



London Borough of Redbridge Press Release

Community urged to stay vigilant, and report signs of child abuse or neglect during pandemic

Redbridge Council wants to ensure that child abuse and neglect is still reported during social distancing, and are calling on the community to stay alert, and report any concerns they have.

With the country now in lockdown, children and young people are now isolating in their homes, and away from the school setting, where signs of child abuse can often be spotted more quickly by teachers.

The council is calling on residents, volunteers, delivery drivers, shop staff and other frontline workers, to be the voice for the youngest members of our society, by staying vigilant to signs of child abuse or neglect.

If you see, hear, or suspect anything please report your concerns to the Redbridge Child Protection Team on 020 8708 3885 Monday – Fridays 09:00 to 17:00, or if it's an emergency please call 999.



Child abuse and neglect are often discovered at school, sports clubs or in church, with an adult noticing that a child is bruised, or a counsellor asking if they're eating enough. In times of crisis, situations can unfold rapidly and victims may feel trapped with their offenders. If a child talks to you about abuse, neglect or mistreatment they are experiencing, it is important that you remain calm and reassuring so that the child feels listened to and understood.

It is also important that the person they speak to responds appropriately to get the child the support they need.

Cllr Elaine Norman, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People said:

“The safety of children and young people in Redbridge is a priority. We all have a responsibility to support them, and report any concerns to the child protection team.

With the country in lockdown, schools shut, and many parents and guardians working from home, children will have much less contact with

the outside world. Now more than ever, we need to work together as a community to be the eyes and ears for children who are otherwise unable to speak up.

If you see, hear or are told anything about an issue relating to the well-being of a child or young person, please don't hesitate to report it.

By residents, volunteers and frontline workers looking out for children and young people in the community, we can ensure cases continue to get reported in Redbridge”

Learn how to spot the signs of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** – Hurting a child e.g. hitting, punching or physical punishment, causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.
- **Emotional abuse** – Ongoing emotional mistreatment of a child, including rejection, and constantly threatening or criticising a child, so that they feel unloved and worthless. This can also include exposure to domestic abuse in the home.
- **Sexual abuse** – Forcing or persuading a child to take part in sexual activities. This can also involve causing a child to look at or be involved in pornographic material.
- **Exploitation** – Using a child for gain, either sexual or criminal.
- **Neglect** – Failure to care for a child's basic daily needs, including food, clothing, medical care, shelter, keeping them safe, education and nurturing.

More information on the different types of abuse can be found on the council website: <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/adult-and-childrens-services/child-protection/>. If you think a child is being abused please call Redbridge's Child Protection Team on 020 8708 3885 (Monday – Friday, 09:00 – 17:00) or 020 8708 5897 (evenings or weekends).

E-mail: CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk

A social worker will follow up reports made with any necessary investigations, or assessment.

