. When shopping, always make sure your child stays close to you - it is easy for them to get lost in a shopping centre or large supermarket.

Supervise playground activities - ensure the playground equipment is suitable for your child's age group to prevent injury.

- We recognise that children will have accidents or experience unintentional injuries, this is crucial to a child's learning
- Many accidents take place in the home and this is why it is important to make sure that your home is safe for all your family especially for young children
- Children will inevitably have accidents, however, it is the serious incidences that parents/carers should seek to avoid (e.g. trips/falls, burns/scalds and poisons)
- Have confidence in your child. Giving them appropriate responsibility and trust is a way of teaching them to be responsible and trusting adults
- Be age and stage appropriate - what is okay for a 10 year old may not be safe for a 6 year old. So rules have to be reviewed regularly
- Remember - other people's homes are not always child friendly



Contacts

- In an emergency call 999
- NHS 24
08454 242424
www.nhs24.com
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) 0121 248 2000
www.rospa.com
- Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) 020 7608 3828
www.capt.org.uk



TRAFFIC & WATER SAFETY

Road safety

Parents should begin to teach their children the basic rules for crossing the road as soon as possible. Hold hands with your child walking on the pavement furthest away from the road edge. Try and make sure children get out of the car on the pavement side.

Children are unlikely to judge the speed and distance of travelling vehicles and should never attempt to cross the road themselves. It is a parent's responsibility to decide when a child is old enough to cross roads safely.

From the age of 3 years your child can join the Children's Traffic Club - they should be automatically sent an invitation around their 3rd birthday. Its fun and it's free!

Car safety

- Rear-facing baby seats must not be used in seats with an active frontal air-bag.
- All children under 3 years old must use the correct child seat when travelling in any car or goods vehicle (except in the rear of a taxi if a child seat is not available).
- Children aged 3 years and under 12 must use the correct child seat/booster cushion when travelling in cars or goods vehicles until they reach about 4' 5" (135cms). Few exceptions are permitted.

The driver of the vehicle should always check to make sure that children are secured safely in a car seat or that they are wearing a seat belt. The driver of the vehicle will be held responsible if children are not secured properly. Passengers should never sit with a child on their lap, no matter how short the trip.

Children out alone

Children under 8 should not be allowed out alone. As they get older

they can be trusted to go out for short periods by themselves, but always agree a time for them to return, to phone you if they are going to be late or the arrangements change. Remind them never to go off with someone they don't know, whatever convincing story they may have.

It can be hard to keep track of your youngster but carrying a mobile phone means they can call you if they are in trouble and you can at least check that they are alright. Keep emphasising personal safety. If they cycle, insist they wear a helmet. Constantly remind them of the dangers associated with playing on or near cliffs, construction sites and old buildings.

Water safety

Remember - playing in and around water can be dangerous. It is possible for someone to drown in as little as 5cm of water. This means that even a garden pond or paddling pool presents a risk. If children are playing in or near water ensure an adult is present nearby to keep an eye on their safety at all times.

Keep an eye out for dangerous areas - open water may look safe, but even in the summer it can be cold and harder to swim in than a warm indoor pool. Take safety advice - look out for signs and notices and don't ignore them, they are there to let you know of dangers.

Beach safety

Going to the beach - look out for:

- **Red and yellow striped flag** means lifeguard on patrol; seek their advice on water safety.
- **Quartered black and white flag** means area NOT suitable for swimmers or bathers. The area is zoned off for water sport activities.
- **Red flag** means dangerous to bathe or swim in this area.

