

Early Help
Services

Social Care

Neglect

Police

Education

Recognise, Report, Record, Respond Together

"It's just the family's lifestyle."



Child Neglect - Do you see it?

Neglect is one of the forms of child abuse where there is a significant failure to provide for children's basic needs. It can be physical, emotional, educational or medical neglect. It is often a result of a parent's inability to care for their child properly. It is important to recognise the signs and symptoms of neglect and to report them to the appropriate authorities.



"Someone else will deal with it."

What you see...



What you don't see (SIF)



Neglect can become normalised. Professional curiosity saves children.



"The child seems okay. I'm sure they're alright."



Let's Deal With Child Neglect



"That's just how it is around here."

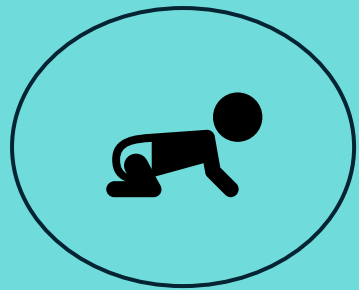
Voluntary Services

School

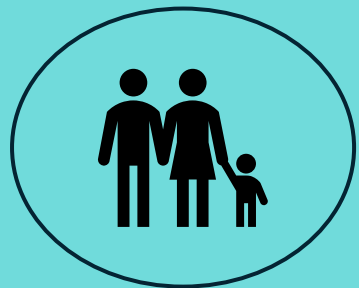
Neglect

Housing

