

Use your voice to speak up for vulnerable people this election.

With the UK poised for a general election on 4 July, the next few weeks are a busy time for candidates as they seek to talk to as many potential voters as possible. This means there are plenty of opportunities to ask them questions.

Our manifesto contains key asks of the government to protect people from abuse and create safer places for all.

Here are some suggested questions based on these asks, specific to where you live in the UK, that you could ask either at a hustings event or on the doorstep.



Scotland

The Scottish government aim to make Scotland the 'best place in the world to grow up'.
If you're elected, what will you do to ensure that the safety and protection of children is kept as a political priority?

The risk to children of being groomed remains high in Scotland, especially online.
How will you make sure that the dangers posed by grooming are properly addressed by the next government?

In Scotland, convicted sex offenders can change their name to hide their convictions when applying to work with children.
What plans does your party have to close this legal loophole that allows convicted Sex Offenders to change their name to avoid detection?

The legal protections for 16-17-year-olds from being sexually abused by adults in positions of trust do not currently extend to sport and faith settings in Scotland.
How would you ensure that 16-17 years olds are properly protected from sexual abuse in all settings?

In Scotland there is currently no mandatory reporting legislation which means many cases of child abuse remain unreported.
What steps would you take to see that mandatory reporting is introduced?

The Online Safety Act 2023 is intended to protect children and adults online.
If your party gets elected, how would you ensure all online risks and harms posed to children are prioritised by the new government?

The Scottish government has led the way in embedding The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into legislation.
How would you ensure these are effectively embedded at every level of society so that children feel the benefit and impact in their daily lives?

Northern Ireland



1 in 5 children experience some form of abuse or maltreatment in Northern Ireland.
If you're elected, what will you do to ensure that the safety and protection of children is kept as a political priority?

The risk to children of being groomed remains high in Northern Ireland especially online.
How will you make sure that the dangers posed by grooming are properly addressed by the next government?

In Northern Ireland, convicted sex offenders can change their name to hide their convictions when applying to work with children.
What plans does your party have to close this legal loophole which allows convicted Sex Offenders to change their name to avoid detection?

The legal protections for 16-17-year-olds from being sexually abused by adults in positions of trust do not currently extend to all settings within Northern Ireland
How would you ensure 16-17 years olds are properly protected from abuse in all settings including non-religious youth groups?

Public perception in Northern Ireland is that Access NI checks are mandatory and that all people working with children have had a check, but this is not the case.
What plans does your party have to make Access NI a mandatory scheme?

In Northern Ireland there is currently no mandatory reporting legislation which relates specifically to child protection situations meaning cases of child abuse remain unreported.
What steps would you take to see that mandatory reporting legislation is introduced?

The courts have decided that new legislation which prevents victims and survivors of sexual abuse from identifying their alleged abuser in the public domain in the absence of a criminal charge should not be in Northern Irish law.
What would you do to support the repeal of this legislation and how would you work to ensure victims of abuse are empowered to come forward and speak up?

In Northern Ireland adults are protected under law from common assault whilst children are allowed to be subject to physical punishment.
If elected, would you support the removal of the legal defence of reasonable punishment and allow children full protection under law?

The Online Safety Act 2023 is intended to protect children and adults online.
If your party gets elected, how would you ensure all online risks and harms posed to children are prioritised by the new government?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) places an obligation on governments to consider children's rights in everything they do that affects children.
How would you ensure the principles of the UNCRC are effectively embedded at every level of society so that children feel the benefit and impact in their daily lives?

‘speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable.’



Wales

1 in 5 children experience some form of abuse or maltreatment in the UK.
If you're elected, what will you do to ensure that the safety and protection of children is kept as a political priority?

The risk to children of being groomed remains high as the law currently fails to properly address the issues, especially of online grooming.
How will you make sure that the dangers posed by grooming are properly addressed by the next government?

The current proposals for the mandatory reporting of abuse that have been drafted are likely to fail most children and young people experiencing abuse.
What steps would you take to broaden the scope of mandatory reporting to make it effective in protecting all children from abuse?

The abolition of the legal defence that allowed physical punishment of children is a landmark piece of legislation in Wales.
If elected, how would you plan to support and monitor the uptake and implementation of the corporal punishment ban to ensure it is effective?

The Online Safety Act 2023 is intended to protect children and adults online.
If your party gets elected, how would you ensure all online risks and harms posed to children are prioritised by the new government?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) places an obligation on governments to consider children's rights in everything they do that affects children.
How would you ensure the principles set out in the UNCRC are effectively embedded at every level of society so that children feel the benefit and impact in their daily lives?

The Welsh government has accepted all six of the recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse that relate specifically to Wales.
How would you ensure the recommendations from IICSA are kept as a priority for the next government and momentum is sustained in seeing them through?

England

1 in 5 children experience some form of abuse or maltreatment in the UK.

If you're elected as my next MP, what will you do to ensure the safety and protection of children is kept as a political priority?

The risk to children of being groomed remains high in England as the existing law fails to properly address the issues, especially of online grooming.

How will you make sure that the dangers posed by grooming are properly addressed by the next government?

Legislation around the mandatory reporting of abuse was a recommendation of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and has been through consultation stage.

What steps will you take to ensure that progress toward the development of mandatory reporting legislation is maintained?

In England adults are protected under law from common assault whilst children are allowed to be subject to physical punishment.

If elected, how would you support the removal of the legal defence of reasonable chastisement and allow children full protection?

The Online Safety Act 2023 is intended to protect children and adults online.

If your party gets elected, how would you ensure all online risks and harms posed to children are prioritised by the new government?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) places an obligation on governments to consider children's rights in everything they do that affects children.

How would you ensure the principles set out in the UNCRC are effectively embedded at every level of society so that children feel the benefit and impact in their daily lives?

In May 2023 the current government issued its response to the recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Except for Mandatory Reporting little progress has been made on any of these, leaving children at risk.

How would you ensure the recommendations from IICSA are made a necessary priority and delivered in full so that children can be kept safe from abuse?

We'd love to hear how conversations with your candidates went. You can email us at research@thirtyoneeight.org