- The outside environment also contains many hazards - on the roads, in gardens, in the countryside and near water
- Keep young children close when shopping
- Children under 8 should not be allowed out alone
- Mobile phones are a good link to young children
- Most accidents are preventable - think safety at all times and show them the safe way
- Never let your children play in or near water on their own



Contacts

- www.trafficclub.co.uk
- www.dft.gov.uk/think
- www.beachsafety.org.uk
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) 0121 248 2000
www.rospa.com
- Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) 020 7608 3828
www.capt.org.uk



FIRE SAFETY

Do

- Make a fire action plan and discuss this with everyone in the house so that you all know how to escape in the event of a fire. Don't avoid talking to children for fear of frightening them.
- Children need to know the basics of how to react to a fire. They may not have an adult to tell them what to do. In fact, if they react quickly and well they may end up saving your life.
- Fit smoke alarms and make sure you check them regularly. There are special alarms for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Close all internal doors prior to going to bed.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- Keep clothing away from heating appliances and keep furniture at least one metre away from heating appliances.
- Keep your escape route clear of toys and other obstacles.
- Take special care when you are tired or if you've been drinking.
- Unplug electrical appliances when they are not in use especially those that children could trip over.
- Position lighted candles out of reach of children.
- Think about investing in a deep fat fryer which is thermostatically controlled.
- Put a child-proof fire guard in front of an open fire or heater if there are children in the house and put child locks on cupboards that have anything in them that children could use to start a fire.
- Put plug guards into sockets so children can't stick things into the holes.
- Make sure that cigarettes are properly put out and disposed of carefully. Remember to empty litter bins and ashtrays last thing at night.

Don't

- Leave a cooker or grill on and unattended.
- Throw water onto burning fat.
- Leave lit candles or firebowls unattended.
- Smoke in bed.
- Let children play or leave toys near a fire or heater.



Contacts

- Strathclyde Fire & Rescue offer FREE home fire safety visits, just call 0800 0731 999, or text "Check" to 61611 on your mobile phone. Your local fire station will then call you back to arrange a time and date that suits you. Alternatively you can phone your local fire station direct to arrange a home safety visit
- www.strathclydefire.org
- www.firekills.gov.uk



INTERNET SAFETY

The Internet, chatrooms, MSN, webcams, mobile phones and iPods are wonderful for young people to find information, study and keep in contact with friends or meet new ones.

Unfortunately there are risks attached to using the Internet from sites that contain violent or sexual content and child abusers who use chatrooms to become friendly with young people. It's also possible for children and young people to be bullied online.

Get involved

If you have a computer at home, keep an eye on what's going on by keeping it in a family room. Take an interest in the websites your child visits and encourage them to talk about how they spend their time online. If you're not confident about using the Internet yourself, why not ask your child to show you how?

Limit the amount of time they spend online and encourage other interests and hobbies.

Online dangers - contact from strangers

Remind your child that strangers on the Internet can be just as dangerous as strangers on the street. They should be alert to the fact that people online might not be who they say they are.

They should never give out any personal information to people they meet in chatrooms as this could allow someone to locate them in the real world.

Warn them about the dangers of meeting up with someone they have met online. If they insist on doing so, go with them and ensure you meet in a busy public place.

Warn your child not to open email attachments from senders that they don't know as they could contain a virus.

Bullying

Increasing numbers of young people are victims of 'cyberbullying'. This can mean getting threatening or hurtful emails or text messages. Maybe having abusive images made or things written about them and placed on websites or sent by text messaging.

Look out for signs as your child may not be able to or want to tell you what is happening to them for fear of making things worse.

If your child tells you that they are being bullied, don't ignore them. Listen to what they are saying and first try to discuss ideas to help sort the problem. It may be possible to block abusive/hurtful messages.

If the messages are coming from someone at school, report it. All schools have an anti-bullying policy. If threats seem serious contact the police.

Inappropriate content

Your child may come across websites with disturbing sexual or violent content. Encourage them to tell you if they are distressed or concerned about anything they have seen online.

Don't overreact if they have been looking at something unsuitable - remember that it's possible they came across it accidentally.

Software filters help block inappropriate material but are not 100% effective and are not a substitute for adult supervision.

If your child keeps it secret when using the computer, if you notice changes in their behaviour, sleep pattern or routine or they suddenly ask about sexual matters you should consider whether their Internet use has anything to do with it.

