



# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: LSCB newsletter

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

## Introduction

Welcome to the latest edition of the LSCB newsletter. The newsletter provides an update on current safeguarding issues that are relevant to frontline practice and the work of the LSCB. The newsletter also provides links and signposts to national documents that you may find helpful in your day-to-day work. The Board is always interested in receiving your views and sharing information about good practice locally so if there are any items you would like to go in the next edition please contact [andy.lambie@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:andy.lambie@northlincs.gov.uk)

Kind regards

*Edwina E Harrison*

**Edwina Harrison** | Independent Chair of North Lincolnshire Local Safeguarding Children Board



Local Safeguarding  
Children Board

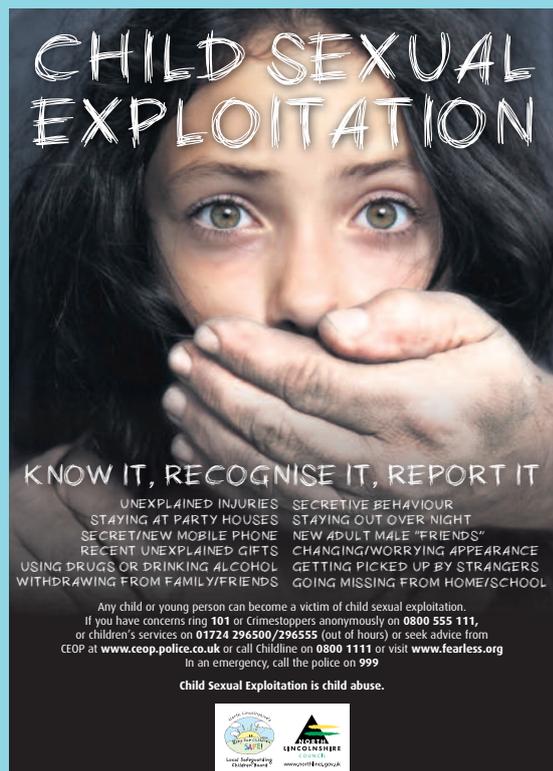
## LSCB Priorities 2013-15

- Reduce the harm from exploitation of children and young people
- Provide Early Help to children and young people
- To support effective parenting capacity

### Reduce the harm from exploitation of children and young people

#### New LSCB CSE poster to raise public awareness launched

The LSCB has launched a poster for parents and carers. The 'Know the signs' poster is available free of charge in A3, A4 and postcard size. Contact Andy Lambie for more information.



#### Warning signs and vulnerabilities of child sexual exploitation

Anyone who has regular contact with children needs to be aware of the warning signs and vulnerabilities that may indicate that a child or young person could be at risk or suffering sexual exploitation, as outlined in Appendix A of the OCC report 'I thought I was the only one'.

The following are typical vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse:

- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality)
- History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang associated CSE only)
- Attending school with young people who are sexually exploited. • Learning disabilities
- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families
- Friends with young people who are sexually exploited
- Homeless
- Lacking friends from the same age group
- Living in a gang neighbourhood
- Living in residential care
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence
- Young carer.

Where professionals have no evidence of child sexual exploitation and are concerned that a child may be vulnerable they should consider undertaking an early help assessment (see Chapter 1 of LSCB procedures at [www.northlincs.gov.uk/people-health-and-care/information-for-professionals/safeguarding-procedures/safeguarding-procedures-and-guidelines](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/people-health-and-care/information-for-professionals/safeguarding-procedures/safeguarding-procedures-and-guidelines)).

The following signs and behaviour are generally seen in children who are already being sexually exploited:

- Missing from home or care
- Physical injuries
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Involvement in offending
- Repeat sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations

- Absent from school
- Change in physical appearance
- Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the Internet and/or social networking sites
- Estranged from their family
- Receipt of gifts from unknown sources
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations
- Poor mental health
- Self-harm
- Thoughts of or attempts at, suicide

If you find a child is experiencing several of these signs or behaviours they could be suffering significant harm.

Contact the Children's Services Single Access Point on 01724 296500 to discuss making a safeguarding referral.

## Draft Modern Slavery Bill

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking, slavery, forced labour and domestic servitude. It is a global crime. In 2012, the International Labour Organisation estimated that there were 21 million victims of forced labour across the world. Victims trapped in servitude, including sexual exploitation, into which they were deceived or coerced and which they cannot leave.

Modern slavery is also complex and varied. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. Organised crime groups (OCG) systematically exploit large numbers of individuals by forcing and coercing them into a life of abuse and degradation. But victims are not always forced to come to the UK. Many victims from the European Economic Area (EEA) report that their first contact with a trafficker began with the offer of an apparently legitimate job and so they travelled willingly to the UK, not aware of the horrors that awaited them. Individuals can also be brought to the UK by their own families or family connections often for domestic servitude.