Hospital Staff



Neglect



Neglect



Police

Social Care

Education

Health Visitor

School Nurse

Probation

Voluntary Services

Housing

Hospital Staff

Domestic Abuse
Services

General
Practitioner

Community

Early Help
Services

Adult Social
Care

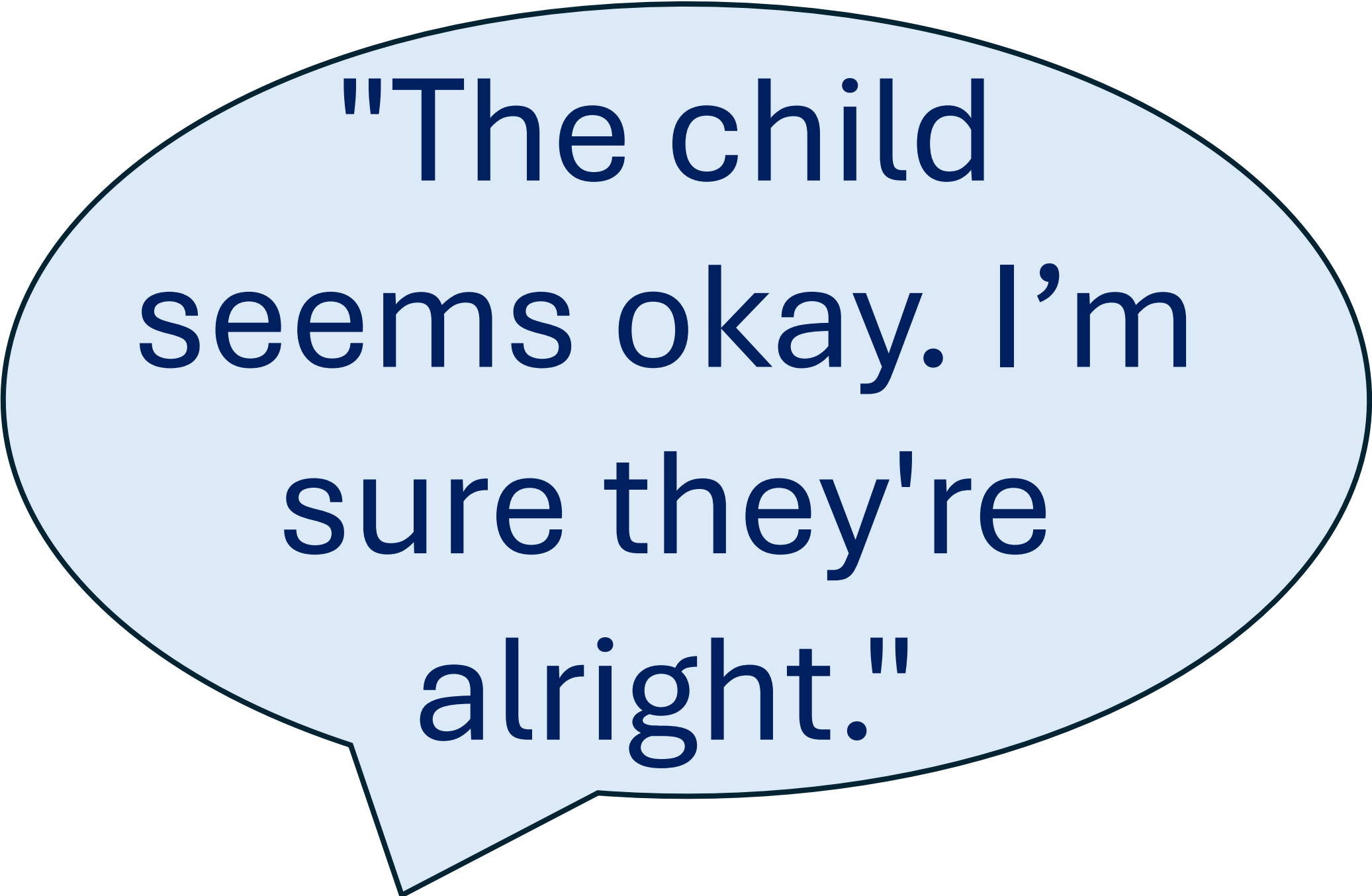
Recognise, R

eport, Record

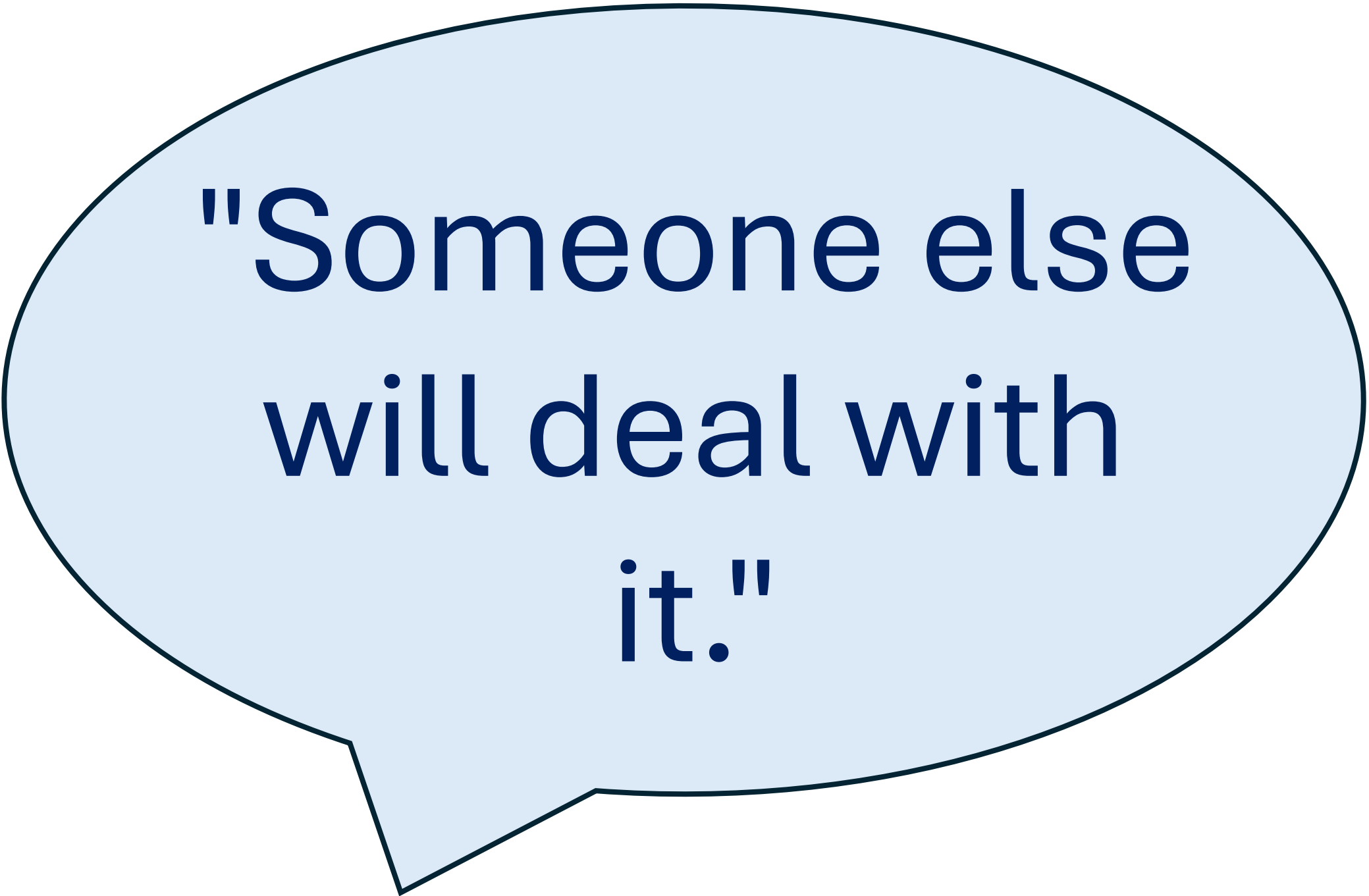
, Respond To



gether



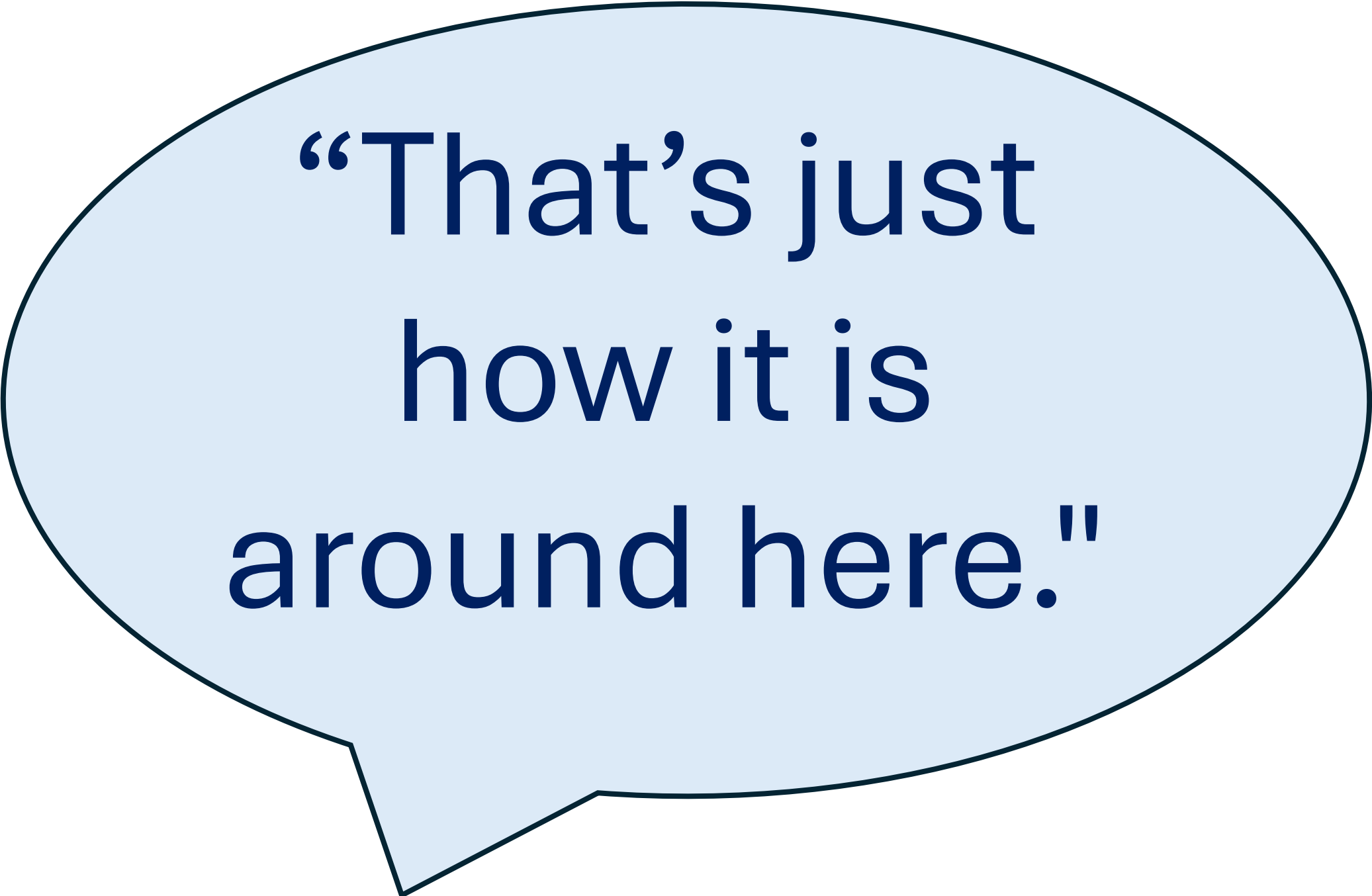
"The child
seems okay. I'm
sure they're
alright."