- The Internet can be fun and is useful
- It is important that parents discuss the dangers of using the Internet with their children
- It is important that parents monitor their child's Internet use
- Children can be bullied online
- Paedophiles can use the Internet to contact children



Contacts

- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) 0870 000 3344
www.ceop.gov.uk
- ChildLine 0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk
- NSPCC 0808 800 5000
www.nspcc.org.uk
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.chatdanger.com
- www.kidsmart.org.uk



- Children have the right not to be hurt or intimidated
- Bullying can happen to any child
- Act immediately if you think your child is being bullied
- Advise your child to run, yell and tell



Contacts

- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk
- www.youngscot.org
- www.bullying.co.uk
- www.respectme.org.uk

BULLYING

Bullying happens when someone hurts or frightens another person, whether intentionally or not. Even if the intent is not there the impact and effect on the person being bullied will be no less severe because of this.

Bullying can include teasing, name calling, violence, stealing or damaging another person's things. Spreading rumours, ignoring someone, cruel text or email messages, picking on someone because of race, religion, sexuality, disability or just because they seem different are also types of bullying. All are unacceptable.

Being bullied breaks down a person's self-confidence. They feel alone, scared and powerless. Being bullied affects schoolwork due to stress, missed lessons, being unable to focus and associated absences (illness caused by worry or injuries). For a small number, it may lead to thoughts of suicide.

Your child may not be able to or want to tell you what is happening. They may be scared that you knowing will make things worse.

Warning signs

- Headaches or stomach aches, caused by stress.
- Not sleeping.
- Being more bad tempered than usual, over-reacting and lashing out at siblings.
- Missing or damaged belongings.
- Bad results at school.
- Worrying about going to school in the morning or changes in routine.

What you can do

If your child tells you that they are being bullied listen to what they are saying and discuss ideas to help sort the problem.

If this doesn't work, suggest your child keeps a diary of things that happen and that they talk to a teacher. Contact the school about your worries. Every school in East Dunbartonshire has an anti-bullying policy.

Episodes of bullying are rarely confined to one place. Something that starts in the playground often spills over into the community - and vice versa.

Bullying in youth organisations and sports clubs

Many of these organisations have child protection policies from their national bodies so if approaching the coach at club level doesn't help, you should make a complaint to the national supervisory body.

Ensure your child feels loved and secure and let them know they can talk to you. Invite friends round and encourage positive activities.

If your child is a bully

Bullies often feel unhappy. Bullying makes them feel powerful or popular.

It can be upsetting to realise that your child is bullying someone but with your help they can stop. Problems at home, pressure from friends or being bullied themselves may all be causes. Without judging them, tell them that what they are doing is wrong. Discuss ways they can change their actions and ask the school for support and advice.



- Know where your child is
- Unhappiness and uncertainty can make young people run away
- Talk to a professional



Contacts

- Strathclyde Police 0141 532 4400
- Social Work Department 0141 775 1311
- Social Work Out of Hours 0800 811 505
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk
- Shelter Helpline 0808 800 4444
www.shelter.org.uk
- Missing Persons Helpline 0500 700 700
www.missingpeople.org.uk
- Message Home (for young people to get a message to their parents)
0800 700 740
www.missingpeople.org.uk

MISSING

Young people love being able to do what they want and part of that is not having to always tell you where they are or answer to you.

This is fine if you have built up trust and you can usually rely on them to be sensible and to be home at a time you both agree on.

Problems may happen if your child often stays out late, is missing for a few hours, or they will not tell you where they have been or who they have been with. If this happens they maybe at risk of trying drugs or alcohol, abuse or maybe getting into trouble with the police. Do not panic, but try to talk to your child in a calm supportive way.

Home sweet home?

If your child is spending a lot of time out of the house and does not want to be at home with family you need to look at the reasons why. Are there fights at home? Are there money or personal problems? Do family members have trouble talking to each other calmly and sensibly? Are you worried about your child's friends or where they might be hanging out? Have you set fair rules that will make everyone's life easier?

What could happen?

