

Legislation and government guidance

England

The legislative framework for the child protection system in England is the **Children Act 1989** and the **Children Act 2004**.

The central piece of national guidance is **Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children**. The guidance sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) use this guidance to produce their own procedures, which should be followed by practitioners and professionals who come into contact with children and their families in that particular local authority area.

For more information on guidance and legislation in England, see the NSPCC's child protection resources for anyone working to safeguard children in England: www.nspcc.org.uk/england

Northern Ireland

The primary piece of safeguarding legislation is the **Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995**.

Northern Ireland's five Health and Social Care Trusts abide by a single set of child protection procedures called the **Area Child Protection Committees' regional policy and procedures 2005 (PDF)**, which is based on the DHSSPS guidance **Co-operating to safeguard children (2003)**.

For more information on guidance and legislation in Northern Ireland, see the NSPCC's child protection resources for anyone working to safeguard children in Northern Ireland: www.nspcc.org.uk/ni

Scotland

In Scotland the legislative framework for today's child protection system is founded in the **Children (Scotland) Act 1995**.

National guidance for child protection in Scotland (PDF) was published by the Scottish Government in December 2010 providing a national framework for agencies and practitioners at a local level to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

For more information on guidance and legislation in Scotland, see the NSPCC's child protection resources for anyone working to safeguard children in Scotland: www.nspcc.org.uk/scotlandinform

Wales

A new **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill**, which covers social care services for both children and adults, is currently passing through the National Assembly for Wales.

Until proposed reforms are approved, legislation and guidance in Wales remains the same, or similar to that of England. In both England and Wales, the legislative framework for today's child protection system is founded in the **Children Act 1989** and the subsequent **Children Act 2004**.

The key guidance in Wales is **Safeguarding children: working together under the Children Act 2004 (PDF)**, which was issued by the Welsh Government in 2006.

For more information on guidance and legislation in Wales, see the NSPCC's child protection resources for anyone working to safeguard children in Wales: www.nspcc.org.uk/cymru

For up-to-date information on all UK legislation, visit www.legislation.gov.uk