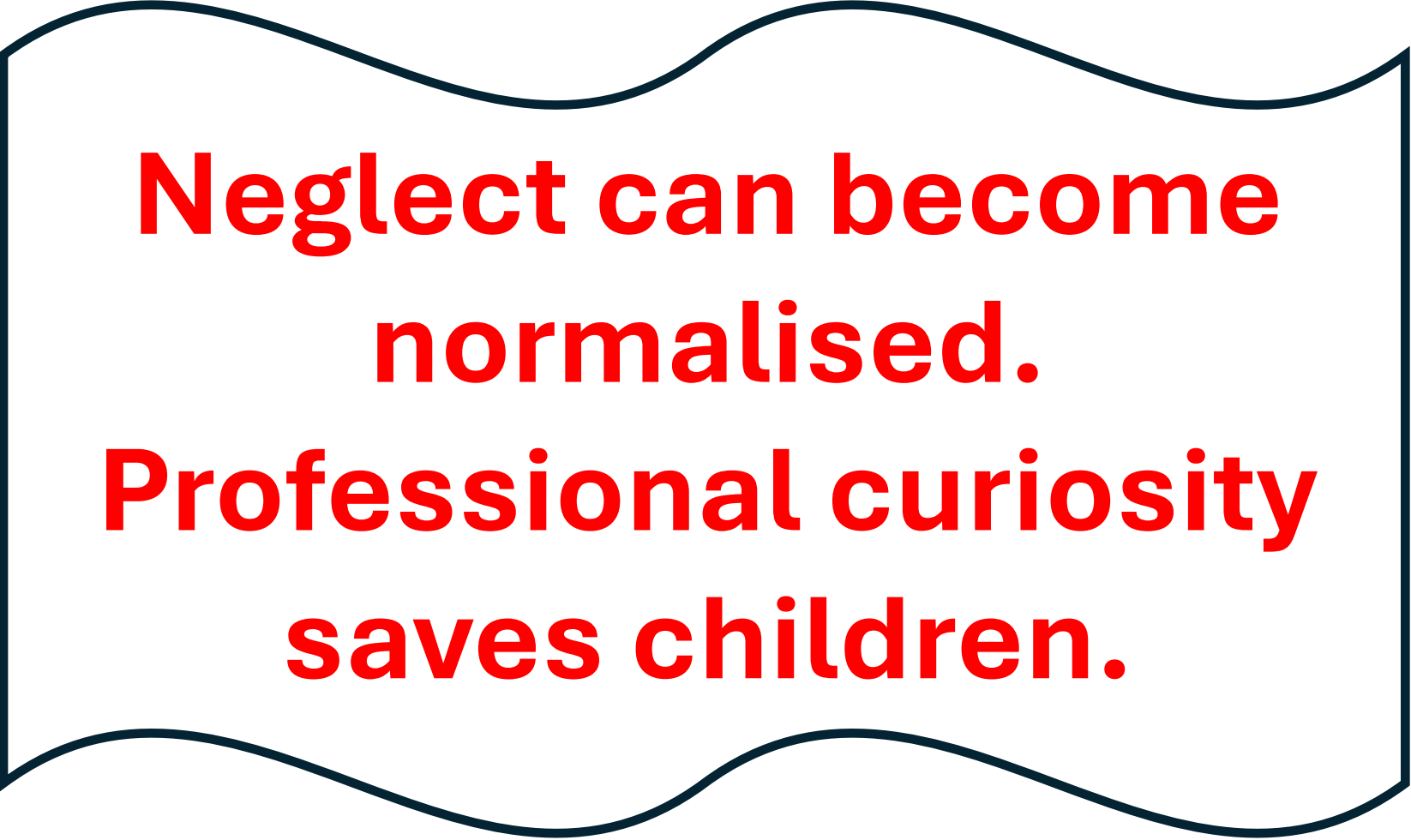
**"Someone else
will deal with
it."**



"It's just the
family's
lifestyle."



**“That’s just
how it is