Children missing from home may also be missing school. You must tell the police if your child goes missing and they are under the age of 16. School staff, health staff and social workers also have a responsibility to inform the police if they think a child is missing or if they cannot get in touch with their family. Each agency has procedures which must be followed if they are concerned that a child or family is missing.

Children missing from education

Children of school age but not on a school roll or being educated otherwise (at home, privately or in an alternative provision). They have usually not attended school for a period of time.

- Maybe in need of help or support but are unable to access it. Children not in school may not have had their needs identified and there maybe no one actively connecting them to services they need.
- Maybe missing important experiences and opportunities to gain knowledge and skills. Schools provide more than subjects, they provide social opportunities, practical skills and practice for life.
- Maybe isolated from other children and adults who can help them.

All Schools in East Dunbartonshire Council have "Children Missing from Education" procedures which must be followed if a child does not attend school regularly.

Running away

Running away is a call for help from young people. Most run away because they are unhappy, confused or at risk. There maybe arguments or violence at home, they may have relationship difficulties, or they maybe the victim of child abuse.



ADOLESCENCE & PUBERTY

As teenagers struggle to build their own identity and decide who they are and what they believe, they can come into conflict with their parents. Your child is learning about views, opinions and beliefs that maybe different to those they have grown up with.

They can sometimes be reluctant to answer the simplest questions about school or how their evening went and can become upset if their views are questioned. On top of all this, they also have to cope with school or college work, which can make them worried and stressed and often teenagers will take it out on those closest to them - you!

The most likely cause for the mood swings of your teenager is hormones. At the start of puberty, hormones are triggering physical changes and emotional feelings that are not only hard to deal with, but hard to talk about.

Your teenager is also forming deeper and more complex relationships; any worries or arguments, for example pressure from friends to do things they may not feel comfortable with, can affect their sense of well-being and confidence. They will also be experiencing new sexual feelings, which they may find difficult to handle and concerns about their looks.

Supporting your teenager

How you deal with your teenager can make the difference between a close relationship and a difficult one.

Untidiness, doing homework, letting you know where they are and helping around the house can cause arguments. Reasoning with your teenager works better than making demands: "If you tidy your room, I'll put this wash on for you."

Talking to your teenager will help you understand each other and develop your relationship. It will also help build up their confidence. Listen to their ideas and try to understand their thoughts and feelings. Respect your teenager's privacy - remember you were a teenager once! Be open minded and do not judge your teenager so they trust you and feel they can turn to you when they need help.

The teenage years can be tough and your child needs to know they have your support. Some teenagers can experience feelings of anxiety and depression. If you feel concerned about your child's emotional well-being talk to your GP, school nurse and/or your child guidance teacher.

- Mood swings are a normal part of behaviour
- Listening is the key to a good relationship
- Your teenager wants independence - but still needs you
- Stay calm and be patient



Contacts

- Triple P Team 0141 578 8694
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- Children 1st 0141 418 5670
www.children1st.org.uk



YOUNG PEOPLE & THE LAW

Despite impressions from the media, it is far more likely that young people will be the victims of crime than being responsible for it.

Young people can be victims of crime at school, at home, or at play. They maybe reluctant to report a crime committed against them because they fear they may make matters worse or get labelled a 'grass'.

An important element in healing the experience of crime is an opportunity to 'tell their story' of what happened. Often it is important to tell their story to those who caused the harm and having the offenders understand the impact of their actions. This can result in the victim feeling empowered again, since the offence left them with a feeling of loss of control over their property, their body, their emotions and their dreams.

Your teenager may move quickly or slowly through the recovery process. It maybe beneficial to make contact with victim support, either through the police or directly yourself. Parents and carers can contact victim support for assistance for themselves, or their child - young people over 14 years can contact a service direct (such as ChildLine).

Preventing young people offending
From an early age you can help keep your children out of trouble by teaching them the difference between right and wrong and helping them develop respect for other people and their property.

