

NEWSLETTER

Welcome

Welcome to Knowsley Safeguarding Children Board quarterly newsletter. One of the most important tasks of the Board is to ensure that all practitioners across the partnership working with vulnerable children and their families are supported, skilled and informed in what can be difficult and complex work. The newsletter is just one of the ways we seek to do this, bringing you the latest information on local and national developments, areas we want to focus on and new policies and procedures.

You will see in the newsletter that we have set new priorities for next year, influenced by what you said when Board members visited a range of organisations and agencies and spoke to frontline staff. These include a focus on domestic violence and its impact on children, early help and child exploitation in all its guises. From the work on the Serious Case Reviews currently being undertaken we recognise that we must improve our understanding of the impact of neglect on children, the most effective interventions and how, while working with parents and carers the child must remain the primary focus. The Board, with your help, will develop a plan across the partnership to prioritise this area of work.



Central to working as a practitioner in a multi-agency setting is the confidence to professionally challenge each other when identifying a plan or intervention to meet a vulnerable child's needs. Day to day challenge is part of everyone's work and such challenges lead to safer and better outcomes for children. To support this, the Board has strengthened the Escalation Policy for all staff to use when concerns remain about how agencies work together with a child.

All Board members from all agencies encourage you to read it on the KSCB website and use it. It can be found within the multi-agency procedures at the following link: <http://www.knowsleyscb.org.uk/professionals/multi-agency-training/> It is a positive way of keeping children at the centre of what we do.



Audrey Williamson
Independent Chair
KSCB

NATIONAL NEWS

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

The Whistleblowing Advice Line has been developed to provide support to employees wishing to raise concerns over how child protection issues are being handled in their own or other organisations.

The advice line is not intended to replace any current practices or responsibilities of organisations working with children. The helpline advisors would encourage professionals to raise any concerns about a child to their own employer in the first instance. However, the advice line offers an alternative route if whistleblowing internally is difficult or professionals have concerns around how matters are being handled.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line can be reached on 0800 028 0285.



NSPCC 
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.™

LOCAL NEWS

You Said **We Did**

Children said: Our Young People's survey highlighted that a small minority of young people considered some abusive behaviours as part of a normal, healthy relationship.

We did: In partnership with Public Health, the KSCB have commissioned the film and drama production 'Black Eyes and Cottage Pie', a performance that highlights issues of sexuality, adult domestic abuse, consent, sexting and the power of positive peer relationships. Essential Safeguarding will be delivering a package of Healthy Relationship Support for PHSE lessons, showcasing the performance to pupils and providing training to pastoral staff within secondary schools and FE providers in Knowlsey.

You said: Practitioners raised concerns regarding their lack of knowledge and understanding regarding New Psychoactive Substances (legal highs).

We did: In partnership with CGL, Public Health and Licencing the KSCB produced a 7 Minute Briefing which was cascaded across the children's workforce and delivered a 60 Minute Briefing to frontline practitioners.

KSCB 2016-17

priorities

Each year the KSCB identifies a set of priorities, for 2016-17 the following have been agreed:

- (1) Children and Young People in Knowsley are safeguarded and protected from harm, including abuse exploitation and neglect.
- (2) The voices and experiences of children and young people are fully embedded in practice and service planning.
- (3) Delivery of the serious case review action plans, including:
 - a) Early Help (particular focus on Domestic Abuse/ Violence): Review the contribution of lower intervention services to safeguarding children & hold services accountable. The Board to consider; the quality of CAFs and early help assessments, the effectiveness of the Step Up Step Down Procedure, performance data.
 - b) Neglect: Increased focus on how effective services are in recognising and addressing neglect. The Board to consider; use of appropriate tools/more audits around neglect/rules of optimism, definition of neglect, what is the boroughs response to neglect?/ risk taking behaviour.
 - c) Exploitation: Continued overview of CSE and Child Criminal Exploitation

These priority areas will be embedded in the work plans of the KSCB Sub Groups and will provide a focus for the forthcoming year. The priorities were shared at a meeting of the Children in Care Council, attendees agreed with what has been identified and suggested we should also look at young carers and healthy relationships.

KSCB Training News

For all forthcoming training opportunities you can access the Training Calendar on the KSCB Website. To book a place you now need to register with the KSCB Training Booking Portal at the following link <https://kscbtraining.knowsley.gov.uk/>. You will be required to complete all fields and include your managers email address in order for them to be able to approve your training request; you will then have access to a dashboard which details available current training courses.

Child Neglect

The Virtual College have published top tips to use when assessing whether a child is being neglected. Recognising and understanding child neglect is difficult to do but absolutely essential when considering a child's welfare. The Graded Care Profile, is a useful tool when tackling the issue of child neglect. Below is a summary of its top tips.

1. Offer praise to parents as well as constructive criticism

Highlight what parents are doing well whilst also noting what needs to improve. Parents are more likely to respond proactively to criticism if they are also commended for their positive actions.

