Welcome

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board’s Newsletter. I hope you find it informative and useful. As a newcomer to Sandwell I have certainly found it helpful.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Independent Chair of Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board. I took up the position on 1st June so I am still busy meeting Board Members across what is clearly a strong partnership. I have been made very welcome and have been struck by the friendly and positive reception I have received.

I am looking forward to meeting front line staff in the near future to gain a good understanding of how safeguarding services are delivered in Sandwell. I believe that the Board’s strength comes from listening to both those who receive services, particularly children and young people, and to those who are delivering services on a daily basis. I do not underestimate the complex and demanding work that many of you undertake and the support of the Board, for example through providing high quality training, plays a critical role in your work.

Sandwell is facing many challenges and changes over the next twelve months and during such times collaboration and partnership work can feel like an additional pressure but these are the very times when we need to work together. As an experienced independent chair, I have witnessed many examples when collaboration has improved services, strengthened safeguarding and enhanced the confidence of staff. SSCB will continue to ensure that partnership work is central to the services children and their families receive.

Finally, I would like to thank my predecessor, Claire Parker, from Sandwell & West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group. Claire is the Vice Chair of the Board and took over the role as Chair from August last year until this June. Claire undertook the task willingly in spite of having a very busy full time job as Chief Officer (Quality). Claire has made my job easier by ensuring the Board continued in its work and maintaining the commitment of the partnership across Sandwell.

I look forward to working with you,

Audrey Williamson
Independent Chair
Sandwell Safeguarding Children board
Children & Social Work Act Update

On 27th April 2017, just before the election was called, the Children & Social Work Act received the Royal Assent. You can find the Act [here](http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/).

As well as provision for new local safeguarding arrangements to replace LSCBs; proposals for local and national practice learning reviews to replace SCRs and reforming CDOP, the Act contains important proposals on social work regulation, care leavers, the statutory inclusion of PSHE in schools and other measures.

Revised guidance for ‘Working Together’ (plus anything else if it does not all come as one document) is being prepared and will be out for 12 week consultation in the Autumn. This was expected to be September 2017, but is now probably going to be a little later due to the election. The expectation is that local plans will be drawn up by April 2018 and agreed for implementation by April 2019, but that some jurisdictions may propose and have agreed new arrangements ahead of this. Further updates will be provided in our upcoming newsletters.

Role of the Conference Chair and Decision Making in Child Protection Conferences:

From 26 June 2017, the Conference Chair has the authority to veto or override the majority view of partner agencies when making a decision about whether a child should become or remain the subject of a Child Protection Plan. The Conference Chair will use his / her professional judgement to determine whether the threshold criteria is met and make a decision which most clearly reflects the child’s best interests.

The first Review Child Protection Conference at three months will be a point of review only and it is only in rare and exceptional circumstances a Child Protection Plan will end. Current improvement work around Child Protection Plans will focus on work being completed within six months followed by a further three months of sustained change and evidence of impact on the child. Informed decisions can then be made which clearly reflect the best interests of the child. When Child Protection Plans are ended, it is expected a Child in Need or Early Help Plan will be in place for a minimum period of three months to address any outstanding needs and ensure safety networks are in place.

The above decisions are a result of a case review of Child Protection Plans ending after three months.

Melanie_jarvis@sandwell.gov.uk Team Manager; Paul_Russell@sandwell.gov.uk Team Manager; Carol_Singleton@sandwell.gov.uk Head of Safeguarding

Workforce Engagement:

SSCB carried out its annual safeguarding survey during April – June 2017 to proactively engage with the partnership’s Safeguarding workforce. The Survey closed on 14 June with 265 staff across the partnership contributing their views in order to help identify needs, inform training to aid their development and provide feedback on the effectiveness of the SSCB. The full findings will be analysed and reported in the next newsletter.

New Procedures Website:

For all forthcoming training opportunities you can access our Training calendar via the Sandwell Learning Pool. You need to register to book a space.