### The strategic response

Following the "4P approach" in the Government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy, the Government says they will:

- track down those responsible for modern slavery and bring them to justice, through an improved law enforcement response, supported with better information sharing and intelligence (Pursue);
- stop people becoming involved in the perpetration of modern slavery through effective deterrent measures (Prevent);
- strengthen our protection against modern slavery by raising awareness and increasing our resilience and effectiveness against this crime (Protect); and

- reduce the impact of modern slavery through improved support for victims, both in the UK and those returning home (Prepare).

The draft Modern Slavery Bill will help to cut this crime and prevent future victims. It aims to:

- **Consolidate and simplify existing slavery and trafficking offences** to provide clarity and focus when investigating and prosecuting traffickers;
- **Increase the maximum sentence available to life imprisonment** so that offenders receive the punishments they deserve;
- **Introduce civil orders** to restrict the activity of those who pose a risk and those convicted of slavery and trafficking offences, strengthening our ability to cut this criminality;
- **Create a new Anti-Slavery Commissioner** role to galvanise law enforcement's efforts to tackle modern slavery;
- **Establish a legal duty to report potential victims of trafficking** to the National Crime Agency (NCA) to build a clearer picture of the nature of this hidden crime.

Rt Hon Frank Field has been asked by the Home Secretary to run a number of evidence sessions to gather information and views from a wide range of experts. The recommendations of this work are going to inform the development of the Bill and the action plan.

For the full draft Bill go to

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/266165/Draft\\_Modern\\_Slavery\\_Bill.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/266165/Draft_Modern_Slavery_Bill.pdf)

# Supporting effective parenting capacity

## Ofsted Report into Neglect

### In the child's time: professional responses to neglect

This report from Ofsted explores the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children who experience neglect, with a particular focus on children aged 10 years or under. The report draws on evidence from 124 cases and from the views of parents, carers and professionals from the local authority and partner agencies.

### Implications of key findings on local multi-agency practice

- Local practice across all agencies should demonstrate clear thresholds in respect of identification, assessment, planning and the evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions
- Understanding neglect requires sufficient account to be taken of the family history. There needs to be a consistent focus on the impact of neglect on the child, seeing issues for adults through the child's eyes and accounting for the impact of adult behaviour on children
- Support needs to include meeting the short-term needs and also ensuring support continues to enable sustained change is maintained
- Ofsted acknowledge the value in methods that some local authorities use to map and measure the impact of neglect on children over time and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. These methods can result in timely and improved decision-making. North Lincolnshire LSCB are in the process of developing this type of robust system in terms of measuring neglect
- For outcomes to be achieved clear multi-agency strategies should be adopted to parental non-compliance and disguised compliance
- Drift was identified in a third of cases. To ensure children's needs are responded to in a timely way the following factors need to be present;
  - › Comprehensive assessments
  - › Outcome focussed planning
  - › Continued parental engagement
  - › Understanding of the cumulative impact of neglect
- Frontline workers should make themselves familiar with research findings and make reference to research in assessments. A list of relevant research is listed at the end of this article
- Performance monitoring of neglect should be regularly reported to the LSCB
- We should maintain our focus on neglect policy and practice development. Our LSCB audits and moderation panels continue to feature neglect as a theme

### Recommendations for LSCBs

- Children who are suffering from neglect in the three arenas of Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection should be known and effectively monitored. This aims to ensure interventions are effective and progress is being made to improve outcomes for the child
- All agencies, including adult mental health; drug and alcohol services; police and social work services working with families where there is domestic abuse; and services for adults with learning difficulties, should work effectively together to assess and agree plans for children who experience neglect. Local examples of joint assessments and supervision between adults' and children's workers have proved to be much more effective at improving outcomes for the child
- We have a high quality course for the recognition and management of non-compliance and disguised compliance. All practitioners and managers should attend this specialist training course. Details can be found at [www.northlincs.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/lscb)
- Everyone should be aware of their responsibility to escalate concerns regarding neglect. Each agency should have clear policies and procedures to guide them. Where disagreements exist regarding thresholds the Escalation procedure for resolving professional differences of opinion

### Recommended reading regarding working with neglect

C Davies and H Ward, Safeguarding children across services: messages from research, Department for Education, 2011;

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-across-services-messages-from-research](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-across-services-messages-from-research).