Children from a stable environment who have a good relationship with their parents are less likely to get into trouble with the law. Research into the lifestyles and experiences of child

offender's shows that the factors most important to keeping them out of trouble are:

- Stable and supportive family home and parents.
- Going to school everyday (except when ill).
- Making good progress at school.

Children also say the two main things that stop them getting involved in crime are:

- Fear of being caught.
- Their parents reaction.

Anti-social behaviour is a phrase used regularly these days. It can vary from high spirits to damaging and frightening behaviour. People have the right to live without fear, including teenagers affected by the behaviour of others.

Some main causes of anti-social teenage behaviour include:

- Lack of opportunity in education or employment.
- Living in an area with few things to do and few family activities
- Pressure from friends or problems at school or bullying.

If your teenager is involved in anti-social behaviour then the following may happen:

- You and your teenager sign an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC).
- The young person maybe referred to a Children's Hearing.
- An Anti-social Behaviour Order (ASBO) maybe sought.

Lots of help is available for young people involved in anti-social behaviour or offending, either from the police, social work, education or other council departments, voluntary agencies and health services.

Victims of crime

- Listen to your child and take seriously the information that they share with you
- Involve your child in any decision making process and allow them to make informed choices
- Talk to them about how they would like the situation to be resolved

Preventing young people offending

- The most important influence on a child's development is that of the family
- Prevention is better than cure
- The main reasons young people give for carrying out crime are boredom and pressure from friends



Contacts

- Strathclyde Police 0141 532 4400
- Social Work Department 0141 775 1311
- Social Work Out of Hours 0800 811 505
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org.uk
- Victim Support Scotland 0845 603 9213
www.victimsupportsco.org.uk
- ChildLine Scotland 0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk



DRUG, ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE MISUSE

How would I know?

There are many signs which can include a young person who is panicky, tense or sleepy, complaining of sickness, cannot concentrate, lacks energy, is depressed, has skin problems or is aggressive, there maybe a change in relationships with family and friends, a change in the way they act, a change in how they do at school, a change in how much money they have and personal things 'disappearing' or being sold.

- In general terms if your child changes in appearance, how they act or if they have extra money that you did not know about you should include drug and alcohol misuse in your list of "I wonder if..." questions.
- Keep an eye on and talk to your child if you are worried. In an emergency contact an ambulance at once. Try to talk with them about their drug use.
- Discuss drug use as much as you can, for example, when drugs are mentioned on TV. You can give information regarding the risks of drug use at an early age.
- Make sure that you are informed about drug use.

Why do young people use drugs, abuse substances or drink alcohol?

They want to find out about them, they want to break the rules, to relax, to escape reality, to cope with difficult situations or feelings, because they enjoy them or because their friends do it.

It is important to discuss drugs use early

Some parents or carers worry that doing this makes their child want to try drugs. By not talking about drugs you will not protect them.

Children will be aware of drugs in some way before they leave primary school. It is likely that at this early stage, children will take more in when being told about the risks of drug use.

Make sure you tell your children about the risks. Clear information and support will help them decide what to do. You cannot be sure they will not try drugs but it will increase the chance of making an informed choice.

- It's normal for young people to want to try out new things
- Having the right knowledge can lead to safer choices
- Know the signs to look out for but be aware that many of the signs and symptoms of drug use are similar to typical teenage behaviour
- Avoid jumping to conclusions!
- Be supportive and do not judge your teenager
- Many parents worry that their children maybe smoking, drinking or using drugs
- Stopping something from happening in the first place is better than trying to sort it out once it has already happened
- Don't let your children see you smoke, drink to excess or take drugs - your example is crucial



Contacts

- Your GP or school nurse
- Your child's school
- Community Addiction Team 0141 588 5143
- Scotland Against Drugs 0141 331 6150
- Scottish Drugs Forum 0141 221 1175
- FRANK 0800 77 66 00
www.talktofrank.com
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- Know The Score 0800 587 587 9
www.knowthescore.info



PARENTAL SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Think about what your behaviour says to children. Children learn from what they see and may begin to think that alcohol or drugs are a solution to problems.

