

# Protecting Children and Young People: **The Charter**



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The clear message from children and young people is:

As children and young people, we have a right to be protected and be safe from harm from others. When we have difficulties or problems we expect you to:

Get to know us

Speak with us

Listen to us

Take us seriously

Involve us

Respect our privacy

Be responsible to us

Think about our lives as a whole

Think carefully about how you use information about us

Put us in touch with the right people

Use your power to help

Make things happen when they should

Help us be safe

**This is a message to all of us** – politicians, communities, parents, families, neighbours; as well as police, health, social work, and education authorities; and people who work directly with children and young people – about what is important to them and how we go about helping to protect them.



# Our pledge to the children and young people of Scotland who are at risk of abuse or neglect is that you will:

- get the help you need when you need it;
- be seen by a professional such as a teacher, doctor or social worker to make sure you are alright and not put at more risk;
- be listened to seriously, and professionals will use their power to help you;
- be able to discuss issues in private when, and if, you want to;
- be involved with, and helped to understand, decisions made about your life; and
- have a named person to help you.

## and those helping you will:

- share information to protect you;
- minimise disruption to other parts of your life;
- work together effectively on your behalf;
- be competent, confident, properly trained and supported; and
- rigorously monitor services to continually improve how and what is done to help you.



To make sure these pledges are met  
for children and young people

## the Scottish Executive will:

- Publish a national, multi-agency Framework for Standards for child protection to translate the Charter into practice: March 2004.
- Work with agencies to raise community awareness of the need to help protect them and how to do this: from March 2004.
- Have assurances from the leaders of local authorities, health and police that they have reviewed their quality assurance systems to ensure continuous improvement in the services they provide: by May 2004.
- Ensure awareness of this Charter and the Framework for Standards amongst professionals in every Child Protection Committee area: by September 2004.
- Pilot approaches to multi-disciplinary inspection to check the Charter and Framework for Standards are being implemented across all agencies: from December 2004.
- Work with agencies and existing helplines to provide a 24-hour national child protection service: by 2005.
- Continue to work with agencies to help deliver real improvements in child protection building on the Charter and the Framework for Standards: by 2006.

We have committed to a programme of reform of child protection services and will work with professionals and agencies to help them deliver these pledges. We will review progress over time and take the necessary steps to make this happen.

It is for all of us to help children and young people to be safe.

The Charter is available in different formats on request

[www.scotland.gov.uk/childrenscharter](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/childrenscharter)

## About the Charter

- It sets out what children and young people need and expect to help protect them when they are in danger of being, or already have been, harmed by another person.
- It has been developed through talking to children and young people who have experienced the need to be protected and supported – but what they are saying is how any child facing difficulties could expect to be treated.
- The statements also reflect how children and young people should be expected to deal with each other and adults.
- The response to the 13 statements from children is a set of 11 pledges and an outline of work to be done to help deliver on these.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out the wider rights of all children and young people.