A Lazenbatt, The impact of abuse and neglect on the health and mental health of children and young people, NSPCC Research briefing, 2010;

[www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/briefings/impact\\_of\\_abuse\\_on\\_health\\_wda73372.html](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/briefings/impact_of_abuse_on_health_wda73372.html).

Children first: the child protection system in England, 2012;

[www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmeduc/137/13702.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmeduc/137/13702.htm).

'The failure of child protection and the need for a fresh start', Michael Gove's speech to the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR), 16 November 2012, Department for Education, 2012;

[www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-failure-of-child-protection-and-the-need-for-a-fresh-start](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-failure-of-child-protection-and-the-need-for-a-fresh-start)

## How Safe are our Children 2014

The NSPCC have recently published their annual report of child safeguarding and protection in the UK. 'How safe are our children?' is a comprehensive study of the kinds of risks facing children and young people and the effectiveness of systems designed to protect them.

### Overview

The report begins by considering the media landscape of the last year: news coverage of grooming and child sexual exploitation, child suicides linked to the online world and the deaths of Daniel Pelka and Hamzah Khan.

The report goes on to remind us that children are, in a many ways, safer than they were even a generation ago. Over the last 30 years, children's rights are better protected. Their voice is heard much more clearly. Our social norms have shifted in terms of how much better we expect children to be treated. 30 years ago a child was twice as likely to die from physical assault. Parents are less likely to physically punish their children and child suicide rates in England, Scotland and Wales have fallen.

However, it goes on to say that much needs to be done to improve protection for children. On average a child dies due to the actions of another each week. Incidents of neglect have not been reduced. One in six children is exposed to violence in the home. Children face new threats of online grooming and cyber bullying. Levels of child self-harm are higher than ever.

### Speaking out about abuse

Following the revelations about Jimmy Saville, disclosures of historic abuse have increased dramatically. However, this has not been replicated in disclosures of abuse from children. Childline has not seen any significant increase in calls to its service in the last year.

## Early help must increase

The NSPCC highlight that child protection systems are under what they describe as 'immense pressure' In the light of the reduction in available funding for local services due to austerity measures.

There have been 84 reports on the importance of early intervention since 2010. For the whole child protection system to work we need to be supporting children and young people at the earliest opportunity. For example, the report says it takes on average seven years for a child to disclose sexual abuse. Consistent and reliable relationships with the adults in their lives give children the confidence to let people know what is happening to them.

### An overview of the child protection system

Safeguarding and protecting children extends far beyond children's social care. All of our services provided by public, private and the third sector play an important role in keeping children safe from harm.

Supported by research findings, the report identifies the factors that influence the risk of abuse to children such as domestic abuse, poverty and issues relating to parenting capacity. A comprehensive and detailed statistical analysis of the data relating to child abuse and neglect in the UK is then presented.

To read the full report, go to [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/how-safe/how-safe-2014\\_wda101852.html](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/how-safe/how-safe-2014_wda101852.html)

## Preventive measures – how youngsters avoid online risks

This report from EU Kids Online looked at how children use the virtual space and how they keep themselves safe from danger. A key message is that children perceive risks differently to adults. What we, as adults, may perceive as a risk may not necessarily have a negative effect on a child.

Children from nine European countries including the UK were asked about their perceptions of the risks they face online and what they do to protect themselves. A total of 359 children and young people between the ages of 9 and 16 were asked what worries them and how they deal with online risks.

The perceptions children have of online risks depends on what they understand about how online activities may lead to harmful or negative experiences. Also important is their knowledge of what they can do to protect themselves as this knowledge makes them less fearful or worried about it.

Children were concerned about a range of online risks including bullying and harassment, unwelcome contact from strangers, misuse of their personal information, issues relating to sexual content or communication and commercial content.

The research looked at where these harmful experiences are most likely to occur. Around half of all risks were found on social networking sites. Facebook was the most popular social networking site used by the children. While children appreciate that these sites pose a risk they do not tend to do something to avoid the risk. When children are equipped with knowledge of how to protect themselves they feel less concerned about them. By showing young people how to protect themselves the fear and impact associated with the threats is reduced.

For the full report go to <http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20III/Reports/Preventivemeasures.pdf>

## New groups to help reduce domestic abuse

### Freedom for Men

There is a new group being established in autumn for men who want to become better partners. Unlike the regular Freedom course for women that runs weekly over 12 weeks, Freedom for Men has been designed to take place over one weekend. The course has proved to be more effective if compacted into 2 days. Male Freedom trained facilitators assist with delivery to help improve engagement with the programme. Two weekend sessions in North Lincolnshire have been planned so far and as with the Freedom format, attendance is voluntary and participants must wish to attend. The format is non-threatening and instead encourages discussion between the participants about different personality characteristics and roles people play in relationships. There will be more information circulated through the summer about this Programme. For any further information contact Debbie Winning at [debra.winning@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:debra.winning@northlincs.gov.uk)

Escape the TRAP (Teenage Relationship Abuse Prevention)

This new programme for young people is designed to assist them to be able to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships. Using the same personas used in the Freedom Programme, Escape the TRAP, will be delivered in settings such as schools and colleges to help young people consider their own relationship behaviours, avoid getting into unhealthy relationships and equip them with the knowledge of how to get out if they are already in one.