Upcoming Training this Summer:

- **CWT L3** [see all dates]
- Thresholds [07 September]
- Sexual Abuse [28 September]
- Digital World [25 September]
- SoS half day [13 July, 07 September]
- Neglect [06 September]
- Serious Case Review [11 September]
- WRAP [12 September]
- Child Sexual Exploitation [14 September]
- MARAC/ DASH/ BST [15 September]
- TRIO of Vulnerabilities [20 September]
- Understanding Extremism [20 September]
- Listening to the Voice of the Child [22 September]

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**HAND SPINNERS: message from West Midlands Police**

**What are they?**

Fidget toys are pocket-sized toys intended to keep hands busy. A step up from stress balls, they typically feature little buttons, switches and joysticks that move back and forth, or propellers that spin.

The toys are being marketed as stress relievers or to help kids burn up pent-up energy that so often gets them into trouble. Some claim to have been modeled after stress tools for kids with ADHD, others say they're just for fun. The most popular are fidget spinners that are mesmerizing to simply watch, but can also be used for tricks. The spinners typically feature two or more propellers and a low-friction, ball bearing centre that allow them to spin for a minute or more at a time. While they spin, users transfer them from hand to hand or finger to finger, while tossing them in the air.

However, there are spinners available with retractable blades which are available online – some go by different names such as Naruto Shuriken Turn darts, Naruto Shuriken and Naruto Dragon.

Please be mindful for the safety of yourselves and children.
Hurting inside:
learning from the NSPCC helpline and Childline on neglect

The long term cumulative impact of neglect can cause deep-rooted and lifelong physical and psychological harm for a child. At its worst, neglect can prove fatal. Through the NSPCC Helpline and Childline timely and decisive action is provided to help stop child neglect.

A report commissioned by NSPCC shares what children tell them about neglect to give a better understanding of the issues they face. The report provides key statistics on contacts to the helpline about neglect and looks at how adults recognise, report and understand child neglect.

Key findings were:

- Neglect is the top reason why people contact the helpline. They received 17,602 contacts about neglect in 2014-15. This is a 3% increase compared to the previous year and a 9% increase in neglect referrals when compared with the previous year.
- 67% of contacts were from the general public.
- We need to encourage everyone to be more curious about older children’s circumstances and to follow up any concerns.
- Children rarely recognise that what they are experiencing is neglect and are less likely to speak out about it.
- In almost a quarter (22%) of counselling sessions about neglect the young person had previously spoken to a teacher or social worker.

What children tell us about neglect:
When a child or young person is counselled about neglect the main themes that come up are:

- parental alcohol and substance misuse and mental health issues
- left at home alone
- insufficient food or going without food
- problems at school
- physical and/or emotional abuse.

Of the young people who told ChildLine how long they had been experiencing abuse and neglect over a third (37%) said it had being going on for years and was still happening.

The full report can be found at:
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/2015/hurting-inside-helpline-childline-neglect/

SSCB Neglect Audit

A SSCB multi-agency audit took place on Friday 23 June with a specific focus on How well staff across the multi-agency partnership work together to support children at risk of, or currently experiencing neglect.

The findings will be shared in the next newsletter in Autumn 2017, however in the meantime look out for the audit learning notes on the SSCB website.
The ‘See Me, Hear Me’ (SMHM) Framework sets out a child-centred multi-agency approach for preventing the sexual exploitation of children, which focuses on identifying, protecting and supporting the victims, disrupting and stopping perpetrators, securing justice for victims, and obtaining convictions. Developed following a two-year Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Gangs and Groups by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner (OCC), the Framework was envisioned as a model of ‘end to end’ prevention and support which links strategic leadership and co-ordination with multi-agency safeguarding arrangements on the ground in order to confront the risk and impact of sexual exploitation of children. The OCC sought to test the efficacy of the framework for practice by commissioning a pilot implementation and evaluation project, which was awarded to the University of Sussex in 2014. Sandwell Council, along with Brighton and Hove City Council and Oxfordshire County Council were the three local authorities who piloted the project. The summary and full reports of the evaluation are now available from the following link: https://padlet.com/m_lefevre/SMHM

CSE and Social Media

Young people increasingly use Social media apps that allow them to send direct messages to others, have group chats, share videos and photos. Most of those apps have a recommended age limit but it is easy for children to register.

