Fact Sheet: When is a Child at Risk of Significant Harm?

A Child is at Risk of Significant Harm if they are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, from Neglect, abuse or psychological harm.

Some signs a Child might be at Risk of Significant Harm include:

- **Signs relating to basic physical or psychological needs not being met**
  - low weight
  - untreated physical problems
  - poor standards of hygiene
  - scavenging or stealing food
  - Child is not attending school

- **Signs relating to physical abuse**
  - bruising, bite marks, scratches
  - burns and scalds
  - the Child’s explanation of injury is not consistent with the injury itself
  - the Child is exposed to domestic violence
  - there is a family history of violence
  - parents or guardians use excessive discipline

- **Signs relating to sexual abuse**
  - the Child is pregnant
  - injuries to the genital area
  - the Child has a sexually transmitted infection
  - the Child is describing Sexual Acts
  - the Child has sexual knowledge or exhibits sexual behaviour inappropriate for their age
  - the Child has accumulated money and gifts without explanation

- **Signs relating to psychological harm**
  - constant feelings of worthlessness
  - lack of trust
  - extreme attention seeking behaviour
  - persistent running away from home
  - anorexia or over-eating
  - anxiety or depression
  - the Child is engaging in risk-taking behaviours including self-harm and attempted suicide
  - the Child is exposed to domestic violence