

New register for people convicted of child cruelty offences

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Child cruelty convictions such as neglect and abandonment will face the same police notification requirements as registered sex offenders.

Parents and caregivers who physically harm children will face tougher, lasting consequences for their actions following a new child cruelty register.

Adults who subject children in their care to cruel, heartless crimes, such as neglect and abandonment, will be more closely monitored by police and face similar restrictions as registered sex offenders – reducing the chances of reoffending and providing better protection to children.

This could include having to inform police if they move house, change their identities, travel abroad, or start living with children again after their sentence.

The register will also cover all offences related to child female genital mutilation.

The move follows calls for such a register from campaigners including Paula Hudgell, the adoptive mother of Tony Hudgell, who became a double amputee following severe neglect by his birth parents.

The government has tabled amendments to the Crime and Policing Bill to establish the register today.

Jess Phillips, MP, Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls, said:

It is unforgivable that someone who is supposed to take care of a child would hurt them instead.

We've listened to the Hudgells, and to the many families who feel the system hasn't done enough to protect some of the most vulnerable people in society, and we are taking vital action.

Whether it be online, on the streets, in schools, or from their own caregivers – children are being kept safer under this government.

Crimes covered by the register will include those convicted of causing or allowing the death or serious physical harm of a child. This includes child cruelty, abandonment or neglect, female genital mutilation and infanticide. These offences are egregious betrayals of a child's trust and dependency.

At the same time, the government is bringing in a raft of non-legislative measures to further protect children. These include promoting the effective use of civil orders, strengthening Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) oversight, ensuring high-risk cases are identified consistently, and putting child sex offender disclosure by police on a statutory footing.

Taken together, the new child cruelty register and supporting measures will provide the best-ever police visibility for those who have harmed children under their care, and will give safeguarding

partners the information they need to stop cruel, neglectful and abusive adults from offending again.

These actions come in addition to the strong steps this government has already taken to safeguard children. These include introducing the landmark Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill with a unique child identifier, new multi-agency child protection teams and better information sharing powers. We are also strengthening child sex offender disclosure, establishing a new Child Protection Agency, and bringing in mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse.

Sentencing Minister, Jake Richards MP, said:

Child abusers do not deserve shielding; children do. The Child Cruelty Register will ensure these offenders are visible to the police, allowing authorities to see and act when risks arise.

I thank Paula Hudgell for her remarkable fight to ensure no child should go through the life-altering abuse that her son Tony did.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-register-for-people-convicted-of-child-cruelty-offences>