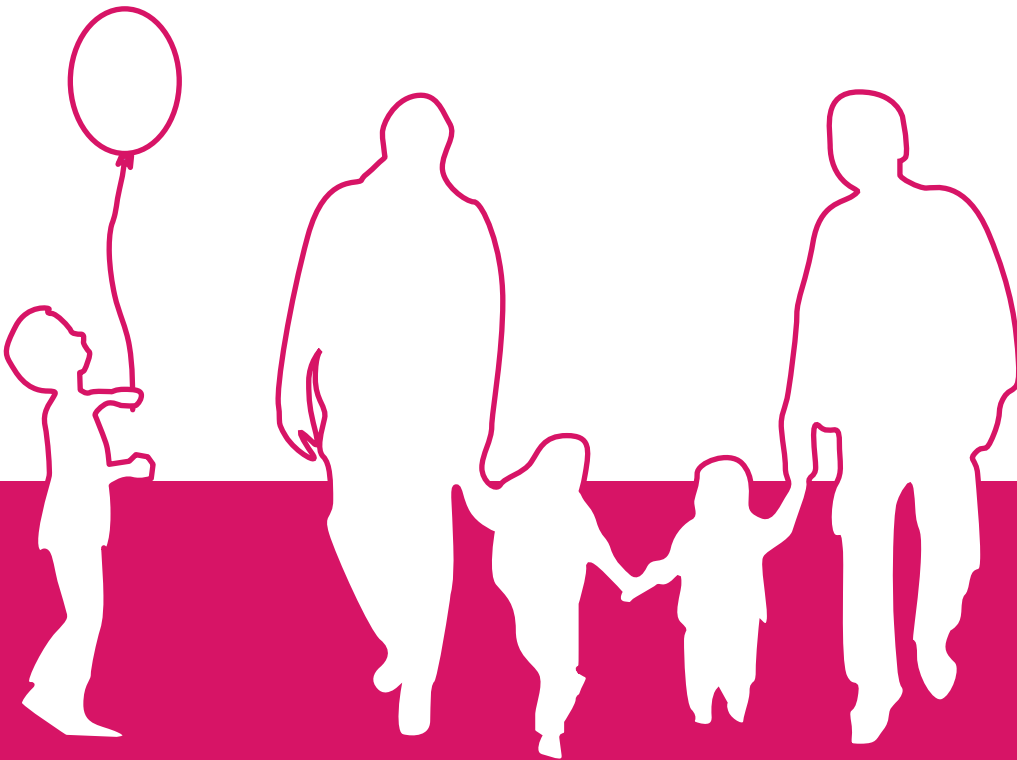




CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014:

**National Guidance on Part 12:
Services in Relation to Children
At Risk of Becoming Looked After, etc.**



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INTRODUCTION

1. The Scottish Government, in collaboration with the Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland (CELCIS), have developed this National Guidance to support the implementation of Part 12: Services in Relation To Children At Risk Of Becoming Looked After, etc. of the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) (the 2014 Act) and the [Relevant services in relation to children at risk of becoming looked after etc. \(Scotland\) Order 2016](#) (the 2016 Order). The 2014 Act defines “relevant services” and sets out the duties of local authorities to make arrangements to secure relevant services for eligible children, qualifying persons and eligible pregnant women. Further descriptions of relevant services are specified in the 2016 Order. .
2. This non-statutory guidance applies to those persons considered to be at risk of becoming looked after and the provision of relevant services as set out above. This guidance will not prescribe which services local authorities should offer as there are many different successful evidence based programmes available. Local authorities should consider which of their services will be most appropriate for the child’s circumstances and ensure that appropriate other persons are included in the process.
3. We want Scotland to be the best place for all of our children to grow up. Over the last ten years, the Scottish Government has developed [Getting it Right for Every Child](#) (GIRFEC), a national approach to improving the wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland. This builds on a growing body of evidence demonstrating the value of supporting children and families at the earliest opportunity, rather than waiting until families reach crisis point. This approach aims to achieve secure, nurturing, positive, childhoods, from which all children and young people can develop into successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. This is underpinned by the Scottish Government’s commitment to the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\) 1989](#).

4. The Scottish Government are committed to delivering public service reform as set out by the Christie Commission. The Commission proposed an asset-based approach, where services are developed *with* people, rather than *for* people.

*We recommend that, in developing new patterns of service provision, public service organisations should increasingly develop and adopt positive approaches which build services around people and communities, their needs, aspirations, capacities and skills, and work to build up their autonomy and resilience.*¹

At the heart of the Christie Commission reforms are preventative approaches and early intervention to tackle inequalities across Scotland.

5. The services provided to families whose children are at risk of becoming looked after (as per the duties set out under Part 12 of the 2014 Act) represent a critical component of that preventative approach, addressing issues at an earlier stage, and thereby preventing the need for more significant intervention in the child's life. As such, local authorities and their Children's Services Planning Partners (including NHS Health Boards, Integrated Joint Boards, the Police, etc.) should consider setting out explicitly, within their local Children's Services Plan, how they will engage and consult with families whose children are at risk of becoming looked after, make available relevant services to meet their needs, and monitor those services' effectiveness. The Children's Services Planning duties (Part 3 of the 2014 Act) are designed to facilitate this practice, encouraging and enabling local authorities and health boards to take a strategic approach to the design and delivery of all services used by children and families.
6. Many children and families can experience adversity in their lives. The US Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study, involving 17,000 participants, revealed that two-thirds of adults experienced at least one adverse childhood experience. The study found that cumulative experience of adversity in childhood can increase the risk of poor outcomes in adulthood; for example, risky health

¹ Christie Commission (2011) [Report on the Future Delivery of Public Services by the commission chaired by Dr Campbell Christie](#), Public Services Commission (pg. 27).

behaviours, chronic health conditions, poor quality of life and early death.² This work, alongside research on risk and resilience in childhood, has influenced our understanding on the importance of supporting children and their families early to minimise adversity for the benefit of children immediately and in the long term.

7. At times of difficulty, extended family and friends are often the main source of emotional and practical support.³ Practitioners supporting families have increasingly recognised that families have the ability to identify their own solutions to the challenges they face. This can increase self-esteem and self-efficacy within families. Fundamentally, in working *with* families, there is a shifting of power dynamics, and an increased recognition of the strengths and resilience within family networks and communities to overcome adversity.
8. Building on the assets within families and communities to prevent children from becoming looked after is identified as a key principle in the Scottish Government's [Getting it Right for Looked after Children and Young People Strategy](#) (2015). We will improve outcomes for looked after children through three priority areas of work: early engagement, early permanence and improving the quality of care. The strategy also states the importance of providing high quality support and assessment for families.
9. As of July 2015, there were 15,404 children and young people who were looked after in Scotland; of these children, three-quarters were looked after away from parents: in kinship care; with foster carers; in residential care; or in other community settings.⁴ The primary reason for children and young people being looked after away from their parents is due to abuse and neglect. This guidance recognises that for some children, becoming looked after away from home is essential to ensure they are safe and protected from significant harm. One-quarter of looked after children are cared for by virtue of a supervision

² Felitti VJ, Anda RF, Nordenberg D, Williamson DF, Spitz AM, Edwards V, Koss MP, Marks JS. (1998) [Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: the adverse childhood experiences \(ACE\) study](#). *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*. 14(4): 245–258.