Often people start using drugs in a similar way to relieve stress or tension.

No matter how careful you think you are children and young people are often very aware of their parents' behaviour. Both alcohol and drugs can affect your ability to look after your children and have serious effects on them as they grow up. If you drink moderately and sensibly, your children are more likely to develop healthy and responsible attitudes to alcohol.

Parents who misuse drugs can go on to develop a dependency on these substances, which in turn can affect their ability to look after their children.

Parents who are worried about the impact that their substance misuse has on their children should seek help or advice from their GP.

Professionals will become involved when a concern is reported to them.

As with alcohol, children learn about drugs from watching and listening. Make sure that you give a positive message to your children.

If you think you or some other adult in your household has a problem seek advice or support.

- There are strong links between parental drinking or drug use and the emotional development and well-being of a child or young person
- Parental drug or alcohol use is linked to problems including damage to relationships, impact on family finances and the ability to provide a safe and stable environment for children
- Drug or alcohol use does not automatically lead to harm but it does lead to an increased risk of harm
- Professionals must report concerns about children affected by parental drug or alcohol misuse. They have no choice about this



Contacts

- Social Work Department 0141 775 1311
- Social Work Out of Hours 0800 811 505
- Your GP
- Drinkline 0800 917 8282
- Community Addiction Team 0141 588 5143
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- Turning Point
www.turning-point.co.uk
- FRANK 0800 77 66 00
www.talktofrank.com
- Know the Score 0800 587 5787 9
www.knowthescore.info



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Mental health problems are very common. In Scotland about 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem at sometime in their life and at least 1 in 10 young people already have mental health problems.

Having a baby

It is normal for new mothers to feel emotional after the birth of their baby. They may feel elated one moment and the next feel very emotional, upset and cry for no particular reason. These 'baby blues' usually disappear after a few days. Sometimes these feelings can persist for longer and if they do it is important to seek advice. Postnatal depression is common and can often be resolved simply with some support from your health visitor or GP.

Childhood

Parents can help their children develop good emotional health. By being loving and affectionate, spending time with your children, showing interest in their activities and being clear and consistent in your approach to their behaviour, as well as modelling positive behaviours yourself, this will help them to develop self-esteem and confidence.

Teenage years

The teenage years can be a difficult time and young people have a lot to deal with physically, mentally and emotionally. What may seem like small problems or worries to an older person can seem like a much bigger problem to a young person. While every young person feels highs and lows, for a few this may turn into depression.

What are the signs?

Although young people can sometimes seem unhappy and quiet, you may feel that this is more than just a phase. Signs may include being unable to sleep, eating too much or too little, mood swings, staying in their bedroom all day, or giving up interests and hobbies, crying, avoiding friends and family, finding it hard to do their schoolwork, or not caring about what they look like are other things to look out for. They may talk about death or have suicidal thoughts. To escape from their feelings or let them out in the only way they know how young people may start taking drugs or drinking, not going to school, becoming violent or carrying out crimes such as shoplifting.

How to help

If your teenager is suffering from depression they need help. Don't ignore their worries and take any talk of suicide seriously. You need to listen, try to understand and get professional help if you need to. Get them to talk about their worries.

If they don't feel they can talk to you, there are a number of helplines they can contact for support. If you are concerned, help them to see their GP or school nurse. They may want you to come with them or may like to go alone (remember they will still need your support). The GP or school nurse can discuss ways to help and may provide a referral to specialist services.

- Good mental health is important for all aspects of the lives of children and young people. It plays a part in their ability to learn, play, interact with others, communicate and form relationships
- Our experience as babies and young children has a profound effect upon our mental health in adulthood. Young people who have good mental wellbeing, who are self-assured, secure and possess good self-esteem are more likely to cope positively with life's ups and downs and to live life to the full
- As a parent it's important to look after your own emotional and mental health and to take time for yourself to unwind and do something that you enjoy



Contacts

- Your GP or school nurse
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- YoungMinds Parents Helpline 0808 802 5544
www.youngminds.org.uk
- www.need2know.co.uk
- www.depressioninteenagers.com
- www.dascot.org/index.html



DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse is when one person hurts another physically, emotionally or sexually in the home.