### Amber Project Drop-in and Support Groups

The Amber Project aims to support people who are in or have been in domestic abuse relationships. Drop-ins and groups run across North Lincolnshire and are an informal way for people to access the support they need. Run on a monthly basis, the sessions provide direct and peer support. There is also a Family Law session and one exclusively for male victims. If you require further information about the services and support Amber Project can offer please call 01724 289299 or email [AmberProject@homegroup.org.uk](mailto:AmberProject@homegroup.org.uk).

## Provide Early Help to children and young people

### Update on changes to the Early Help Assessment Framework

The Early Help Transformation Group has been working on behalf of the LSCB to make sure the Early Help Assessment is embedded into multi-agency practice. Operational developments and consultation with children, families and professionals have led to some changes to the form and to the Early Help process.

#### There have recently been the following changes;

1. The CAF form will no longer be accepted. An Early Help Assessment must be used to identify early help for children and their families.
2. The Early Help Assessment has been revised to make it easier to complete. The guidance has also been updated to include disability and ethnicity codes. The new guidance should be read by all practitioners and managers. The new form and guidance are now available at <http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/people-health-and-care/information-for-professionals/safeguarding-procedures/safeguarding-procedures-and-guidelines/>.
3. The administration form has been replaced by a copy of the front page. Once an Early Help Assessment has been completed a copy of the front page should be sent to the Early Help Administrator by post to;

Early Help Administrator, Church Square House, 30-40 High Street, SCUNTHORPE, DN15 6NL

Or by email to [earlyhelp@northlincs.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@northlincs.gcsx.gov.uk)

#### 1. Who do I send the forms to?

Send original assessments and meeting records to:

- The child and family and a copy to
- All professionals involved in supporting them that you have consent to share it with
- Your manager

#### 2. Where can I get further advice and support?

Support is available from your local Children's Centre Manager and from the Single Access Point on 01724 296500. Health Visitors and Schools Nurses can also contact Claire Clarke on 01724 203721.

## Early Help Safeguarding Strategy 2013-15: “Safe, supported, transformed”

The Strategy is set within the context of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Children and Young People’s Plan and Local Safeguarding Board (LSCB) Business plan. The Strategy and associated guidance is required by the new Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, takes our LSCB priorities forward and is overseen by the LSCB.

The Early Help Safeguarding Strategy forms an integral part of a wider Children and Young People’s Plan. It is built upon the North Lincolnshire’s Single Organisational model that has enabled agencies to work together, organise services on level of need and to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

The Strategy provides the structure and processes by which all professionals work together to support better outcomes for children and families in North Lincolnshire. To ensure children are safe, families are supported and lives are transformed.

The LSCB considers what children have told us and builds upon the aspirations of our children and what they want from an effective safeguarding system. It is important to consider their views as we move forward with our Early Help Safeguarding Strategy.

Children tell us that they want:

- adults to notice when things are troubling them;
- to understand what is happening, to be heard and have that understanding acted upon;
- to be able to develop ongoing, stable relationships of trust with those adults helping them;
- to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not;
- to be informed about and involved in decisions, concerns and plans;
- to be informed of the outcomes of assessments, decisions and reasons when their views have not been met with a positive response;
- support in their own right, as well as a member of their family; and
- to be provided with advocates to assist them in putting forward their views

The Early Help Safeguarding Strategy promotes the single organisation model in the delivery of services to children and families (identification, assessment, access and services).

All agencies have agreed to work toward the commitments set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, these are:

**We provide help as early as possible:** We will provide help and advice as early as possible, to prevent problems getting worse.

**Everybody deserves to be heard:** We will always listen to a family’s concerns, without jumping to conclusions. They will show respect for each point of view. Whenever possible they will talk to wider family members, including children and young people.

**We will always be open and honest and treat the whole family with respect:** We recognise that all families are different and we will show respect to each family, their culture, beliefs and traditions. We will always share with parents/carers any concerns that we worry might affect the welfare of children.

**We see families as the experts:** We will always try to work with families to find a sensible solution to the problems faced. We believe that families are the experts about their own children and unique circumstances and that they have a lot of valuable information about what will and will not work.