³ Bradshaw, P., Wasoff, F. & Jamieson, L (2008) [Growing Up in Scotland: Use of Informal Support by Families with Young Children](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

⁴ Scottish Government (March 2016) [Children's Social Work Statistics 2014-15](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

requirement or a compulsory supervision order at home with birth parents or relevant persons. Research has identified that there has often been insufficient attention paid to the provision of support for children who are looked after at home.⁵

10. Children with complex disabilities may also be looked after children due to the local authority and/or health board providing a care placement to meet the needs of the child. At 31 July 2013, the last date for which national data was collected, there were 1,914 children being looked after on a planned series of short-term placements. Sixty-one per cent of these children were looked after in residential establishments, whilst 25 per cent were looked after in foster placements.⁶

11. Referrals to the Scottish Children's Reporter can provide an important insight into the reasons why children may be at risk of becoming looked after. In 2014/15, 15,858 children and young people were referred to the Reporter; this equates to 1.7% of all children and young people in Scotland. Almost 90% of referrals include care and protection grounds and the most common reasons for concern include; lack of parental care and domestic abuse.⁷ There has been a downward trend in referrals to the reporter since 2006 (after a sharp peak which was significantly due to a police policy of automatic referral where domestic abuse incidents had taken place). Referrals on care and protection grounds fell by 19% from 2013/14. This can be partially explained by the success of early and effective intervention work that has enabled the hearings system to concentrate on those children in need of compulsory measures:

*'Increasingly, recent years have seen a focus on early and effective intervention, through the prism of the GIRFEC and the Whole Systems approaches. The impact of this is highlighted through the reducing numbers of children and young people referred.'*⁸

⁵ CELCIS (2014) [Overseen but often overlooked: children and young people looked after at home in Scotland: Report 1 - a review of the literature](#), Glasgow: CELCIS.

⁶ Scottish Government (March 2015) [Children's Social Work Statistics 2013-14](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

⁷ SCRA (2015) [Children and Young People Statistical analysis 2014-2015](#), Stirling: SCRA

⁸ SCRA (2015) [Children and Young People Statistical analysis 2014-2015](#), Stirling: SCRA (pg.4)

12. Children may also be referred to the reporter on offence grounds. From this population, a very small number of children may be at risk of becoming looked after due to solely offending behaviour.

Structure of the Guidance

13. This guidance will explain the provision of relevant services for children and families where there is a risk the child may become looked after. The purpose of the 2014 Act as a whole is explained, and definitions are provided for terms frequently used in this guidance. The guidance is divided into two sections: Part one provides the legal framework. Part two describes the relevant services outlined in the 2016 Order and the persons for whom relevant services must be provided. Appendix A is Part 12 of the 2014 Act and the 2016 Order. Appendix B contains a list of useful organisations and further information.

14. This non-statutory guidance has been written to support the wide range of front-line practitioners, managers and strategic leaders who all play an important role in supporting children and families who face adversities. This guidance is particularly relevant for social care, health, education and third sector providers using a multi-agency approach. Practitioners will also need to be aware of other parts of the 2014 Act, and the other Guidance related to those parts, including, most notably Part 1 (Rights of Children), Part 3 (Children's Services Planning), Part 13 (Support for Kinship Care) and Part 18 (General), in particular Section 96 (Assessment of wellbeing).

DEFINITIONS

Child

15. The term 'child' or 'children' refers to persons who have not yet attained the age of 18 years as stated in section 97(1) of the 2014 Act.

Eligible child

16. Under section 68(3) of the 2014 Act, an eligible child is defined as 'a child who the local authority considers to be at risk of becoming looked after'.

Eligible pregnant woman

17. An eligible pregnant woman is a pregnant woman who the local authority considers is going to give birth to a child who will be an eligible child as stated in section 68(5) of the 2014 Act.

Looked after child

18. The definition of a 'looked after child' is set out in Section 17(6) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 (the 1995 Act), as amended by the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 (the 2007 Act) and Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). A child is 'looked after' by a local authority when he or she is:

- provided with accommodation by a local authority under section 25 of 1995 Act; or
- subject to a compulsory supervision order or an interim compulsory supervision order made by a children's hearing in respect of whom the local authority are the implementation authority (within the meaning of the 2011 Act); or
- living in Scotland and subject to an order in respect of whom a Scottish local authority has responsibilities, as a result of a transfer of an order

under regulations made under section 33 of the 1995 Act or section 190 of the 2011 Act; or

- subject to a Permanence Order made after an application by the local authority under section 80 of the 2007 Act.

Qualifying Person

19. Under section 68(4) of the 2014 Act, a qualifying person in relation to an eligible child is a person:

- a) Who is related to the child
- b) Who has any parental rights or responsibilities in relation to the child, or
- c) With whom the child is, or has been living.

20. The references in section 68 to a person who is related to another person (“the other person”) includes a person who—

- (a) is married to or in a civil partnership with a person who is related to the other person,
- (b) is related to the other person by the half blood.

Qualifying Person in relation to an eligible pregnant women

21. Under section 68(6) of the 2014 Act, a “qualifying person” in relation to an eligible pregnant woman is a person—

- (a) who is the father of the child to whom the pregnant woman is to give birth,
- (b) who is married to, in a civil partnership with or otherwise related to the pregnant woman,
- (c) with whom the pregnant woman is living, or
- (d) who does not fall within any of paragraphs (a) to (c) but who the authority considers will, when the pregnant woman gives birth to the child, become a qualifying person in relation to the child.

Relevant Services

22. Under article 2 of the 2016 Order, relevant services for the purpose of section 68 (1) of the 2014 Act are specified as:

- a) Family group decision-making services which means a service which is designed to facilitate decision-making by a child's family in relation to the services and support required for the child; and
- b) Support services in relation to parenting which means a service which is designed to increase parenting skills.

PART ONE: SERVICES IN RELATION TO CHILDREN AT RISK OF BECOMING LOOKED AFTER AND THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Children (Scotland) Act 1995

23. The [Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#) (the 1995 Act) provides a major part of the legal framework for child welfare and protection in Scotland. There are three main themes that run through the Act:

- a) The child's views should be taken into account in decisions that affect their lives;
- b) The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration;
- c) No court or hearing should make an order, unless the court or hearing considers that to do so would be better for the child than making no order at all (known as the 'no order' principle).

