

## Who is most likely to sharing information?

The people who are most likely to be sharing information about a child or young person, their parents or carers, include: health visitors, school staff, support workers, educational psychologists, social workers, doctors and police officers.

## What information will be shared?

Information such as name, address and the names of other professionals or practitioners involved in the child or young person's life will be shared.

Any other information that might affect the wellbeing of the child or young person may also be shared with the people directly involved in their support or care and or anyone who may need the information to provide the best support as quickly as possible.

## What if the child, young person, their family or carers don't want to have their information shared?

When a child or young person or their family does not want to have their information shared they must make sure that the child's named person or the practitioner who is leading assessing and planning to support them knows how they feel and why. Talking their concerns through may make them feel better. However it is important to remember that practitioners have a duty to share any information that is affecting or might affect the wellbeing of a child or young person and that information should always be shared with the Named Person when it is in the best interest of the child to do so.

To find out more about Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) go to [www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright)

Please contact us on the telephone number below if you want this document in Braille, large print or on an audio CD, or if you want the document translated into another language.

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# Information Sharing

Integrated Children's Services

for  
aberdeen  
children

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the Scottish Government's overarching policy for children's services. GIRFEC operates on the principle that it is 'everyone's job to make sure that all children and young people are alright.' In order to deliver this approach all children from birth (or in some cases pre-birth) will have a named person based in the universal services of health or education.

The wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of GIRFEC. Wellbeing looks at a child's or young person's safety, health, achievement, nurture, respect, responsibility, activity and inclusion. Practitioners work with children and young people to make sure they reach their full potential by getting the right help at the right time.

### For children and families GIRFEC means:

- Getting the appropriate help as soon as possible
- Experiencing a more streamlined and co-ordinated response from practitioners
- Feeling confident about the help they are getting
- Understanding what is happening and why
- Being listened to carefully and having their wishes heard and understood
- Being appropriately involved in discussions and decisions that affect them.



### Why share information?

- When people work together to provide extra support for children, young people and their family or carers, they may need to share relevant information in order to provide the right help as quickly as possible.
- Practitioners will always tell children, young people, their family or carers before they share their information and they will make sure that they know what information is to be shared, with whom and for what reason, unless doing this would place the child at risk of harm.
- Sharing relevant information will help give practitioners a better picture of what support and services are needed. Working with children, young people and their family or carers will help staff from different services to provide support in a co-ordinated way.
- Practitioners will make an assessment of the needs of the child and will work with the family to develop an action plan which will detail what support is required, who will deliver it and by when. Those involved in the plan will arrange to meet again to review how things are going and to make sure that the support is helping to make things better or so that they can alter the support to meet the changing circumstances or needs. Children, young people and their families will always be involved in this reviewing process
- What the child, young person and their family or carers think and want to happen is really important so they will be asked for their views about what is being said and about what is being planned to help and support them.

### Asking for permission to share information

Until recently the guidance around information sharing implied that information could only be shared without consent if there were concerns around child protection.

However the data protection act provides conditions that allow for the sharing of information in several circumstances. This means that if anyone has a concern about the wellbeing of a child or young person that could lead to them being at 'risk of harm' then that person can share information without the explicit and/or informed consent of the child or their family.

A practitioner should only ever ask a child, young person and or their parents and carers for permission to share their personal data when they have a real choice in the matter.

Consent should not be sought by a practitioner where they have already decided to share information on the basis of wellbeing.

If there is a risk to the wellbeing of a child or young person asking for consent would give the child or young person and or their parent a false belief that they could prevent information being shared by withholding their permission.

It is basic good practice to keep the child or young person their parent or carers fully informed of any intentions regarding the sharing of information as well as keeping them fully informed about what information has been shared.

Any consent to share information must be revisited regularly: at least every time circumstances change significantly requiring the sharing of different or new information or every six months. A practitioner must always record when they have shared information. They must record what information has been shared, why it has been shared, who it has been shared with and how – by email, telephone or in writing.

It is important to remember that any information shared should always be proportionate, relevant and shared on a need to know basis only.