

## **Operation Encompass**

In Knowsley, like all local authorities, there are children silently living with the impact of Domestic Abuse. In 2012 Knowsley, Merseyside Police and Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, introduced a new initiative which looked at how key partners could work better together to safeguard these silent victims.

Operation Encompass is an initiative that follows in the footsteps of a successful programme in Plymouth developed by Sgt David Carney Howarth (retired). The purpose of this was to safeguard and support children and young people following a domestic abuse incident where police have been called out. The initiative was led in Knowsley by Jane Case (KMBC) and Mark Guinness (Merseyside Police).

Knowsley Operation Encompass aims to ensure that appropriate school staff are made aware when a child has been present at a domestic abuse incident so that school staff can provide early support children and young people in a way that means they feel safe and included in the school day.

Operation Encompass is built upon the development of Key Adults within each school these are the named lead for receiving information from Police and ensuring the appropriate support is available for the child or young person.

### **How does it work?**

Each morning our local Vulnerable People's Unit at Merseyside Police look at the Police systems, highlighting any violent or abusive incidents that would indicate domestic abuse. They then contact the named Key Adult in the school. This knowledge, given to schools through Operation Encompass, allows the provision of immediate early intervention through silent or overt support dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

## **Operation Encompass to date .**

- All Knowsley schools are signed up to Operation Encompass
- Over 160 staff trained in all its schools on to be key adults,
- Briefings have also been delivered to all Knowsley Police officers.
- The evaluation of the first 6 months of Knowsley Operation Encompass has evidenced that children have been increasingly safeguarded with 89% more children now known to be living with Domestic Abuse and accessing or receiving support.
- Over the first year its estimated that over 1000 children and young people have been supported.

To conclude: Operation Encompass builds upon the sound principles of protection of children's emotional health and wellbeing by increasing children's ability to speak freely about domestic violence by creating a safe environment that leads to an increase in their physical and emotional safety and increased understanding that domestic violence is not their fault. It focuses on prevention of further isolation and reduced stigma and less tolerance and social acceptance of domestic violence within communities. Preventing increased poor outcomes for children and young people through understanding what they have experienced. Lastly, Operation Encompass supports the promotion of strong resilient communities with an increased knowledge of rights to access services for those affected by domestic violence and of the right to live violence-free lives.

Each morning the police computer system is interrogated by using local codes. An area specific search is made using a specific domestic violence/abuse code which highlights domestic incidents. This highlights all domestic incidents during the search period (crime and non-crime).

The front screen of each incident is viewed to see if there are children aged between 4-16 years involved. If children are listed the details are taken.

The Vulnerable Persons Unit ( VPU) then contact the Key Adult for the school and the details shared. A certificate is then put on the crime page stating what information has been passed and the name of the Key Adult it has been passed to.

The school log the information in the same way as Child Protection records are maintained. Appropriate support is offered to the child.

Using the national Police decision making model – schools record the interventions and support given to CYP