The Act also provides for an early intervention approach with a provision on local authorities' duties in relation to children 'in need' (section 22).

24. The key principles underpinning the 1995 Act are:

- Each child has a right to be treated as an individual
- Each child who can form a view on matters affecting him or her has the right to express those views if he or she so wishes
- Parents should normally be responsible for the upbringing of their children and should share that responsibility
- Each child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- So far as is consistent with safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare, the public authority should promote the upbringing of children by their families.
- Any intervention by a public authority in the life of a child must be properly justified and should be supported by services from all relevant agencies.

Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007

25. The [Adoption and Children \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#) modernised the system of adoption in Scotland and introduced Permanence Orders to provide long-term security for children who could not live with their families. The 2007 Act provides new provision for the distribution of parental responsibilities and rights.

Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011

The [Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#) restates the child-centred, participative nature of the hearings system but also sets out fundamental structural changes. These include the creation of a National Convener and a national body, Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS), to support this role. This Act also updated some procedural issues; for example, it introduced pre-hearing panels and extended the definition for relevant persons. It also modernised the grounds for referral and placed the right to legal representation on a permanent statutory footing.

Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013

26. The [Social Care \(Self-Directed Support\) \(Scotland\) Act 2013](#) (the 2013 Act) makes legislative provisions relating to the arranging of care and support ("community care services" and "children's services") in order to provide a range of choices to individuals as to how they wish their support to be provided. The Act is underpinned by four statutory principles, which should guide and inform the assessment process and any subsequent provision of choice as part of wider support planning. The principles of collaboration, informed choice, involvement and participation and dignity are important as they articulate the underlying spirit of the legislation. The 2013 Act introduces the language of self-directed support into statute. It places a duty on local authorities to offer four options to individuals who they assess as requiring care and support under section 12A of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, section 3 of the 2013 Act (support for adult carers) and section 22-24 of the 1995 Act. It requires authorities to explain the nature and effect of all four options and provide information and assistance to individuals in order that they can make an informed choice about the options available.

27. Under [Section 8: Choice of Options: Children and Family Members](#) of the 2013 Act, where the local authority is providing services to a child or a member of a child's family under section 22 of the 1995 Act, the local authority must give the supported person the opportunity to choose from the four self-directed support options. Furthermore, the supported person must, as far as practical and taking into account the maturity of the child, have regard to any views expressed by the child under section 8 (6)(c) of the 2013 Act. This is highly likely to be relevant for children who are deemed by a local authority to be at risk of becoming looked after. Furthermore, this could be key for engaging with families and empowering them to seek their own solutions.

28. The local authority retains some discretion with regards the offer of option one – a direct payment. The accompanying [Statutory Guidance](#) (2014) suggests that there are a number of circumstances when it is not possible, or appropriate, to offer all of the options and local authorities can use a “duty of care” discretion. This may include, for example, where a child's safety would be put at risk by having a direct payment, if there is evidence that the money will not be used to meet their needs, or when assessments are undertaken at acute points of crisis therefore the offer of the four options would only be given after the initial crisis has been resolved and longer term support is required.

Public Bodies (Joint working) (Scotland) Act 2014

29. The [Public Bodies \(Joint Working\) \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) requires integration across health and social care for adult services, with local discretion to include integration of children's services. The Act provides for nationally agreed outcomes on health and wellbeing to be set out by Scottish Ministers. The Act establishes integration joint boards and integration joint monitoring committees as the partnership arrangements for the governance and oversight of health and social care services. There is a requirement on partnerships to strengthen the role of clinicians and care professionals, along with the third and independent sectors, in the planning and delivery of services. Partnerships will be jointly accountable to Ministers, Local Authorities, NHS Board Chairs and the public for delivering the nationally agreed outcomes. This legislation is highly relevant

where children's services have been included through integration and thus, has consequences for the joint delivery of services as the health of the child or parents is a common factor when children are on the edge of care.

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

30. The [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) (the 2014 Act) was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 19 February 2014, and received Royal Assent on 27 March 2014. The legislation is a key part of the Scottish Government's strategy for making Scotland the best place in the world for children to grow up. By facilitating a shift in public services towards the early years of a child's life, and towards early intervention whenever a family or young person needs help, the legislation encourages preventative measures, rather than crises' responses. Underpinned by the Scottish Government's commitment to the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989](#) (UNCRC), and the national approach, [Getting it Right for Every Child](#) (GIRFEC), the 2014 Act also establishes a new legal framework within which services are to work together in support of children, young people and families.

31. Composed of 18 distinct Parts, the 2014 Act makes important changes to the development of services for children and their families. In summary, the Act:

- Places new duties on Scottish Ministers and public bodies to report on the steps they have taken to give further effect to the UNCRC requirements. (Part 1)
- Strengthens the powers of the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland to enable investigations to be conducted in relation to matters concerning individual children and young people. (Part 2)
- Establishes a structure for the 'integrated' planning and delivery of all children's services in a local authority area. (Part 3)
- Provides for child and young people (up to their 18th birthday) and beyond, if still at school, to have a Named Person who is a single point of contact with responsibility for promoting, supporting and safeguarding the child's wellbeing. (Part 4). This part of the 2014 Act is not yet in force.

- Ensures that there is a single planning framework (the Child's Plan) for children who need support to meet their wellbeing needs which require targeted intervention. (Part 5). This part of the 2014 Act is not yet in force.
- Increases the amount and flexibility of early learning and childcare available to all 3 and 4 year olds, and to vulnerable 2 year olds. (Part 6)
- Introduces a coordinated approach to consultation and planning on all early learning and childcare, day care and out of school care provided by local authorities. (Part 6, Part 7 and Part 8)
- Places corporate parenting duties on a range of publicly funded organisations in respect of looked after children and care leavers, increasing the breadth and depth of support available to those groups of children and young people. (Part 9)
- Extends eligibility to aftercare assistance up to an individual's 26th birthday. (Part 10)
- Introduces 'continuing care', through which eligible care leavers will have the opportunity to continue with the accommodation and assistance they were provided with before they ceased to be looked after. (Part 11)
- Increases the support available to children at risk of becoming looked after. (Part 12)
- Specifies the type of court order that will be recognised as a kinship care order for the purposes of receiving kinship care assistance and sets out the duties of the local authority to make arrangements to ensure that assistance is made available to kinship cares who are seeking, or who have obtained a kinship care order, to parent-appointed guardians and to eligible children and young people. (Part 13)
- Places Scotland's National Adoption Register on a statutory footing. (Part 14)
- Strengthens existing legislation on school closures. (Part 15)
- Makes changes to the children's hearing system. (Part 16)
- Provides for free school meals to be made available to certain pupils, creates a new right to appeal a local authority decision to place a child in secure accommodation under section 44 of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995, amends the system of children's legal aid, extends

the licencing of child performances and provides that the wellbeing of a child should be considered in exercising certain functions of the 1995 Act. (Part 17)

- Establishes a holistic understanding of child wellbeing for the purposes of the 2014 Act. (Part 18)

Part 12 of the 2014 Act and the Relevant services in relation to children at risk of becoming looked after etc. (Scotland) Order 2016

32. Part 12 of the 2014 Act and the 2016 Order came into force on 31st August 2016. The Order supports the implementation of Part 12 (see Appendix A for full content of the 2016 Order).