around here.”**



**Neglect can become
normalised.**

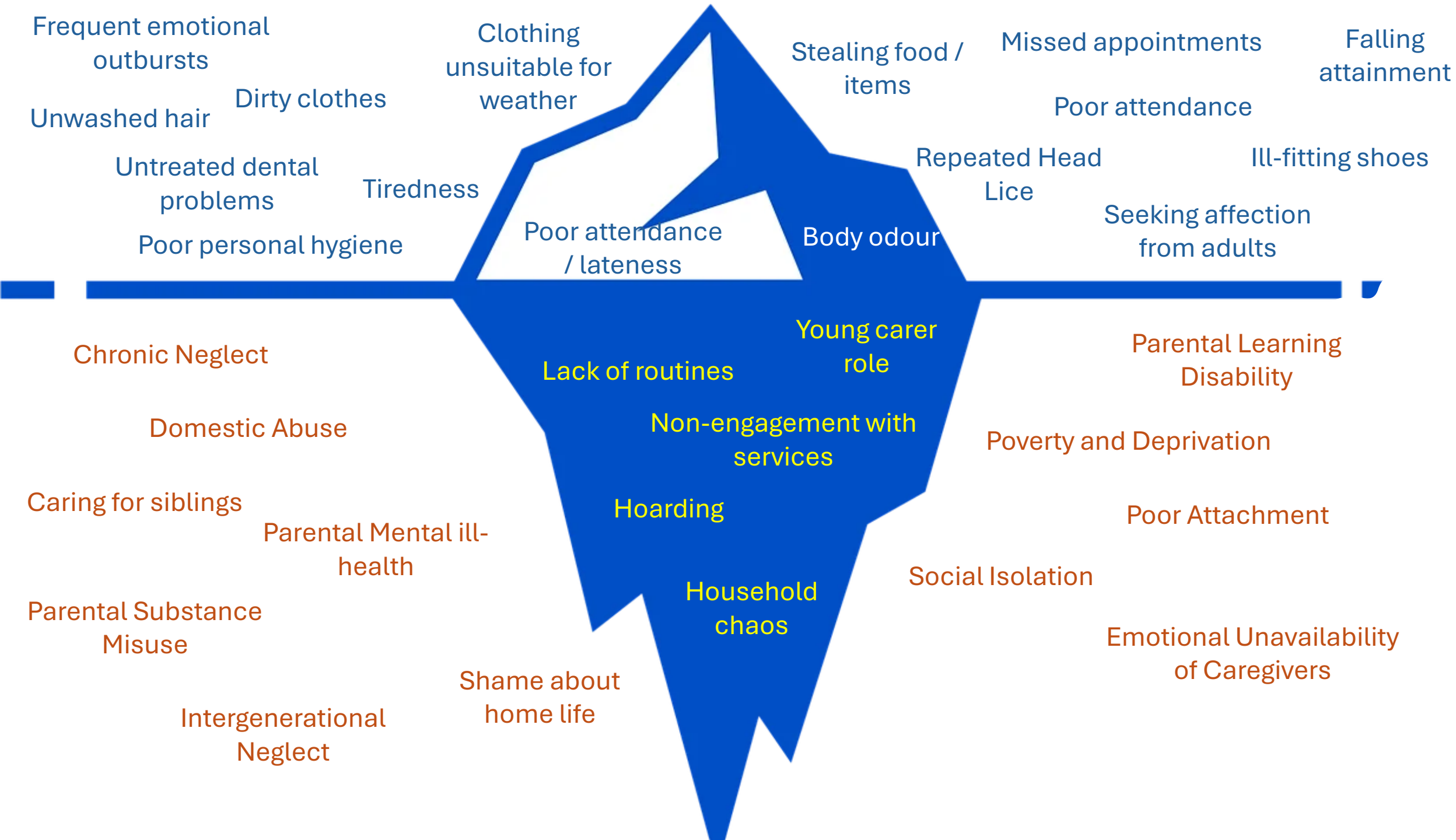
**Professional curiosity
saves children.**

