

# News

## **Public across North Yorkshire urged to be vigilant to hidden harm caused by pandemic**

People across the County are being urged to be vigilant to the harm endured by children and young people during lockdown and to report any concerns they might have. The lockdown has meant hundreds of people are in their homes around the clock – but this doesn't mean they are out of harm's way.

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership are asking members of the public to remember safeguarding is everyone's business and to report any safeguarding concerns they have about children and young people.

The Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown places increased importance on people within the community to ensure that they are alert to safeguarding risks and take appropriate action by reporting any concerns they may have, vigilance against harm endured at home is essential.

In response to a set of unprecedented circumstances, key workers in all areas have adapted how they work and continue to do so.

However, some children and young people are not seeing teachers and school staff every day and may not have the face-to-face interaction with healthcare professionals, social workers or support structures they may have normally.

During the pandemic, the pressures of social isolation have increased the potential of harm to children and young people, relating to mental health, exploitation, which includes online activity and other forms of abuse and harm.

The circumstances of the pandemic can put added pressure on families too, which is why it's essential to ensure the right support is in place and that children and young people are safeguarded.

That's why across the whole of North Yorkshire communities are being urged to be vigilant and #tellusyourconcerns.

Please contact us at North Yorkshire Customer Service Centre on 01609 780780. However, if you believe a child or young person is at immediate risk please contact the Police.

Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service, said: "Even though people are in their homes more than ever before, it doesn't mean they are out of harm's way.

"Children and young people across North Yorkshire could find themselves in harmful situations compounded by the lockdown.



“And because they aren’t going to school, seeing friends or interacting with professionals it may be harder to pick up on.

“That’s why we are urging you, the public, to be on the lookout for anything you think is concerning and report it straight away.