33. Under section 68(1) of the 2014 Act, local authorities must relevant services must be made available for the following persons:

- a) Each eligible child residing in its area
- b) A qualifying person in relation to such child
- c) Each eligible pregnant women residing in its areas
- d) A qualifying person in relation to such a woman.

34. Under article 2 of the 2016 Order, relevant services for the purpose of section 68 (1) of the Act are specified as:

- c) Family group decision-making services which means a service which is designed to facilitate decision-making by a child's family in relation to the services and support required for the child; and
- d) Support services in relation to parenting which means a service which is designed to increase parenting skills.

35. Under section 68(3) of the 2014 Act, an eligible child is defined as 'a child who the local authority considers to be at risk of becoming looked after' or, who falls within such other description as the Scottish Ministers may by order specify. The local authority has a responsibility to determine whether or not a child is at risk of becoming looked after.

36. Under article 3(2) of the 2016 Order, a local authority must consider whether the child's wellbeing is being, or is at risk of being, adversely affected by any matter, such that a child is at risk of becoming looked after. The local authority must only provide relevant services where the local authority considers that the likely benefit to the eligible child's wellbeing outweighs any likely adverse effect. As far as reasonably practical, the local authority must ascertain and have regard to the views of the child and such persons the local authority considers appropriate (article 3(4)).

37. Under article 4 of the 2016 Order, local authorities must publish, in such a manner as they consider appropriate, information about the provision of relevant services; the ways in which persons can contact the local authority about the provision of those relevant services; and others matters about the provision of relevant services that the local authority considers appropriate.

PART TWO: SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Getting it Right for Every Child

38. The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach is underpinned by early intervention and supporting families at times of difficulty. This applies to children from birth to eighteen years old and to young people beyond their 18th birthday if still at school. The GIRFEC approach should reduce the escalation of problems that may lead to a child needing to become looked after. As part of GIRFEC, all children and their families have access to universal support services.
39. The [Getting it Right for Every Child National Practice Model](#) includes a ‘My World’ triangle which supports everybody involved with a child (aged from 0-18) to consider: *How I grow and develop; what I need from people who care for me; and my wider world.* In adopting a holistic understanding of the child’s world, there is an opportunity to address a child’s wellbeing needs at all stages of childhood. The national wellbeing indicators are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (commonly known as the acronym SHANARRI) as set out in section 96(2) of the 2014 Act.
40. The development and strengthening of support to families at the earliest stages is an important feature of GIRFEC. Between 2002 -2010, there had been a significant increase in very young children becoming looked after. In 2015, 40% of children who started to be looked after were under the age of five.⁹ Research conducted by the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA) found an increasing trend in the use of Child Protection Orders, (including pre-birth) and the majority of children were consequently looked after away from their birth parents (70%).¹⁰ Almost half of all child protection orders (n=734 in 2013/14) were for children under the age of two years old. Given that approximately two-thirds of children were already known to social services, the authors’ of the SCRA report question whether the risks could have been identified earlier and

⁹ Scottish Government (March 2016) [Children’s Social Work Statistics 2014-15](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

¹⁰ Henderson, G & Hanson, L (2015) [SCRA Research report: Child Protection Orders](#), Stirling: SCRA.

interventions could have taken place to prevent the emergency intervention of a Child Protection Order.

41. In planning for the provision of relevant services in relation to family group decision-making services and support services in relation to parenting, local authorities, in collaboration with their Community Planning Partners, may wish to consider the current and projected demography of children at risk of becoming looked after, in order to develop and design services appropriately.

Family Group Decision-Making Services

42. The ethos underpinning family group decision-making services is a strengths-based, solution-focused model (rather than a deficit-based problem-focused one). Since the 1970s, social work theorists have increasingly recognised that families have the ability to identify their own solutions to the challenges they face. This can increase self-esteem and self-efficacy within families. Fundamentally in working *with* families, there is a shifting of power dynamics, and increased recognition of the strengths and resilience within family networks to overcome adversity.

43. There are a variety of family group decision-making service models. Family decision making services (FDMS) is a term more commonly used in the USA. This encapsulates and widens the most commonly known Family Group Conference model (FGC). There are a wide range of tools developed for practitioners to involve families in decision making where there are child protection concerns or youth offending behaviour. For example, an Australian Signs of Safety model has demonstrated improved engagement with the family where there are child protection concerns, as well as higher levels of job satisfaction from front line social workers.¹¹

44. Recognising and developing supportive relationships within families to meet the needs of the child are fundamental to family decision making services. The FGC

¹¹ Bunn, A (2013) [*Signs of safety in England: An NSPCC commissioned report on the Signs of Safety model in child protection*](#), London: NSPCC.

model has four distinct parts: preparation with the family and the wider network; information giving stage at the start of the Family group conference; private family time to develop a plan; sharing the plan with the co-ordinator and professionals for agreement. Increasingly there is recognition that a further step may be required for the family group to reconvene to discuss progress on implementing the plan at a later stage.

45. In 2015, a set of National Standards were developed for FGC in Scotland.¹²

Building on an evidence-base, the key standards are:

- a) The FGC coordinator is independent;
- b) Children and young people are paramount in the FGC process;
- c) The FGC should be family-led and include 'private family time' to make decisions and plans;
- d) Everyone participating in the FGC will be prepared and supported through the process;
- e) Families have the right to have their safe plans agreed and resourced;
- f) The FGC should be sensitive to the family's culture, taking account of ethnicity, language and religion.

46. There is strong international evidence that families engage positively in the family group decision-making processes concerned with child welfare when given the opportunity.¹³ In a research review, Ward and colleagues (2014) found family decision making models, as well as Motivational Interviewing and Family Partnerships Models can 'offer potential methods of engaging parents who are ambivalent about change, mistrustful of social workers, or not fully ready for change'.¹⁴

47. The quality of the independent coordinator in mediating with family members is considered critical to the success of the FGC process. Furthermore, there is a

¹² Scottish Family Group Conferencing Steering Group (2015) *Family Group Conferencing: Scotland's National Standards*, Supported by Action for Children, Children 1st, Edinburgh City Council, North Lanarkshire Council, Kalm Solutions, FGC European Network.