Please see below some of the apps we have recently identified:

- **Some schools strongly advise parents to delete MyLOL app after concerns raised that it’s being used by sexual predators.** MyLOL bills itself as the ‘#1 teen dating site in the US, Australia, UK and Canada’ with more than 300,000 members around the world. It invites users to meet ‘thousands of teenagers like you’ and ‘chat with members or privately with someone.’ Teenagers are encouraged to share pictures.

- **It’s not the first time concerns have been raised about dating apps aimed at young people. In November, the NSPCC warned against the Yellow app labelled ‘Tinder for teens’, which could be used by predators to groom young-sters. Like Tinder, Yellow allows its users to swipe right and left to either ‘like’ or ‘pass’ another user, and if there’s a match, they can begin chatting.**

- **The Monkey app enables you to have Facetime with random strangers.** Once you register for the Monkey App, you verify your phone number, age, Snapchat name and whether you are male or female. It then asks you to allow access to your contacts. ‘Monkey’ will then try to connect you with people from across the world of a similar age via FaceTime and Snapchat. It’s rated as being suitable for over 12’s.

- **On the plus side, the Gallery Guardian app detects when children take or receive explicit images. It send alerts to parents.**
CSE Superhero Launch Event

The Safeguarding team at NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group (SWB CCG) held the regional launch of the CSE Superhero Campaign at West Bromwich Albion Football Club on 21 June 2017.

The CSE Superhero theme was developed in response to a challenge from Julie Warren Sykes and her son Ben, the mother and brother of a young woman, Samantha, who was murdered trying to help a friend who was a victim of CSE.

At the event, Julie and Ben urged health professionals to be professionally curious, to really listen to children and young people and to never forget their safeguarding duty.

The ‘Safeguarding Superhero’ campaign led by Eileen Welch, Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children, recognises that health professionals are ideally placed to identify abuse. Campaign resources complement the training film ‘Know the Signs’ which stars Josie Lawrence and was produced by ‘Chatback’, a group of looked-after and birth children of foster carers. The toolkit aims to enable health professionals to identify the signs and indicators of CSE and to safeguard children.

It is estimated that 954 children and young people are experiencing or at risk of CSE in the West Midlands. This can happen to children as young as eight and to both boys and girls.

The campaign materials are available from 21 June for all health professionals nationally via the NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG website:

www.sandwellandwestbhamccg.nhs.uk/csesuperheroes
SSCB Table Top Review

The Serious Case Review Subcommittee have recently completed a Table Top Review concerning a young person who attempted to take their own life in July 2016 at their home address, by taking 60 painkillers, 5 paracetamol and 12 anti-spasmodic tablets. They were taken to hospital in a critical condition and had to be resuscitated. They had previously self-harmed due to bullying at school.

The Review found that it is crucial that a lead professional is identified when a number of agencies are involved with a child; Multi-agency meetings are needed to ensure holistic support is offered; It is important to feedback to the referrer about outcomes of referral and assessment; Timely information transfer between schools at transition points is vital; The Review questioned the validity of "safe and well" checks that take place over the phone; Patterns of behaviour were identified as crisis points shortly before school holidays; Interpreter needs to be used when a parent/carer has limited English skills.

As professionals, ask yourself:

- What is your understanding of the Lead Professional Role and how is it implemented in your agency?
- How do you share information during transitions? Is it timely, accurate and relevant?
- Do you monitor patterns of behaviour and put support packages in place before crisis points occur?
- How do you feed back to referrers on referrals?

