



Safer Seven

On: Affluent Neglect



1. Safeguarding in affluent homes

This Safer 7 covers affluent neglect, the risks children are exposed to, and the reasons affluent neglect is often overlooked.

Affluent neglect refers to the neglect experienced by children in wealthy families.

2. Emotional neglect

This type of neglect can be more difficult to spot, as the type of neglect experienced by children and young people is often emotional.

In some cases, the children who come to practitioners' attention had affluent home environments consisting of excellent housing, a nutritious diet, first-class educational opportunities, and access to a range of enrichment opportunities.

3. Signs to look out for?

It can be difficult to differentiate when their home environment lacked emotionally nurturing parenting behaviours.

- Parental emotional neglect due to not spending enough quality time with the child and putting excessive pressure on the child to be a high achiever
- More relaxed attitude to drug use, sexual activity, and sexuality, and as a consequence their children are exposed to more risks
- Wealthier families may have the material resources to hide physical and supervisory neglect while being psychologically or emotionally neglectful.

4. Hostility of parents

Parents were often affronted that the quality of their parenting were being questioned, or that they were being accused of neglecting their children.

As a result, any questions that practitioners had about their parenting and the emotional home environment were often met with hostility and conflict, and parents strongly resisted any intervention.

Practitioners may feel that there is a power shift and may feel that parents are in control of the meeting rather than the professional.

5. The impact of affluent neglect

The emotional neglect, exposure to the trio of vulnerabilities, and lack of supervision sometimes faced by children from affluent families are considered to be adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

ACEs can affect brain development and change how a person's body will respond to stress.

They have a lasting impact on an individual and the consequences of these adverse experiences can lead to long-term mental and physical health problems.

6. Responding to affluent neglect

It is important for practitioners to understand the complexities of affluent neglect and feel confident through support via supervision to address these issues.

Use of the GCP2 assessment tool can also assist to highlight neglectful situations.

7. Further information:

- [Adverse Childhood Experiences](#)
- [Special report: Emotional neglect in children with affluent parents](#)
- [An exploration of how social workers engage neglectful parents from affluent backgrounds in child protection](#)

Visit our Learning Zone to see our selection of briefings and more [HERE](#)