¹³ Frost, N, Abram, F, & Burgess, H (2014) Family Group Conferences: Evidence, outcomes and future research, *Child & Family Social Work* 19:501-507.

¹⁴ Ward, H, Brown, R & Hyde-Dryden, G (2014) [*Assessing parental capacity to change when children are on the edge of care: an overview of current research*](#), London: Department for Education (pg. 12).

specific role for the child's advocate, supporting the child's participation in the process (as appropriate to age). Whilst acknowledging that more research is required to demonstrate the improved outcomes of children involved in FGC, the authors conclude that the evidence of participation is compelling:

*'Studies of the experience of children and families using the FGC model suggest that FGC is a family-centred and strengths-based approach that promotes partnership between family and State, and can consequently act as an empowering process.'*¹⁵

It should be noted that FGC is one of a number of successful evidence based early engagement services that include family group decision making.

48. The values and ethos of family group decision making is often demonstrated in social work practice. In Scotland, the 1995 Act clearly embedded working in partnership with parents to address the needs of their children as does the [Social Care \(Self-Directed Support\) \(Scotland\) Act 2013](#) which enshrines in statute principles of collaboration, participation & dignity, involvement and informed choice. The evidence reflects that social workers are influenced by participating in FGC processes; they use a strengths-based approach in all of their work.
49. There are opportunities in family group decision making processes to consider the applicability and provision of self-directed support options for children in need as set out in section 8 of the 2013 Act. The recognition of a family's strengths and abilities to identify, and be part of solutions, underpins the ethos of self-directed support. This works well with the asset-based approach of developing collaborative family plans to support and safeguard children and young people. The consideration of the range of options for self-directed support for eligible children can provide families with choice and autonomy in creatively considering how to best meet the needs of their children. Subject to age and maturity, children and young people will be an integral part of this decision making. For example, a number of local authorities are using a self-directed support approach and using money differently to support young people at risk of being looked after away from home to develop appropriate support plans.

¹⁵ Ibid. Pg. 506.

Support Services in Relation to Parenting

50. In 2012, the National Parenting Strategy set out the values and ethos to support parents across Scotland. All parents and carers can require information, advice and support in caring for their children throughout their childhood and into adulthood. There is a broad definition of people who can be in a primary caregiver role:

*'The very term 'parenting' now applies to a much broader range of primary caregivers. Grandparents, step-parents, kinship carers, foster and adoptive parents, 'corporate parents' of children looked after by the state, extended families, networks and communities – each has an important role to play in the care and upbringing of children and young people.'*¹⁶

Fundamentally, the strategy is based on an ecological understanding where the local, regional and national context impacts on parenting. This approach recognises the responsibility of a wide range of public agencies to support parenting to achieve the common goal of improving the life chances of all Scotland's children.

51. Section 68(4) of the 2014 Act defines a 'qualifying person' in relation to an eligible child, and in so doing also recognises the broad range of persons who are in a caregiving role for a child who may be at risk of becoming looked after.

52. Support for parenting can be required at any stage of childhood. Based on research and extensive consultation, the National Parenting strategy highlights the need to:

- a) Ensure all parents have easy access to clear, concise information on everything from pregnancy to the teenage years and beyond;
- b) Offer informed, coordinated support to enable parents to develop their parenting skills, whatever their need, wherever they live, whether they live together or apart;
- c) Take steps to improve the availability of – and access to – early learning, childcare and out-of-school care, taking into account parents in rural areas and those who work irregular hours;

¹⁶ Scottish Government (2012) [National Parenting Strategy](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government (pg.14).

- d) Provide targeted support to families facing additional pressures that impact on day-to-day parenting;
- e) Acknowledge and address the wider issues that can affect parents' abilities to provide a nurturing environment and care for their child.¹⁷

53. Some families can face adversities that impact on their day-to-day ability to care for their children. There are a wide range of reasons why children and young people may be 'at risk' of becoming looked after away from home. Research indicates that parental drug and alcohol problems, mental health issues, domestic abuse and parental learning disabilities can impact on a parent's ability to care for their children, however, as Ward and colleagues highlight:

*'Experiencing any one of these problems does not preclude loving and effective parenting. The research suggests it is where multiple problems interlock and interact that there is a substantially increased risk that children will be exposed to maltreatment and suffer significant harm.'*¹⁸

Therefore, it is important to recognise that the impact of these issues cannot be understood without considering the range of risks and the protective factors using the [Getting it Right for Every Child National Practice Model](#). Furthermore, given this holistic understanding of family life, it is important that a range of support services work together from across statutory and third sector organisations to meet the needs of the child and family.

54. It should be recognised that families can face adversities where a child may be at risk of becoming looked after at any stage of childhood. In 2015, 29% of looked after children became looked after when aged between twelve and fifteen years old.¹⁹ Therefore, it is critical that support for parenting is provided for this demographic. Using the GIRFEC approach, it may be recognised that direct support is required for children and parents separately, as well as working with

¹⁷ Scottish Government (2012) [National Parenting Strategy](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

¹⁸ Ward, H, Brown, R & Hyde-Dryden, G (2014) [Assessing parental capacity to change when children are on the edge of care: an overview of current research](#), London: Department for Education (pg. 14).

¹⁹ Scottish Government (March 2016) [Children's Social Work Statistics 2014-15](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

the family, to effectively meet their needs. For example, there may be mental health concerns for young people, as well as parents.

55. It may be useful to consider that support services in relation to parenting for children and young people who are 'at risk of becoming looked after' should be informed by the evidence-base. Professor Harriet Ward and colleagues (2014) provide key research findings concerning factors which promote or inhibit parental capacity to change in families where there are significant child protection concerns. The review highlights the use of effective intensive interventions aimed at improving parenting skills or addressing other specific problems, for instance, drug or alcohol misuse, which can complement social work support to a family. There is recognition that parenting does not 'exist in isolation' and it is important to understand and address issues in the wider context:

*'Interventions designed to increase parenting skills can be effective and can have a positive knock on impact, reducing other parental problems by increasing self-efficacy and self-esteem. However, in cases where parents are facing complex, multi-layered problems, an integrated package of support may be required, tailored to meet the needs of each member of the family.'*²⁰

56. In recognition of the range of support that may be required for children and parents; local authorities should adopt a multi-agency approach to deliver services. There is a critical role for specialist health professionals in supporting the health needs of parents (for example, where there are mental health problems, substance misuse or learning disabilities). There should also be consideration of the impact of poverty on the stress and strains of daily life, with practical support provided to maximise income (for example, ensuring eligibility for financial support and access to hardship funds), ensure basic needs of the family are met (e.g. functioning utilities), and that there is a safe home environment.