**We look at the big picture:** Problems do not usually exist in isolation. We aim to work in partnership with schools, health services and other services that might be able to support a family to reach the goals that we identify together.

**We will focus on solutions:** We are interested to know about the things that work well in a family and about the strengths that will help to make lasting changes. We will set these alongside any wider concerns and then work together to come up with a Support Plan.

**We recognise that small steps count as progress:** It is unusual for any family to manage to solve all their problems at once. Through the Support Plan we will agree what things need to be done first and what can wait until later. This will help us all to see when things are going in the right direction. Even small steps of progress usually make people feel a lot better.

**Everyone has the skills needed to do their job:** Parents and carers can be confident that our staff are well trained and supported. They have the right values, experience and up to date skills to work with their family.

**We will always work to keep children safe:** We believe that in the vast majority of cases the best place for a child or young person to be is with their family. That is why we work so hard to provide early help to prevent families from breaking down. If disagreements occur about what needs to be done to keep a child safe we will always discuss this with the parents/carers and explain exactly what our concerns are and what action we believe needs to be taken to keep children safe from harm.

**We will listen to all children and young people:** This includes a commitment to understanding the life experiences of disabled children and young people and ensuring that practitioners are competent and confident in being able to use a range of communication methods.

Disabled children, young people and their families are supported by the development of the "Local Offer" as part of the national changes in relation to how we support children with disabilities and those with Special Educational Needs. The Local Offer complements the Early Help Offer by focusing on the provision of advice, guidance and information in relation to the services that support disabled children, how to access them and what difference they have made to the lives of disabled children and their families.

We look to develop one plan across all services, a "single plan" that can incorporate statutory role and function, e.g. Special Educational Needs, Child Protection. We will work

toward fewer adults doing more to support the child and family and reduce those who do not offer a service or whose involvement is not a priority at this moment in time. Hopefully this will enable families to manage the support, be clear about who is supporting them and helping to make a real positive difference. Organisationally we should experience less staff doing more and therefore more staff to help and support.

To read the full Strategy go to [www.northlincs.gov.uk/people-health-and-care/information-for-professionals/safeguarding-procedures/early-help-safeguarding-strategy](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/people-health-and-care/information-for-professionals/safeguarding-procedures/early-help-safeguarding-strategy)

## The impact of LSCB Quality Assurance on frontline practice

The LSCB has a statutory duty to oversee and monitor the work that multi agencies are doing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in North Lincolnshire. One of the ways in which the LSCB does this is to conduct multi agency case audits. There is a LSCB Quality Assurance Group in place and each month two cases are audited by the group. The Group uses an agreed quality assurance framework which asks each agency who is involved with the cases selected for audit to present information on the assessment, intervention and outcomes being achieved in a multi agency basis for children and young people.

The case audit framework is part of the LSCB Learning and Improvement Framework and the purpose of the audit is to reflect on good practice and build upon it, as well as further developing interagency work. The cases selected for audit are reflective of the LSCB priority areas, in the last year we have audited cases with the following themes:

- Domestic abuse involving 16 or 17 year olds
- Children and young people who are experiencing neglect
- Children and young people who are experiencing emotional harm
- Children and young people whose parents have a learning disability
- Children and young people who have been missing from home/ school
- Children and young people who go missing from care
- Children and young people within the Early Help arena
- Children and young people who have a disability and there are safeguarding concerns
- Children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation

The multi-agency audits routinely demonstrated that **standards regarding the following are met:**

- Holistic assessment
- Parental and child views inform the assessments
- The assessment are carried out in a timely manner

- Assessments demonstrate risks as well as protective factors
- Assessments inform plans and interventions
- Plans evidence the goals to be achieved
- Decision making is recorded in the case files and within assessment and plans
- Supervision is in place
- Plans are reviewed within timescale
- Multi agency working is routinely happening
- There is good quality case recording evidenced on file
- A good understanding of thresholds is evidenced, cases are being managed at appropriate levels of intervention commensurate with the need identified

Within the case audit process there was evidence of good practice, for example:

- Practitioners who utilised a role-modelling approach with families where they demonstrated the practical skills they wanted parents to adopt
- Facilitative support that overcomes some of the practical barriers to achieving the best outcomes for children for example supporting parents to take children to appointments
- Decisive, informed and evidence based assessment which led to children being placed for adoption swiftly
- Practitioners using relevant significant history to inform contemporary planning and intervention

As would be expected within any learning and improvement framework, observations were made in order to enhance further learning. In a minority of cases professionals were challenged to effectively engage parents in the assessment process, where parents were involuntary clients and reluctant to engage. As a result a dissonance between the agency goals and the parental goals could be seen and this resulted in a lack of a shared agreement of what needed to change, what needed to happen to promote that change and what the outcomes would be.