Physical abuse includes hurting someone by kicking, pushing or hitting them.

Emotional abuse includes putting someone down, saying things to make them frightened or lack self-confidence.

Sexual abuse is making someone take part in sexual acts they don't want to or are not happy with.

Stress, money problems, alcohol or drug misuse can lead to abuse within the home. There is no excuse. Abuse is wrong and can have a major impact on children/young people in the home.

It is estimated that 1 in 5 women in Scotland experience domestic abuse at some time in their lives. It is hard to build up the courage to take action against domestic abuse. If you are a victim, your children become victims too.

Many people find it difficult to understand why women remain in or return to abusive situations. A combination of fear, love, the risk of homelessness and financial issues can make it very difficult for women with children to leave. Some women will want to remain in the family home and have the perpetrator leave.

The children's charity ChildLine, say that in 9 out of 10 cases of abuse, children are in the same or next room when the abuse is going on. In half of all reported domestic abuse cases, children get hurt too.

Short-term effects

Children are affected in many ways by domestic abuse - every child is an individual and responses will vary, but some children will feel frightened, become withdrawn, run away, be aggressive, have behavioural difficulties, problems with school, poor concentration and emotional turmoil.

Long-term effects

The longer children are exposed to violence and abuse, the more severe the effects on them are. These can include a lack of respect for the non-violent parent, loss of self-confidence, impacting in every area of life, being overly-protective of a parent, loss of childhood, problems at school and running away.

How to get help

If you are worried about domestic abuse.

- TALK to someone who understands.
- You are not alone, you are not to blame.
- Seek information and help from the specialist agencies in East Dunbartonshire such as Women's Aid (see contacts listed).
- You may want to seek legal advice from a Solicitor to help consider your options.

- Domestic abuse can affect children in serious and long-lasting ways
- Where there is domestic abuse there is often child abuse
- Domestic abuse can teach children to use violence or abuse
- Domestic abuse causes damage to children
- Children will often blame themselves for domestic abuse
- Pregnant women are more vulnerable to domestic abuse
- Get advice, support and help to stop the abuse



Contacts

- Social Work Department 0141 775 1311
- Social Work Out of Hours 0800 811 505
- Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline 0800 027 1234
- East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid 0141 776 0864
- Rape Crisis 0141 552 3200
- East Dunbartonshire Association for Mental Health 0141 955 3040
- ChildLine Scotland 0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk
- Parentline Scotland 0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- Domestic Abuse - Male Advice Line 0808 8010 327
- National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247
www.womensaid.org.uk
<http://refuge.org.uk>

Helpful national organisations

- **British Dental Health Foundation**
0845 063 1188
www.dentalhealth.org.uk
- **Bullying UK**
www.bullying.co.uk
- **Care Commission**
0141 843 4230
www.carecommission.com
- **Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland**
0131 651 6371
- **Child Protection Line**
0800 022 3222
- **ChildLine Scotland**
0870 336 2910
www.childline.org.uk
- **Children 1st**
0141 418 5670
www.children1st.org.uk
- **Daycare Trust**
0845 872 6251
www.daycaretrust.org.uk
- **Domestic Abuse - Male Advice Line**
0808 8010 327
- **Drinkline**
0800 917 8282
- **Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence (ERIC)**
0845 370 8008
www.eric.org.uk
- **Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH)**
0808 1000 143
- **Enable Scotland**
0141 226 4541
- **Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland**
0845 604 5510
www.equalityhumanrights.com
- **FRANK**
0800 77 66 00
www.talktofrank.com
- **Healthy Living Advice Line**
0845 278 8878
- **HMIe**
01506 600200
www.hmie.gov.uk
- **Know the Score**
0800 587 5787 9
www.knowthescore.info
- **Law Society of Scotland (Children's Law)**
0131 226 7411
- **Learning and Teaching Scotland**
08700 100 297
www.ltscotland.org.uk
- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youthline Scotland**
0845 113 0005
www.lgbtyouth.org.uk
- **LGBT Youth Scotland**
0845 113 0005
- **Message Home**
0800 700 740
www.missingpeople.org.uk
- **Missing Persons Helpline**
0500 700 700
www.missingpeople.org.uk
- **National Day Nurseries Association**
01484 407070
www.ndna.org.uk
- **National Domestic Violence Helpline**
0808 2000 247
www.womensaid.org.uk
<http://refuge.org.uk>
- **NHS 24**
08454 242424
www.nhs24.com
- **NHS Health Scotland**
0131 536 5500
www.healthscotland.com
- **NSPCC**
0808 800 5000
www.nspcc.org.uk
- **One Scotland**
0131 244 0095
- **Parentline Scotland**
0808 800 2222
www.parentingacrossscotland.org
- **Parentzone**
www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/index.asp