57. There is a growing body of evidence-based interventions that may be useful to support practitioners and service deliverers in providing relevant services.²¹ Work with children and families should be informed by a robust evidence base wherever possible. It is acknowledged that innovations will not always have an

²⁰ Ibid. Pg. 13.

²¹ For examples of evidence-based interventions, see <http://www.evidencebasedinterventions.org.uk/>

evidence base but can be developed on sound and reflective practice models. As highlighted in the Christie Commission, families and communities should be involved in the development of services. There is some evidence to suggest that models with high levels of family engagement and involvement in decision making can lead to improved outcomes for children.

58. As previously highlighted, research conducted by the SCRA found an increasing trend in the use of Child Protection Orders (CPOs), (including pre-birth) and that the majority of children were consequently looked after away from their birth parents (70%). In the audit of CPOs between 1st October and 31st December 2013, just over a quarter (27%) were for pre-birth children with the most common established ground being 'lack of parental care' (77%).²² This indicates that where there are child protection concerns requiring a CPO for pre-birth children, there is a risk of the child becoming looked after away from their birth parent/s.

59. There is strong evidence that pregnancy for mothers and fathers can be a critical 'turning point', where parents who previously have been problematic users of drug and/or alcohol, involved in criminal behaviour or engaged in other risky activities, seek to change their behaviours for the wellbeing of their child.²³ Relevant services should be provided to pregnant women who the local authority considers are going to give birth to a child who will be at risk of becoming looked after (section 68(5) of the 2014 Act) and the father of the child or a "qualifying person" in relation to an eligible pregnant woman (in terms of section 68(6) of the 2014 Act).

60. The provision of relevant services, through support for parenting and/or family group decision-making services, for eligible pregnant women is particularly salient. The role of health services as part of a multi-agency approach is critical in supporting families who are experiencing adversity. Guidance developed for health care services, A [Pathway to Care for Vulnerable Families](#) (0-3), sets out an aim 'to ensure vulnerable children (from conception to age 3) and families in all parts of Scotland receive support that is equitable, proportionate, effective and

²² Henderson, G & Hanson, L (2015) [SCRA Research report: Child Protection Orders](#), Stirling: SCRA.

²³ Ibid. Pg. 87.

timely'.²⁴ Supporting parenting using a strengths-based approach is advised 'when parents are partners in the endeavour rather than being coerced'.²⁵

61. One example of an evidence-based intensive family support programme for very young children is Family Nurse Partnership which was developed in the United States of America. The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) programme was implemented in NHS Lothian in 2010 and has since been expanded to Tayside, Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Fife, Ayrshire and Arran, Highland and Lanarkshire.

²⁶ The FNP programme is a licensed preventative home-visiting programme which aims to improve outcomes for young first time mothers and their children through a structured programme of home visits delivered by specially trained Family Nurses from pregnancy until the child is two years-old. Although the evaluation was limited in scope, the FNP in NHS Lothian demonstrated the value of developing therapeutic relationships with clients. However, one identified barrier for involvement with FNP was the engagement with parents who had problematic drug and/or alcohol use.

62. There should be specific consideration given to the support needs of parents with learning disabilities. International research has identified that children are more likely to be removed from parents with learning disabilities. In 2015, the Scottish Consortium on Learning Disabilities refreshed the Scottish Good Practice Guidelines for supporting parents with a learning disability.²⁷ The guidance was developed to:

- a) Help services to improve their support for parents with a learning disability and their children;
- b) Increase the chances of the children of parents with a learning disability continuing to live with them in a positive and supportive environment that meets the children's needs;

²⁴ Scottish Government (2011) [A Pathway to Care for Vulnerable Families \(0-3\) Guidance](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

²⁵ Ibid. Pg. 34.

²⁶ Ormiston, R, McConville, S & Gordon, J (2014) [Evaluation of the Family Nurse Partnership programme in NHS Lothian, Scotland: Summary of key learning and implications](#), Edinburgh: Scottish Government Social Research.

²⁷ Scottish Consortium for Learning Disabilities (2015) [Supported parenting: Refreshed Scottish Good Practice Guidelines for Supporting parents with a Learning Disability](#), Glasgow: SCLD

- c) Increase the chances of avoiding family breakdown which has enormous social and financial consequences.

The guidance also provides information for practitioners engaging with parents with learning disabilities where child protection proceedings are necessary.

63. Where parents have learning difficulties, it is likely that long-term support is required to be tailored throughout the different stages of childhood. The key elements of successful parenting skills support are:

- a) Clear communication and ensuring parents have understood what they are told;
- b) Use of role play, modelling, and videoing parent and professional undertaking a task together, for discussion, comparison and reflection;
- c) Step by step pictures showing how to undertake a task;
- d) Repeating topics regularly and offering opportunities for frequent practice; and
- e) Providing/developing personalised 'props': for example, finding a container which will hold the right amount of milk for the child so that the parent does not have to measure out the milk.²⁸

64. There are also children who may be living with another family member or family friend in an informal kinship care or guardian arrangement who may be at risk of becoming looked after. As defined under section 72(2) of the 2014 Act, a qualifying person in relation to a kinship care order, along with kinship carers and other care givers are entitled to support services in relation to their parenting role. Research indicates that some children who are cared for by their wider family in their early years can present some more challenging behaviour as they become adolescents explained through early adverse experiences.²⁹ The provision of kinship care assistance for eligible children and kinship carers and guardians is

²⁸ Tarleton, B, Ward, L. and Howard, J. 2006. [*Finding the Right Support: A review of issues and positive practice in supporting parents with learning difficulties and their children*](#), Bristol: University of Bristol.

(pg.54)
²⁹ Selwyn, J, Farmer, E, Meakings, S & Vaisey, P (2013) [*The Poor relations? Children and informal kinship carers speak out: A research report*](#), Bristol: University of Bristol.

set out in non-statutory guidance for [Part 13: Support for Kinship Care of the 2014 Act](#).

65. A further group to consider are disabled children who are at risk of becoming looked after due to the local authority and/or health board providing a care placement to meet the needs of the child. In the majority of circumstances, this is a voluntary agreement with parents and will often be short-term (for example, provided as a 'short break service'). This provision of support can be hugely beneficial for children and parents and/or primary carers. However, it could be considered that in some circumstances, the provision of a support service for parenting a disabled child may result in a child no longer requiring a placement away from home. Where appropriate, this form of parenting support may be welcomed. For this group of children, there should be specific reference to self-directed support under the [Social Care \(Self-Directed Support\) \(Scotland\) Act 2013](#).