Child Neglect – Do you see it?

Neglect is one of the forms of child abuse where there are opportunities to improve identification, make predictions about the likelihood of its continued occurrence and take more effective and **earlier interventions** to reduce the impact on a child look at

Bolton's Multiagency Tackling Child Neglect Strategy (QR Code red)
and awareness video (QR Code blue)





What you see...



Fold and stick



**What you don't see
(lift)**

Physical neglect



Failure to meet a child's basic physical needs.

- Poor hygiene, dirty or inappropriate clothing, persistent nappy rash
- Underweight or always hungry
- Lack of essential items such as bedding or heating

Environmental neglect



Unsafe, unhygienic, or harmful living conditions.

- Serious hoarding or clutter
- Vermin infestations, no safe food storage
- Broken or unsafe appliances

Medical neglect



Failure to seek medical treatment or follow advice.

- Missed medical appointments
- Medication not collected or treatment plans not followed
- Untreated injuries or medical conditions

Emotional neglect



Failure to provide emotional warmth, stability, or responsiveness.

- Child withdrawn, anxious, overly compliant
- Harsh, unpredictable or unavailable parenting
- Child taking on adult roles (parentification)

Educational neglect



Failure to ensure educational needs, including SEND, are met.

- Lack of support for child's attendance at their registered school
- Inadequate, inappropriate or unstimulating home education provision
- Lack of support for child's educational progress or SEND provision

Supervisory neglect



Lack of supervision or exposure to unsafe situations.

- Young children left alone or with unsafe caregivers
- Inadequate sleep routines, absence of boundaries
- Adolescents frequently unsupervised late at night

Recognising different types of child neglect

Red flags for identifying neglect



-  Repeated short interventions with no sustained change
-  Multiple agencies providing food and clothes (compensatory care)
-  Parents repeatedly declining support
-  Child not seen alone, barriers to the child's environment being seen
-  Concerns recorded as isolated incidents but build up over time

Frequently missed forms of neglect



-  Dental neglect: untreated pain, decay, missed check-ups
-  Mental health neglect: missed appointments, distress not explored, self-harm indicators
-  Sleep neglect: unsafe or inconsistent sleeping arrangements, particularly for babies
-  Disability or SEN neglect: missed therapy, lack of communication support, specialist equipment not used or maintained

What practitioners should do



- ☒ Name neglect explicitly in records and discussions
- ☒ See the child - in person and alone where appropriate
- ☒ Observe the home environment
- ☒ Use multi-agency chronologies
- ☒ Proactively share information, especially around compensatory care
- ☒ Consider cultural and disability contexts
- ☒ Be mindful of the difference between poverty and neglect
- ☒ Use structured assessment tools

Respond, Nurture, Thrive

Bolton's Multi-agency Neglect Strategy

Our Vision

In Bolton, we want every child to have the best possible start in life, safe, supported, and able to thrive.

