

Unidentified Adults

Top Tips for Identifying

These top tips have been identified to support workers to notice when another adult is involved in a child's life where it wasn't expected or reported. The presence of another adult may be a safeguarding risk but equally may be a source of support to a child.

Every agency has its own key points where information is sought or provided.

The purpose of the 'top tips' is to increase professional's awareness and to assist in prompting professional to notice changes, outside of the usual contact.

It may not be appropriate for all professionals to question but to share information with the relevant agency.

- The main carer references to another person in a child's life in conversations
- Children refer to another unknown adult in conversation or through play/imitation
- Presence of another person on visits/ contacts
- Another person not known to the practitioner answers a phone call to the main carer
- Presence of another person at appointments and locations for example at school gate
- Instinct or 'tacit knowledge' plays an important part. For example, someone else new in the house who appears to be 'at home' or taking on a caring role for the children
- Physical evidence of another person which contradicts what you were expecting e.g. personal possessions evident around the household, spare bedrooms in use / spare bedding visible
- When someone is introduced as a family member which does not 'fit' with existing knowledge of the family situation
- Other adult in the household who 'removes' themselves when the professional arrives
- Information provided to a professional by a third party
- Change in a child's behaviour or primary carer's behaviour
- New adults answering questions being directed at the primary care giver or child
- Falling into rent arrears
- Changes to the condition of the property
- New vehicles parking at the property
- Change in children appearance or demeanour
- Not keeping pre-arranged appointments
- Constant presence of someone not known at the property/answering the door etc.
- Information may need to be flagged/checked/verified with another professional, not necessarily challenged by the worker at that time. Professionals need to consider asking partner agencies what information they hold about the child and family.

With thanks to Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.