Views of the Child and other persons

66. Under the 1995 Act, local authorities have a duty to ascertain the wishes and feelings of children when making decisions that affect their lives. This is in line with Article 12 of the UNCRC which states that the views of the child should be taken into account (subject to age and maturity) in decisions.

67. Under article 3(4) of the 2016 Order, a local authority must, in considering the likely effect on an eligible child's wellbeing, so far as reasonably practicable, ascertain and have regard to the views of the child and such other persons as the local authority considers appropriate. This could be done via the Family Group Decision-Making Services, highlighted above, which can provide a valuable setting to ensure this duty is met. An English study exploring children's experiences in FGCs from twenty families involved found:

Their responses suggested overall that they had valued the experience of being consulted, of being listened to and, on the whole, they had welcomed

*the provision of opportunities for families to work together on issues free from the attentions of social services.*³⁰

However, the authors caution that there were negative views from a minority of children and young people; thus, 'our study suggests that although FGCs can usefully include children and have a clear role in children's welfare practice, they are not the panacea for all ills or necessarily the route to empowering practice for all children or all families'.³¹

68. Local authorities should be aware of local or national advocacy organisations that can support children and families to fully participate in decisions that affect their lives. The decision of the state to look after a child is a serious intervention and timely access to advocacy to ensure the child's views are sought and heard is encouraged. This is subject to the age and maturity of children and may be difficult to ascertain with very young children. For children with complex disabilities and for those whom English is not their first language, extra effort should be taken to ensure their views are taken into account.

Publication of information about the provision of relevant services

69. Under article 4 of the 2016 Order, local authorities must publish, in such a manner as they consider appropriate, information about the provision of relevant services; the ways in which a person can contact the local authority about that provision; and other matters the local authorities deem appropriate.

70. The information should be provided in a timely and accessible manner. A local authority should keep published information under review and, where appropriate, publish revised information. Information should be available in a range of languages and formats on request. It is recommended that local authorities should include information about their complaints procedures within their publications.

³⁰ Bell, M & Wilson, K (2016) Children's views of family group conferences, *British Journal of Social Work* 37: 671-68. Pg.679.

³¹ Ibid.

APPENDIX A: PART 12 OF THE 2014 ACT AND THE 2016 ORDER

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014

PART 12

SERVICES IN RELATION TO CHILDREN AT RISK OF BECOMING LOOKED AFTER, ETC.

68 Provision of relevant services to parents and others

- (1) A local authority must make arrangements to secure those relevant services of such
- Description as the Scottish Ministers may by order specify are made available for—
- (a) Each eligible child residing in its area,
 - (b) A qualifying person in relation to such a child,
 - (c) Each eligible pregnant woman residing in its area,
 - (d) A qualifying person in relation to such a woman.
- (2) A “relevant service” is a service comprising, or comprising any combination of—
- (a) Providing information about a matter,
 - (b) Advising or counselling about a matter,
 - (c) Taking other action to facilitate the addressing of a matter by a person.
- (3) An “eligible child” is a child who the authority considers—
- (a) To be at risk of becoming looked after, or
 - (b) To fall within such other description as the Scottish Ministers may by order
- Specify.
- (4) A “qualifying person” in relation to an eligible child is a person—
- (a) Who is related to the child,
 - (b) who has any parental rights or responsibilities in relation to the child, or
 - (c) with whom the child is, or has been, living.
- (5) An “eligible pregnant woman” is a pregnant woman who the authority considers is going to give birth to a child who will be an eligible child.
- (6) A “qualifying person” in relation to an eligible pregnant woman is a person—
- (a) who is the father of the child to whom the pregnant woman is to give birth,
 - (b) who is married to, in a civil partnership with or otherwise related to the pregnant woman,
 - (c) with whom the pregnant woman is living, or
 - (d) who does not fall within any of paragraphs (a) to (c) but who the authority considers will, when the pregnant woman gives birth to the child, become a qualifying person in relation to the child.

(7) The references in this section to a person who is related to another person (“the other person”) includes a person who—

- (a) is married to or in a civil partnership with a person who is related to the other person,
- (b) is related to the other person by the half blood.

(8) This section is without prejudice to section 22 of the 1995 Act.

69 Relevant services: further provision

(1) The Scottish Ministers may by order make provision about—

- (a) when or how relevant services specified in an order under section 68(1) are to be provided,
- (b) when or how a local authority is to consider whether a child is within paragraph (a) or (b) of section 68(3),
- (c) when or how a local authority is to review whether a child continues to be within paragraph (a) or (b) of section 68(3),
- (d) such other matters about the provision of relevant services specified in an order under section 68(1) as the Scottish Ministers consider appropriate.

(2) An order under subsection (1)(d) may include provision about—

- (a) circumstances in which relevant services specified in an order under section 68(1) may be provided subject to conditions (including conditions as to payment), and
- (b) consequences of such conditions not being met.

70 Interpretation of Part 12

The following expressions have the same meaning in this Part as they have in Part 1 of the 1995 Act—

- parental responsibilities
- parental rights.

**The Relevant services in relation to children at risk of becoming looked after etc.
(Scotland) Order 2016**

SCOTTISH STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

**2016 No. 44
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS**

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Relevant Services in relation to Children at Risk of Becoming Looked After etc.) Order 2016

The Scottish Ministers make the following Order in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 68(1) and 69(1)(b) and (d) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014(a) and all other powers enabling them to do so.

Citation, commencement and interpretation

- 1.— (1) This Order may be cited as the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Relevant Services in relation to Children at Risk of Becoming Looked After etc.) Order 2016 and comes into force on 31st August 2016.
(2) In this Order, “the Act” means the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Relevant services

- 2.— (1) The following descriptions of relevant services are specified for the purpose of section 68(1) of the Act:—
(a) family group decision-making services; and
(b) support services in relation to parenting.
(2) For the purpose of paragraph (1)—
(a) a “family group decision-making service” means a service which is designed to facilitate decision-making by a child’s family in relation to the services and support required for the child; and
(b) a “support service in relation to parenting” means a service which is designed to increase parenting skills.

Relevant services: further provision

- 3.— (1) Relevant services are to be provided in accordance with this article.
(2) For the purpose of considering whether a child is within section 68(3)(a) of the Act, a local authority must consider whether the child’s wellbeing is being, or is at risk of being, adversely affected by any matter, such that the child is at risk of becoming looked after.
(3) A local authority must only provide relevant services as specified in article 2 where the local authority considers that the likely benefit to the eligible child’s wellbeing in doing so outweighs any likely adverse effect on that wellbeing arising from doing so.