The needs of parents were evident within the cases being audited and the impact of their needs upon their parenting capacity. Professionals with good

communication and engagement skills could ascertain this information and the importance of how the parents own historical experiences impacted on their current parenting capacity enhanced the assessment and subsequent plan.

The audits demonstrated the importance of the input of adult based services within assessments of parenting capacity and subsequent plans, for example where a parent had a mental illness, the manifestation of the illness and how this could impact on the child and what agencies could do to tailor their approaches in light of this information was helpful.

The application of a medical model can limit the flexibility and effectiveness of the seamless support, particularly when applied to mental wellbeing or ill health. Issues determined as behavioural as opposed to a mental health diagnosis can mean that children and young people can be passed between agencies where a medical diagnosis is required to access support.

The audits demonstrated the prevalence of domestic abuse within families and the consequences this can have upon parenting capacity and the quality of relationships between parents and children. The pervasive nature of domestic abuse when it becomes part of a child's experience was identified and the impact this can have on their normative views of relationships. The link between physical harm perpetrated to them as children and them as young people entering into relationships where domestic abuse perpetrated to them was also a theme.

One of the challenges identified through the audits was that working with families with complex and multiple needs can appear overwhelming for families and practitioners. In these circumstances the importance of professionals prioritising the areas for intervention, rather than attempting to resolve everything simultaneously was identified as key to enabling the family to engage in a plan and begin to feel that they could make changes.

Within the audits the importance of assessing and understanding parents levels of cognition and how this impacts on how they understand plans for their children was identified. Where parents had a learning disability/ low levels of literacy this needed to be taken into careful consideration when building plans of intervention with them.

### **So what has changed as a result of the learning from the audits?**

Following the learning from the audits, the early help framework was developed in respect of the engagement of children and families in assessments, seeking and evidencing their views and using them to inform planning and intervention. These are key components of the Early Help framework developed and implemented in August 2013. The principles, forms and quality assurance process in respect of early help are designed to ensure that the views of children and their families are at the heart of the process.

We have revised the training on Early Help and Lead Professional to include the learning from the audits and this training is open to all multi agency practitioners and can be accessed by contacting [Helen.parker@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.parker@northlincs.gov.uk)

We continue to deliver motivational approaches, which are solution focused and that enhance engagement with families, through the training delivered to practitioners, this is recognition of understanding 'who' works with families and not 'what'. This is underpinned by the risk analysis framework in place and is disseminated through multi agency training and learning.

We have continued to develop policy, procedures and practice guidance to support frontline practice. The LSCB has developed a protocol for working with parents with learning difficulties, Guidance for working with families who are challenging and reluctant to engage and a multi-agency protocol for assessment of children in need and child protection. These are all available on [www.northlincs.gov.uk/LSCB](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/LSCB)

We have developed and piloted the DAY program with young people whose families are affected by domestic abuse, to teach them about healthy relationships. The feedback from the young people who attended the course was extremely positive in respect of encouraging them to think about their own behaviour and that of others and also to challenge some of the normative views they had come to hold about domestic abuse within relationships.

We have rolled out of DASH risk assessment training to enable more professionals to utilise the CAADA risk assessment in respect of domestic abuse and we continue to review the effectiveness of this model.

We have developed training and resources in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation, including multi agency procedures. These can be accessed on [www.northlincs.gov.uk/LSCB](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/LSCB)

We continue to develop our learning and development through formal training, practice forums, best practice meetings and promote evidence based frameworks and models to promote what works and who works for delivering the positive outcomes for children and families. We hold LSCB information sessions that multi agency staff can access free of charge and where we share the learning from audits. Please visit [www.northlincs.gov.uk/LSCB](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/LSCB) for details.

We have developed practice forums and joint supervision between adult mental health workers and social workers to enhance the assessment of parenting capacity on parents who have a mental health issue.

## Safe places update

Preparations are under way for the launch of the safe places scheme. Now called the Spaces of Safety scheme, a multi-agency Implementation Group have been meeting to ensure the scheme is successful. The group have designed a logo (see below) and agreed the processes for ensuring the right support is accessed depending on the needs of the person asking for help.

As previously reported the scheme provides safe places in the community where children, young people and vulnerable adults can seek help if they are in distress or require immediate help.

The group have agreed a set of principles by which the scheme will run. Known as 'Our Promise to You' this set of statements about how people can expect to be treated have been based on the following sources of user led best practice in helping vulnerable people

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 – 'What children said'
- Children's Society Runaways Charter – 'How runaways should be treated'
- Norah Fry Institute – How people with learning disabilities should be supported

Staff members in Café INDIdependent have been receiving training to prepare them for this important role in the community.