We will prevent and reduce neglect through early, coordinated, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive support.



Our Shared Commitment



- Embed the strategic principles across organisations with full involvement of system leaders.
- Mobilise Bolton's shared definition of neglect, common tools, and pathways.
- Prioritise early identification and family help: Embedding a trauma-informed approach.

What Success Looks Like



Fewer children require Child Protection Plans for neglect.

- More families receive help earlier, reducing escalation.
- Practitioners feel confident, skilled, and supported; Children and families feel heard, respected, and safer.

Governance & Accountability



Delegated Safeguarding Partners

Strategic Oversight
& 6-Monthly Reviews



Safeguarding Effectiveness Group

Monitor Progress &
Drive Improvement



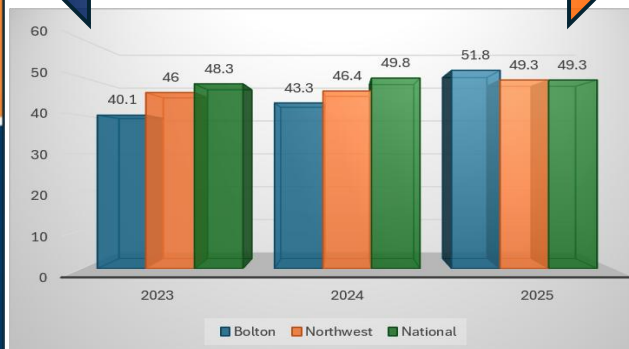
Independent Scrutineer

Robust Challenge &
Annual Review

Child Neglect

Bolton Strategic Overview Call to Action: Strengthening Our Response to Child Neglect in Bolton.

Tackling neglect is everyone's business. In six months BSCP will be seeking assurance from all statutory and relevant organisations as to how they have embedded Bolton's Tackling Neglect Strategy and supporting resources, and what impact has it made for the children and families they work with.



The percentage of Child Protection Plans (CPPs) in Bolton with neglect as the primary category of harm increased from 40.1% in 2023 to 51.8% in 2025, overtaking both the northwest average and national average (49%).

Alignment with Bolton's Vision 2040

Bolton's Vision 2040 sets out an ambitious plan for a borough where every child has the best start in life, families thrive, communities are safe, and the local economy grows sustainably. "Respond, Nurture, Thrive" (2025–2028) directly supports these aspirations through its whole-system, prevention-focused approach.



Supporting Family-Friendly Communities

Vision 2040 prioritises strong families and early intervention to **reduce inequalities and improve life chances**. This strategy aligns by **embedding**: –

- ✓ **Primary Prevention** measures such as universal awareness campaigns, Family Hubs, and parenting programmes to create safe and thriving communities
- ✓ **Support** that strengthens protective factors and reduces stressors that often lead to neglect.
- ✓ Approaches that promote resilience and linking families to practical resources, contributing to inclusive, supportive communities.



Enabling Every Child to Achieve Their Potential

Educational attainment and wellbeing are central to Vision 2040. Neglect is a **significant barrier to learning and development**; therefore, the strategy focuses on:

- ✓ Early identification and timely intervention to prevent escalation
- ✓ **Trauma-informed practice** to support emotional wellbeing and education
- ✓ Contribute to safer communities and improved public confidence



Building Safer, Stronger Communities

Vision 2040 seeks to create safe neighbourhoods through prevention and **partnership**. The Neglect Strategy strengthens multi-agency collaboration to: –

- ✓ **Supports pathways** to education, employment, and skills development
- ✓ **Creates** a stronger foundation for Bolton's future workforce
- ✓ Enhances the borough's attractiveness for investment

Embedding the Vision's Strategic Pillars:

The Neglect Strategy reflects Vision 2040's core principles of **Prevent, Invest, Grow**:

PREVENT

INVEST

GROW

Let's Deal With Child Neglect