(4) In considering the likely effect on an eligible child's wellbeing as mentioned in paragraph (3) a local authority must, so far as reasonably practicable, ascertain and have regard to the views of—

- (a) the child; and
- (b) such other persons as the local authority considers appropriate.

Publication of information about the provision of relevant services

4. Each local authority must publish, in such manner as it considers appropriate, information about—
- (a) the provision of relevant services (as specified in article 2) in its area;
 - (b) the ways in which persons can contact the local authority about the provision of those relevant services; and
 - (c) such other matters, relating to the provision of those relevant services, as the local authority considers appropriate.

APPENDIX B: FURTHER INFORMATION

For further national information on a range of organisations that can support children and families, please review the resources listed below. This is not an exhaustive list.

Aberlour

At Aberlour, we are there for children, young people and families across Scotland, helping transform lives for the better. We support them through challenges like: living with a disability, growing up in and leaving care, and the impact of drugs and alcohol on families. We are committed to getting it right for our children by tailoring our services to help each child, young person and family achieve their own personal goals.

Tel: 01786 450335

Email: enquiries@aberlour.org.uk

Web: <http://www.aberlour.org.uk>

Barnardo's

Barnardo's Scotland provides more than 122 community-based services throughout the country working with over 26,500 vulnerable children, young people and their families.

Tel: 0131 446 7000

Web: <http://www.barnardos.org.uk/scotland.htm>

Children1st

Children 1st aims to provide excellent services which promote the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people. Helping vulnerable children and young people thrive safely within their families is at the heart of what we do.

Tel: 0131 446 2300

Email: cfs@children1st.org.uk

Web: www.children1st.org.uk

ChildLine Scotland

ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19. You can contact a ChildLine counsellor about anything - no problem is too big or too small.

Tel: [Call free: 0800 1111](tel:08001111)

Web: <http://www.childline.org.uk>

Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland

The Children and Young People's Commissioner is a person. Their job is to help you understand your rights and to make sure those rights are respected.

Young person's freephone: 0800 019 1179

Tel: 0131 346 5350

Email: inbox@cypcs.org.uk

Web: <http://www.cypcs.org.uk/>

Clan Childlaw

Clan childlaw provides children and young people throughout Scotland with free information about the law and their rights. We provide free legal advice and representation to children and young people. We provide training and information about the law to people who work with children and young people in Scotland.

FREEPHONE: 0808 129 0522

Text: 07527566682

Email: info@clanchildlaw.org

Web: <http://www.clanchildlaw.org>

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) in Scotland

CPAG works to get a better life for low-income families in Scotland through campaigning and lobbying, and ensure they get the correct information through welfare rights work, [information](#), [training](#) and [advice line for advisers](#). CPAG produce an annual [Children's Handbook](#) and a series of factsheets. They offer free, independent, expert, up-to-date advice and information to frontline advisers and support staff in Scotland on all aspects of the benefits and tax credits system.

Tel: 0141 552 0552 (Monday to Thursday, 10am - 4pm, Friday 10am - 12 noon)

Email: advice@cpagscotland.org.uk

Web: <http://www.cpag.org.uk/scotland>

Enquire

This is a Scottish advice service for additional support for learning.

Tel: 0131 222 2425

Helpline: 0845 123 2303

Email: info@enquire.org.uk

Web: enquire.org.uk

Families Outside

Families Outside is an independent charity which helps prisoners' families in Scotland through offering support and information.

Freephone: 0500 839383

Email: support@familiesoutside.org.uk

Web: <http://www.familiesoutside.org.uk>

Includem

Includem exists for the most vulnerable, troubled and challenging young people and their families. At the heart of what we do are tailored, one-to-one professional relationships which help young people build skills, self-confidence and resilience and to stop harmful behaviours.

Tel: 0141 427 0523

Email: enquiries@includem.co.uk

Web: <http://includem.org/>

Mentor

Through research and working hands on with kinship families Mentor provides advice, information workshops, training and dedicated family support to carers and children while delivering training to professionals to raise awareness of kinship care. This includes a National Kinship Care Resource Guide detailing the rights, roles and responsibilities of kinship carers including details of all local kinship care support groups.

Email: admin-scotland@mentoruk.org

Web: <http://mentoruk.org.uk/>

NSPCC Scotland

We work directly with children and families in over 40 service centres across the UK. We collaborate with frontline professionals and researchers to find innovative solutions and evaluate what works. And we can help you find the latest policy, practice, research or news - whether you're researching a particular therapy or preparing a court report.

Concerns about a child: [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000)

ChildLine: [0800 1111](tel:08001111)

Web: www.nspcc.org.uk

Parenting Across Scotland

Parenting across Scotland provides support for parents and families through our information services and partners' helplines. We find out what matters to parents and families and what they need, and get this across to politicians. We also share research, policy and good practice with people who work with families.

Web: <http://www.parentingacrossscotland.org>

ParentLine Scotland

The free confidential helpline and email service for anyone caring for a child to contact about any problem, big or small. ParentLine Scotland provides support to kinship carers as part of the national Kinship Care service.

The helpline is available 7 days a week;

Tel: 0800 028 2233

Email: parentlinescotland@children1st.org.uk

Web: www.parentlinescotland.org.uk

Scottish Child Law Centre

An independent charity which promotes knowledge and use of Scots law and children's rights for the benefit of children and young people in Scotland.

Freephone for under 18s: 0800 328 8970

Tel: 0131 667 6333

Text: text 'SCLC' and your question to 80800

Email: info@sclc.org.uk

Web: www.sclc.org.uk

Scottish Commission for Learning Disability

The Scottish Commission for Learning Disability (SCLD) is an independent charitable organisation for the learning disability sector. The SCLD have produced [Supported Parenting: Refreshed Good Practice Guidelines for Supporting Parents with a Learning Disability](#). This includes a chapter on good practice where child protection procedures are necessary.

Tel: 0141 248 3733

Email: administrator@sclد.co.uk

Web: <http://www.sclد.org.uk/>

Scottish Families Affected by Drugs

A national charity that provides advice and information to families across Scotland who are affected by alcohol and drug misuse.

Tel: 0141 221 0544

Helpline: 08080 10 10 11

Email: info@sfad.org.uk

Web: www.sfad.org.uk

Who Cares? Scotland

Who Cares Scotland is a voluntary organisation working with and for care experienced children and young people.

Tel: 0141 226 4441

Email: hello@whocaresscotland.org

Web: www.whocaresscotland.org

Young Scot

Offers information for 12-16 year olds; includes arts, jobs and careers, housing, sport and leisure.

Infoline: 0808 801 0338 (Mon to Fri 10am – 6pm)

Text: 'callback' to 07781 484 317

Email: infoline@youngscot.org

Web: www.youngscot.org



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