The way the scheme works is that participating venues display the Spaces of Safety (SOS) logo in the window to show they are part of the scheme. A poster with the logo on is displayed in a prominent position near the counter. All trained members of staff wear a photo ID badge. There are a number of ways people can ask for help or let people know what is happening to them

1. A token saying 'Please hand me in' can be given to a member of staff
2. A postcard with the logo on can be handed to a member of staff. The postcard has space to write information on if they prefer.
3. Information can be shared by posting a postcard in a secure letterbox

The member of staff then invites the person to go to a designated quiet but open area. Once there they reassure them, listen to them and contact the appropriate service to provide them with the help they need.

The Spaces of Safety scheme aims to support any child, young person or vulnerable adult. The range of issues includes;

- Young runaways
- People in mental distress
- Adults with learning disabilities
- Children and young people at risk of, or involved in, sexual exploitation
- People escaping domestic abuse

- Honour based violence
- Female genital mutilation
- People with substance or alcohol misuse issues

**SOS**  
This is a Space of Safety

Need advice & guidance?  
...ask here

### Our promise to you...

**We will:**

- Do what we can to make you feel safe
- Take you to a quiet but safe place to listen to what you have to say
- Treat you with respect
- Listen to you, hear you and take you seriously
- Be understanding, calm and relaxed
- Listen without judging you
- Be patient and give you enough time to talk
- Explain things to you
- Be straightforward and honest
- Do what we say we will do
- Give you choices
- Make sure we have checked you understand any decisions you have to make
- Let you decide what happens next so you are in control as much as this is possible
- Keep you informed about anything we do for you
- Introduce you to other people who can help if that is what you want
- Only share information with people you want us to - unless we have a duty to share\*
- Tell you if we have to share anything you have told us
- Tell you what is likely to happen next

\*We have a duty to share information that involves significant harm to a child (anyone under 18 years) or serious harm to an adult.

The name Spaces of Safety was chosen as the acronym SOS is so widely understood as a request for help. The group felt that this universally recognised acronym would make the scheme more accessible to certain vulnerable groups such as people whose first language is not English, people with learning disabilities or those with impaired vision.

The logo features the SOS acronym within a house with a speech pointer. The combined message is of a safe place to ask for help.



## Keeping children safe in education: statutory guidance for schools and colleges

This statutory guidance sets out what schools and colleges must do to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18. (It replaces 'Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education' (December 2006))

### Who is this guidance for?

- Governing bodies of maintained schools and colleges and proprietors of independent schools (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies) pupil referral units (PRUs), further education colleges and sixth form colleges.
- Staff in all schools and colleges

### The guidance is divided into four parts

1. Safeguarding information for staff including what they should know, types of abuse and information on specific safeguarding concerns
2. The management of safeguarding including responsibilities for governing bodies and proprietors
3. Safer recruitment
4. Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff

Part one should be read by all members of staff in schools, colleges and PRUs. It sets out the expectation that everyone who works with children and families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Staff members in schools, colleges and PRUs are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide early help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children as described in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013. The guidance says that schools and colleges should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

All staff members should know who the other agencies in the local safeguarding system are. They are also expected to receive child protection training which is regularly updated. Everyone is expected to take the view that safeguarding issues 'could happen here' and be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect. Education settings are expected to work closely with the LSCB for advice, resource materials and training.

Staff should know what to look for in identifying abuse and neglect and what to do if they have concerns. This includes children who go missing from school. The guidance gives a clear responsibility to everyone to take immediate action if they suspect there is a risk of significant harm to a child.

Definitions of different types of abuse are included along with links to specific guidance on the following issues;

- Child sexual exploitation
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Mental health
- Private fostering
- Radicalisation
- Sexting
- Teenage relationships abuse
- Trafficking

For the full report go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>

## NSPCC briefings and factsheets for schools

The NSPCC produce regular briefings factsheets regarding all aspects of safeguarding.

The following documents have been developed specifically to assist schools;

- The role of schools, academies and colleges in addressing neglect
- The role of schools, colleges and academies in protecting children from grooming and entrapment
- The role of schools in protecting children from sexting
- Protecting children and young people from sexual exploitation

- The role of schools, colleges and academies in protecting children from sexual abuse
- Recognising and supporting children who display harmful sexual behaviour
- Role of schools in recognising and responding to concerns about self-harm
- School safeguarding pocket guide

They are available for download at [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/briefings/briefings\\_wda48208.html#schools](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/briefings/briefings_wda48208.html#schools)

## Clinical Judgment and Decision-Making in Children's Social Work: An analysis of the 'front door' system

This is a research report from the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) for the Department for Education. The brief for the study was;

What behavioural factors affect social workers' decisions at the 'front door' and how can we improve the 'front door' process to help social workers make better decisions?

