

7. Learning more

- RSCP training:
 - Cumulative Harm and Childhood Neglect
 - Graded Care Profile, Neglect & Adolescent Neglect
- [Safeguarding Network: Listening to Children](#)
 - [NSPCC: Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people](#)
 - [NSPCC: Neglect](#)
 - [Hershkowitz et al, 2007: 'Victimization of Children with Disabilities', American Journal of Orthopsychiatry](#)

6. Learning

- Children with disabilities are Children in Need [S17.CA1989](#)
- Don't be over-reliant on medical models of children's disabilities: symptoms might be the result of neglect
- Do think the unthinkable: disabled children are sometimes abused and neglected. Not all carers are caring
- Be open to interpreting children's behaviours as forms of communication, and look for discrepancies with carers' explanations
- [myconcern.co.uk: Children with Disabilities - Safeguarding Our Most Vulnerable](#)
 - [Child G \(2019\) Portsmouth Serious Case Review](#)
 - [Taylor et al, 2014](#)

5. What we found

- Professionals did not hear the voice of the child. They were looking for verbal disclosures and not recognising behaviour as communication
- Unwanted behaviour was viewed and treated as a problem to be addressed and not interpreted
- The views of siblings without disabilities were not captured
- Professionals took their lead from the carers, who were articulate keen to put forward their views and version of events
- Indicators of neglect were viewed as symptoms of either physical or learning disability
- Professionals did take a positive and joined-up approach

4. What's different for children with disabilities?

Children and young people who have disabilities are at an increased risk of being abused compared with their non-disabled peers and are less likely to receive the protection and support they need when they have been abused ([Taylor et al, 2014](#))

Professionals sometimes have difficulty identifying safeguarding concerns when working with d/Deaf and disabled children [NSPCC?](#)

1. Why we looked at this

The Practice Standards Group monitors practice standards across the Safeguarding Partnership and considers the ways in which Partner Agencies work together to safeguard children.

We were asked to review how professionals from Partnership agencies worked together in relation to the case of a child with disabilities who was subject to neglect. It was thought that professionals had not fully recognised indicators of neglect, and that this might have been because the outward signs of neglect were thought to be symptoms of the child's

2. What is it?

'Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs' [NSPCC](#)

Types:
Physical – Educational
Emotional – Medical

Wilful failure to provide adequate food, clothing, medical aid or lodging is an **Offence of child cruelty** [Children and Young Persons Act 1933](#)

3. The impact of childhood neglect

Children who have been neglected might experience:

- problems with brain development
- taking risks, like running away from home, using drugs and alcohol, or breaking the law
 - getting into dangerous relationships
 - difficulty with relationships later in life, including with their own children
 - a higher chance of having mental health problems, including depression.