

SSCB News



Welcome to our Spring Newsletter

Annual Conference Issue

We have had a busy season at the Board.

Inside this issue:

In addition to our ongoing work we held our first Annual Conference 'Neglect as a Result of Compromised Parenting' on 21 March which was a great success.

Our Business Plan priorities 2010-2012 can also be found inside.

The Final Report by Professor Eileen Munro has now been published and we outline 15 key recommendations.

"The measure of the success of a child protection system, both local and national, is whether children are receiving effective help."

(Munro 2011)

Spring/Summer
2011

Issue 2

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Annual Conference

The 'Neglect as a Result of Compromised Parenting' Conference was held on 21 March at the Public. Attendance was phenomenal with over 160 people taking part from many professions including police officers, social workers, health visitors and probation officers. Our key speakers were Professor Antonia Bifulco of The Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies and Vivien Evans OBE, CEO of Adfam.

Professor Antonia Bifulco of the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies at Kingston University spoke about Neglect, and the Harm caused by Neglect. She accompanied this with Research Evidence and Assessment tools.

"The more severe the neglect in childhood, the higher the association with later disorder. A cut-off using 'marked' or 'moderate' as severe consistently related to worse adult outcomes"

Professor Bifulco, SSCB Annual Conference 2011)

"Childhood maltreatment has major impacts on the capacity for attachment and future attachment style"

(Professor Bifulco, SSCB Annual Conference 2011)



"The speakers were to the point and no information overload, will use the information in practice"

(Delegate SSCB Annual Conference 2011)



Viv Evans OBE, CEO Adfam presented 'Families' looking at the impact of parental substance misuse on children and the importance of working with the whole family.

"Parental drug use causes serious harm to children at every age from conception to adulthood ... Effective treatment of the parent can have major benefits for the child. By working together services can take practical steps to protect and improve the health and well-being of affected children"

(Viv Evans OBE SSCB Annual Conference 2011)

Workshops

We held five workshops and got some great information back from delegates which reflected learning from presentations in the morning. We will be able to take this information forward in our Safeguarding work as a Board.

"Taking the research on neglect seriously has implications for professionals and services as they currently operate, the workshop agreed that there would have to be some culture shift. Individual workers and services have always been aware of neglect but have still been able to avoid/ be prevented from tackling it"

(Substance Misuse Workshop, SSCB Annual Conference 2011)

Feedback

We had some great feedback on the event. Many people stated that they found the day very informative and one whole staff group loved the day and returned with great enthusiasm to work inspired by the day.

“Resources to take away and evidence-based research was very useful.”

(Delegate SSCB Annual Conference 2011)

“Good Networking enabling partner agencies to communicate.”

(Delegate SSCB Annual Conference 2011)

We will be holding some Practitioner Forums which will include work to take forward from the Annual Conference so look out for these on our Website: www.sandwellscb.org.uk



Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board has eight key priorities in its Business Plan for 2010-2012. This is where our work will be focussed during this time. These key priorities will be sent out to partners on a poster, a copy of which can be seen below.



Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board's priorities are:-

- To improve quality of practice across agencies to improve protection for Sandwell's children.
- Learning from SCRs & CDOP to be embedded and support improvements in safeguarding practice.
- All agencies to have a common understanding of the ACCSS process of referring concerns to the ACCESS Service and increase support at all levels - agencies to be fully engaged in delivering protective services.
- To improve the engagement of children, young people and their families, and practitioners.
- To improve links with adult services to ensure practice is focussed on the needs of the children, young people and their families.
- To improve the engagement of SSCB with Sandwell's communities in order to improve awareness of safeguarding issues.
- To ensure that staff from all agencies have access to high quality Learning & Development opportunities in respect of Safeguarding.
- To ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place where young people are at risk of sexual exploitation due to risk taking activity.

Final Munro Report

On 10 June 2010, ministers announced the launch of a review of child protection, headed by Professor Eileen Munro.

The Secretary of State for Education asked Professor Munro to conduct a review of the system, with a focus on strengthening the social work profession, to put them into a better position to make well-informed judgements based on up-to-date evidence in the best interests of children and free them from unnecessary bureaucracy and regulation. Munro's final report has now been published. Here we outline the 15 key recommendations.

Munro's 15 Recommendations:

1. Initial and core assessments should be scrapped and replaced with a single, ongoing assessment listing decisions to be made.
2. Unannounced inspections should examine the safeguarding performance of other agencies as well as children's services.
3. Inspections should also look at outcomes and how children's wishes and experiences shape services provided.
4. A combination of nationally collected and locally published performance data should be used.
5. Each Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) should submit annual reports to council leaders and heads of police and health and wellbeing boards.
6. LSCBs should also assess local outcomes including the effectiveness and value for money of early intervention services and multi-agency training.

Cont'd ...

7. The role of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services should be protected from departmental mergers.
8. Research is needed on the impact of health reforms on partnership working in child protection.
9. LSCBs should use a systems approach to serious case reviews (SCRs) with learning from the approach taken in sectors such as aviation and healthcare. There should be a stronger focus on understanding the underlying issues that made professionals behave the way they did and what prevented them from being able to properly help and protect children. The current system is too focused on what happened, not why. Ofsted's evaluation of SCRs should end.
10. Councils should have a legal duty to provide sufficient early intervention services leading to better identification of the help that is needed and resulting in an offer of early help.
11. The Social Work Reform Board's Professional Capabilities Framework should specify those qualities needed for child and family social work.
12. Employers and higher education institutions (HEIs) should work together on student placements.
13. Local authorities should review and redesign the ways in which child and family social work is delivered.
14. Local authorities should designate a Principal Social Worker.
15. A Chief Social Worker should be created in government.

For full details www.education.gov.uk/munroreview

In Our Next Issue:

We will be focusing on the work of one of our Subgroups, the Serious Case Review Sub-Committee. We will examine the lessons that we can all learn from recent Serious Case Reviews and smaller scale audits.

We also hope to bring you news of the final Munro report on Child Protection and what this may mean for us as a Safeguarding Board.

And Finally...

We hope that you will continue to support our Safeguarding Work in the future. Safeguarding continues to be the responsibility of everyone but it is our job as the Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board to guide, co-ordinate, support and evaluate this work in Sandwell. We can only do that if we all Work Together.



If you do not sow in the Spring you will not reap in the Autumn (Irish Proverb).



Agencies need to continue to work together for the good of children.



(Delegate SSCB Annual Conference 2011)