BIT looked at three domains to undertake the research;

- Site visits to five Local Authorities
- A review of relevant behavioural science literature
- A review of literature relating specifically to social workers and child protection

Four key factors were found to affect the efficiency of social workers' ability to make highly complex, challenging decisions. These were that;

- Time and workload pressures increase reliance on intuition. This is unlike other professions where there is more time for skilled intuition
- Behavioural biases that affect social workers' ability to be objective such as availability heuristics (judgments made on probability based on ease of thinking of other examples), confirmation bias (looking for evidence that confirms the current hypothesis) and a tendency to judge cases on their relative rather than objective merits.
- The information provided to social workers tends to be of low quality. Social workers spend a great deal of energy making sense of, and piecing together the relevant information leaving less time for analysis.

To exacerbate these issues further, there is an overarching lack of evidence of what works in different circumstances – a lack of evidential proof of methodological effectiveness.

However, BIT did find some solutions to these problems. Four recommendations were made.

1. Develop qualitative, predictive modelling to identify effective practices
2. Introduce feedback loops to help social workers learn from their past decisions
3. Improve the inputs to the system, by developing simple systems for filtering out irrelevant information
4. Development of heuristic tools such as 'fast and frugal trees' and/or checklists to guide decision-making without the complexity of actuarial tools

In North Lincolnshire the social work 'front door' system has been developed over a number of years, in part by the use of the findings of Professor David Thorpe we have commissioned to review child protection systems. Some of these methods, such as the use of decision-making checklists (e.g. what are known locally as Climbie Questions) and feedback loops such as the Moderation Panel have been implemented in North Lincolnshire. However, development is ongoing and the recommendations of this report will be considered when further enhancing our local systems.

The full report can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clinical-judgement-and-decision-making-in-childrens-social-work>

## Adult health outcomes of childhood bullying victimisation: Evidence from a five decade longitudinal UK birth cohort

This research study looked at cohort of children who were bullied over the course of their early to middle adulthood.

The findings suggest the effects of bullying in young children can have a lasting effect on health and wellbeing that can be found to have an impact up to four decades later.

The authors identify that long term negative effects on social, health and economic outcomes could be due to unresolved distress at the time of bullying or the increased vulnerability and peer bullying experienced through to adulthood.

From either perspective interventions to stop bullying early and address the distress caused could arrest the long-term impact on a child's future adult life.

<http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/data/Journals/AJP/0/appi.ajp.2014.13101401.pdf>

## UNICEF public perception of trafficking

Even though 10 children are trafficked every week in the UK, a new poll sponsored by UNICEF UK has found that a majority of the British public do not see the country as a hotspot for child trafficking.

UNICEF UK warns that potentially thousands more trafficked children remain unidentified in the UK, facing a life of violence, exploitation and abuse.

Even when trafficked children are identified they remain vulnerable and separated from their families. They face frightening interviews with various authorities and don't always receive the protection they need. 3 out of 4 of those polled said that giving these children a legal guardian was the "right thing to do".

Anita Tiessen of UNICEF UK said: "We're calling on the UK Government to ensure guardians are included in the Modern Slavery Bill, so that trafficked children are protected by law and have a chance to rebuild their lives. Guardians must be independent, established in law and given legal powers so that children get the support they need to stay safe."

The poll results come as MPs release a report recommending that the upcoming Modern Slavery Bill needs to be strengthened to protect victims of trafficking.

To read the full survey, go to <http://www.comres.co.uk/poll/1149/unicef-public-perceptions-of-human-trafficking-survey.htm>

## Recommended reading

'Raising Parents: Attachment, Parenting and Child Safety', Patricia M. Crittenden. In this book is useful to anyone working with children and families. The author shares her insightful experiences of supporting families and being a parent.

## Training

It is important, when undertaking our safeguarding responsibilities, to ensure that we have kept up to date and developed our professional practice - to help with this the LSCB produce a dynamic training programme which can be found at: [www.northlincs.gov.uk/LSCB](http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/LSCB)

If you would like to discuss any training opportunities please speak with Helen Parker - the LSCB Training Coordinator on 01724 296654 or email her at [helen.parker@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:helen.parker@northlincs.gov.uk)

This is your newsletter. Send any articles or feedback to Andy Lambie at [andy.lambie@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:andy.lambie@northlincs.gov.uk) or call 01724 298293.