



Holy Innocents' Church - CHILD PROTECTION

Are you concerned about a child? Are you a child who needs someone to talk to? Do you need advice on child safety issues?



Orpington Social
Services

020 8313 4325 (Weekdays,
working hours)

020 8464 4848
(Emergencies, out of hours)



National Society for
the Prevention of
Cruelty to Children

0800 800 500 (24 hours)



Working together for a safer London

If a child is in immediate danger
Or a crime has been committed
Call the Police, Dial 999



0800 1111 (24 hours)

Roman Catholic

Archdiocese of Southwark

COPCA - Catholic Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Canon John

Kavanagh Child Protection Office:

020 8698 1449

Helen Sheppard ChildProtection 020 7261 1606

Fax: 020 7261 1433 **Email:** helen.sheppard@btconnect.com

...Whatever the reason, abuse is always wrong and it is never the child's or young person's fault.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IN CASES OF SUSPECTED OR ALLEGED ABUSE?

As a general rule - **always** contact those in authority - see below a) and b)

• **Do not** investigate • **Do not** inform, question or confront the alleged abuser

- a) If you think that a child is in **immediate danger** or the matter is **urgent**, you should report your suspicion without delay to Social Services, the Police, or the NSPCC. Please then contact the Southwark Diocese Child Protection Officer.
- b) If the matter relates to past events but carries no immediate danger, contact the Southwark Diocese Child Protection Officer who will advise you further and pursue the matter appropriately.

When a child or vulnerable adult tells you about abuse?

Listen carefully and reassuringly. Listen only to what the child wishes to share.

Be encouraging - it will be difficult for the child to disclose a painful or disturbing experience - but refrain from asking probing questions and go at the child's pace. Accept what is said to you.

Make it clear to the child that you cannot keep what they tell you a secret, but will share it only with people who can help them.

Never, never approach or inform the alleged abuser. This does not help and may harm the child.

Make a record as soon as possible of all the details, which have been given to you, using the child's exact words if you can. Contact Social Services, the Police or the NSPCC and inform the Southwark Diocese Child Protection Officer for child protection matters.

Remember the child's well-being comes first. Your contact will be treated confidentially and you will be advised on how to proceed.

When an adult expresses concern about someone else?

Listen carefully without making any judgement or asking leading questions. The personal cost to someone making a complaint or expressing concern may be high. They may be upset, angry or confused. Give them as much time and encouragement as necessary and put them in immediate contact with one of the appropriate authorities. Offer to accompany them if possible. If neither is feasible, then tell them that you will pass on the necessary information yourself.

If an adult confides in you that they were abused as a child?

The same guidelines (as for an "adult expresses concern", above) are appropriate here also. Remember the alleged abuser could still be in a position to harm others. In any case, the abused person will need careful help.