

Here are some points that you need to consider. You should have included all of these in your reflective activity.

- Asking a social work assistant to call the family to find out what happened is not the right thing to do. This situation requires immediate attention and you must take responsibility for making sure it is addressed. The right thing to do now is tell your manager this new information and about the previous referral.
- When someone reports that a child you are working with may be in need of protection, it is your responsibility to carry out enquiries and make recommendations as to whether or not the child should be the subject of compulsory protection measures. This situation needs to be prioritised. You should have organised your workload accordingly, or informed your line manager if you were not able to include this in your existing workload.
- You should have used your social work skills to intervene early. Early intervention can prevent risk factors developing into crises. By not taking action sooner, the situation has become worse. You need to appreciate that appropriate intervention and prevention of harm is one of the important contributions social workers make to achieving better outcomes for individuals, families and communities.
- As a skilled social worker, you should take responsibility for making decisions, understand that these can have far-reaching significance and be accountable for the exercise of statutory interventions. All social service workers must be able to explain and account for their practice.
- You must act in a way that demonstrates you are trustworthy and reliable. It is through your actions you earn the trust of colleagues, people using services and the public. As a result of your actions, you could lose the trust of your colleagues and the wider community.
- You must recognise the power that comes from your work with people using services and the community and use this responsibly. You need to communicate with colleagues in an appropriate, open, accurate and straightforward way.
- You need to understand and comply with the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers, Scottish Government Guidance on the Role of the Registered Social Worker in Statutory Interventions, and the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014.
- Your actions could call into question your suitability to be a social worker. An investigation by your employer or the SSSC may result in disciplinary action and even the loss of your eligibility to remain on the SSSC register.

When you learned a neighbour of a family you are working with called to report her concerns, the right thing to do was immediately tell your manager and initiate child protection proceedings in line with your employer's policies.