- **Scotland Against Drugs**
0141 331 6150
- **Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline**
0800 027 1234
- **Scottish Drugs Forum**
0141 221 1175
- **Scottish Government**
www.scotland.gov.uk
- **Scottish Out of School Care Network**
0141 564 1284
- **Scottish Pre-School Play Association**
0141 221 4148
- **Scottish Social Services Council**
01382 207101
www.sssc.uk.com
- **Shelter Helpline**
0808 800 4444
www.shelter.org.uk
- **Sleep Scotland**
0131 651 1392
www.sleepscotland.org
- **Smokefree**
0800 022 4 332
<http://smokefree.nhs.uk>
- **Victim Support Scotland**
0845 603 9213
www.victimsupportsco.org.uk
- **Welfare Rights**
01387 266888
www.welfarerights.net
- **YoungMinds Parents Helpline**
0808 802 5544
www.youngminds.org.uk

Helpful local organisations

- **Community Addiction Team**
0141 588 5143
- **East Dunbartonshire Association for Mental Health**
0141 955 3040
- **East Dunbartonshire Community Health Partnership**
0141 201 4217
www.chps.org.uk/eastdunbartonshire
- **East Dunbartonshire Council**
0141 578 8000
www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk
- **East Dunbartonshire Council Childcare Information Service**
0141 570 0091
- **East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid**
0141 776 0864
- **Rape Crisis**
0141 552 3200
- **Social Work Department**
0141 775 1311
- **Social Work Out of Hours**
0800 811 505
- **Strathclyde Fire & Rescue**
01698 300999
www.strathclydefire.org
- **Strathclyde Police**
0141 532 4400
www.strathclyde.police.uk
- **Triple P Team**
0141 578 8694
- **Other useful websites**
www.5aday.nhs.uk
www.beachsafety.org.uk
www.ceop.gov.uk
www.chatdanger.com
www.depressioninteenagers.com
www.dwp.gov.uk
www.eatwell.gov.uk
www.enquire.org.uk
www.firekills.gov.uk
<http://kidshealth.org/parent>
www.kidsmart.org.uk
www.mugdock-country-park.org.uk
www.need2know.co.uk
www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk
www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk
www.thinkuknow.co.uk
www.dft.gov.uk/think
www.trafficclub.co.uk
www.turning-point.co.uk
www.youngscot.org

Other formats and translations

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or on audio cassette and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council's Public Affairs Unit at:

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Tom Johnston House
Civic Way
Kirkintilloch
G66 4TJ
Tel: 0141 578 8000

Gabhaidh an sgrìobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhith oirbh. Cuiribh fòn gu 0141 578 8152

अनुरोध करने पर यह दस्तावेज़ हिन्दी में भाषांतरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0141 578 8152 पर फोन कीजिए।

本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0141 578 8152。

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0141 578 8152 ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

اس دستاویز کا درخواست کرنے پر (اردو) زبان میں ترجمہ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ براہ مہربانی فون نمبر 0141 578 8152 پر رابطہ کریں۔