2. Concentrate on the child

Understand situations from the child's point of view, especially in regards to their needs. Recognising the impact of household and environmental factors, involve children in the evaluation procedure and understand their opinions.

3. Be adaptable

Co-work with someone to ensure an in-depth assessment synchronised approach, especially when working with alternative organisations. Surprise visits are also effective.

4. Be easy to understand

Do not use language that is too technical and complicated, it is crucial to use vocabulary that everyone is comfortable with.

5. Use a range of evidence

Observe interactions with the child at different parts of the day and during different activities, such as meal times. Align these observations with assessments of the child's clothes, types of food typically consumed, and discussions with the family.

6. Points system

Use a points system that allows different aspects of a parent's care to be rated from 1 - 5. Neglect can then be easily observed and clearly communicated to parents and fellow social workers in a manner that everyone can understand.

7. Perform a thorough assessment

Fully explore all features of parental care and set out key areas for investigation such as physical care, safety, emotional care and development care.

8. Create a clear strategy

Set targets that are attainable within practical timescales. Breakdown overall plans into small, achievable goals which allow parents to easily see what needs to be done and how.

9. Revisits are crucial

Revisit families to check if progress has been made and measure if target have been met or not.

The KSCB launched the 'Graded Care Profile' (GCP) in September in order to assist staff in undertaking a comprehensive and evidence based assessment of families when neglect is known or suspected. Increased use of the tool has evidenced that it improves multi-agency working, supports the process of stepping cases up or down the continuum of need, improves engagement with parents and has been used reflectively within supervision or professionals meetings.

Access the Knowsley Graded Care Profile Tool here: <http://www.knowsleyscb.org.uk/professionals/>



Preventing and Tackling the Criminal Exploitation of Children Procedure

There is no legal definition of child criminal exploitation (CCE) through organised crime groups in England and Wales. For Knowsley, the exploitation of children and young people under-18 is defined as that which:

'involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them completing a task on behalf of another individual or group of individuals; this is often of a criminal nature. It often occurs without the child's immediate recognition, with the child believing that they are in control of the situation. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/ economic and/or emotional vulnerability.'

Knowsley have produced a Child Criminal Exploitation Procedure which provides information regarding what to do if you are concerned a child is at risk of criminal exploitation, how to use the CCE screening tool allowing you to determine the level of risk, identify the threshold, the response and action required to safeguard a child/children.

Access the procedure here: <http://www.knowsleyscb.org.uk/professionals/multi-agency-training/>

CSE and Social Media

A recent 7 Minute Briefing, produced by Public Health, highlighted the increased use of social media by young people. Popular social media apps used by children allow them to send direct messages to an individual, have group chats, have audio conversations, have video conversations, send photos and videos, participate in online gaming and share geographical locations. Despite apps having a recommended lower age limit, it is easy for children to provide false information during the registration process. Please see the attached guide to common apps used by children and young people.

<http://www.knowsleyscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/App-guide.pdf>



The Brutal Practice of Breast Ironing



A number of recent news articles have been published highlighting that more and more girls in the UK are being abused through the horrific practice of breast ironing, in an attempt to hide the onset of puberty. This extremely harmful traditional practice involves the painful practice of massaging or pounding young girls' breasts with heated objects to suppress or reverse the growth of breasts. Breast ironing is often performed by mothers or female relatives of victims misguidedly wishing to protect their young relatives from rape, unwanted sexual advances, early sex, and pregnancies, all of which they fear would result from the appearance that a girl has reached the age of puberty.

<http://www.knowsleyscb.org.uk/breast-ironing/>

We hope you find this newsletter useful and if any of you have ideas you would like to see in future issues, please contact sarah.herron@knowsley.gov.uk

Children and Adult Alerters Training

Knowsley Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards have been commissioning the Aftathought Theatre Company to deliver Safeguarding Alerters Training for 9 years now. We have recently met with the company to update and revise the scenarios they perform in line with the current priorities identified for Knowsley.

Forthcoming dates are:

Tuesday 8th June 2016

Wednesday 5th October 2016

Thursday 16th February 2017



The Workshops will be held at The Venue, Huyton and will run from 9.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 4.30pm on each of the above dates.

Contact Dot Murphy on doris.murphy@knowsley.gov.uk to book a place.

We have also updated and revised the 2-day Working Together to Safeguard Children and 1-day Refresher courses to include recent changes and additions to practice guidance and procedures. There are still places available on the following session:

Working Together to Safeguard Children
16th and 17th May 2016 9:30am - 4:30pm
The Oaks Teaching School, The Acorn Centre, Whiston

National Evaluation of the Graded Care Profile

The NSPCC carried out the first UK-wide evaluation of this tool supported by Luton Safeguarding Children's Board, the GCP developer, Dr Srivastava and his colleague, Richard Fountain.

The report looks at the value of using the GCP in practice and why it was not used when it could have been. It draws on a range of perspectives including the views of practitioners and managers, parents, Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and GCP trainers.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/2015/graded-care-profile-evaluation-report/>

