

10 Top Tips...

when making a referral to Children's Services

- 1. Make relationships clear.** Who lives in the house? What is their relationship to the child? Are there any other significant adults?
- 2. Be concise.** Highlight the main concerns. Don't give their life story, be specific.
- 3. Use the child's words.** If the child has made a disclosure write down exactly what the child has said, don't put it in your own words.
- 4. Think: What are you worried about? What is working well? What needs to happen?** Focus on these three areas when you are making your referral.
- 5. Include support.** What are you already doing to support the child? Any Early Help intervention? This includes support provided by school and the Early Help Family Team. Is there an existing Early Help Assessment? If there is, include a copy of this and the latest Team Around the Family meeting minutes. Add contact details of any current or previous agencies and their role in supporting the child/family.
- 6. Include previous significant events and referrals.** Have there been any previous concerns or referrals? If you use a reporting system (eg. CPOMS) a chronology of significant events can be attached to the referral form for further information. Any previous referrals and reasons for them should be included.
- 7. Contact parents.** This should be done unless doing so would put the child (or others) at increased risk or would prejudice any investigations or enquiries. Parents should also not be contacted if the concern is related to fabricated and induced illness, forced marriage, familial sexual abuse or Prevent. Inform parents that you are making a referral and the reasons why. If you have not contacted parents for any reason, make this clear when you speak to First Contact and on your referral form.
- 8. Check your information.** Make sure you are clear what the concerns are and have as much information as possible. Before you send your paper referral read it through and try to see it from the perspective of someone who does not know anything about the child/family. Are the concerns clear? Is there enough information for someone to make a judgement? Are the main concerns hidden by too much background information?
- 9. Don't forget to scale.** Make sure you complete the scale on the referral form. Put your own judgement on but also add judgements for the child, parent and any other relevant people if you can. Remember that the child or parent may see the concerns as at a very different level to you.
- 10. Ask for advice.** You can ring One Call for advice if you are unsure whether a referral is needed and to discuss your concerns before making a referral.

One Call: 01670 536400

Email address for referral forms: childrentriage@northumberland.gov.uk