REGIONAL SCR

A review was undertaken by the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board into the sad death of an 18-month-old child in 2015 who was subject of a Special Guardianship Order (SGO). The child had extensive internal and external injuries that had been sustained over a period of time. These fatal injuries were inflicted by the guardian who was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment with the expectation that they serve a minimum of 18 years. The review found that the child’s death could not have been predicted, however this case identifies important learning for professionals.

http://www.lscbbirmingham.org.uk/

Dfe return for child death

The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) have recently submitted the annual return to the Department for Education regarding data collected between 2016-2017 on the reviews it has carried out. During this period 66 deaths were reviewed from years 2012 to 2017. 22 of these were seen to have modifiable factors which are important learning in the review of deaths as they alert us to factors that can be addressed locally, regionally and nationally. CDOP child death reviews this year have continued to highlight the recurring theme of co-sleeping, however there has been a reduction in actual child deaths due to co-sleeping this year. Baby Boxes were launched successfully this year for all those that give birth at City Hospital and is now being adopted by other Birmingham Trusts. Data received on forms with regards to smoking has improved but there have been concerns over the lack of information with regards to consanguinity data. Over 400 young people were present during a training/information sharing event at a local college around safer sleeping, road safety and suicide awareness. A development day has also been held where 65 partners and stakeholders were invited to analyse modifiable data highlighted by CDOP and to look at possible strategies as to how these could be approached within different agencies in conjunction with the Lullaby Trust. A parent of a child who committed suicide this year gave a very moving presentation. Both events were favourably evaluated.
There are a number of issues that affect young people and SHAPE Youth Forum thought of many of these but the top 3 were:

1. Terrorism
2. Hate Crime
3. Knife Crime

The information below are the views and opinions of how young people feel about terrorist attacks and what professionals can do to make them feel safe.

Being an individual living in the UK has recently been terribly difficult. This is due to the number of terrorist attacks, including the explosion at the Ariana Grande concert; the London bridge attack and the mosque attack in London. All of these events frighten the public and as a result parents are reluctant to let their children attend social events and gatherings. To help prevent parents from having these thoughts we should come together as a community, stand strong and reassure them.

How can professionals help to change this:

1. Provide reassurance to the people around you and those that you work with in particular young people
2. Get professional help to those most vulnerable through offering counselling and therapy sessions and provide individuals who are most in need with supplies of clothes, food, housing Etc.. Donate and help fundraise.
3. Educate people in the differences between the Islam religion and beliefs and radicalisation.
4. Reduce the levels of hate crime by reminding people that anyone can be a victim of hate crime regardless of their appearance or beliefs. Encourage victims and witnesses to report hate crimes.
5. Unite people in local communities. Young people can participate in the positive reinforcement of this unity.
6. Continue to Increase police and security patrolling in response to the terror attacks.
Young Carers

Young carers are young people under 18 who help to look after someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled, or misuses drugs or alcohol. Schools are invited by the Carers Trust to show their commitment to supporting young carers by adding a flag onto the Young Carers in Schools map. It's easy and straightforward - why not add yours today? Add my school to the Young Carers in Schools map

Schools who demonstrate a wide-range of support for young carers can show their commitment by applying for the Young Carers Award (some of the successful schools are shown on the map above).

You can find out more here: Young Carers Award

Organising safe sporting events - a briefing for schools (NSPCC)

The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) is a partnership between the NSPCC, Sport England, Sport Northern Ireland and Sport Wales. The Unit was set up in 2001 to help organisations minimise the risk of child abuse during sporting activities. The CPSU has launched a new briefing, developed by the NSPCC, provides guidance on key considerations for schools hosting a sporting event, to ensure children and young people are properly safeguarded. The guidance includes:

- schools hosting a sporting event
- visiting other premises for a sporting event
- using external coaches for sporting activities
- using volunteers as coaches
- community and club use of the school sports facilities


E-Safety Posters for children

eSafety advisor, Alan Mackenzie, is a popular and knowledgeable consultant who supports schools with all aspects of internet safety. His website is full of useful advice and resources, including these free posters www.esafety-adviser.com/esafety-posters
In Sandwell
“Where Every Child’s Voice Matters”

Saturday 22 July 2017
11am - 5pm at Sandwell Valley Country Park, B71 4BG

featuring the BLIND DAVE COLOUR RUN
starts at 1pm • see overleaf for details

sports • music • live acts • kids zone

for further information visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/SHAPEevents
Parking charges will apply