

Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board Newsletter



Hello and Goodbye

A new independent chair is taking the helm of Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board.

The outgoing chair, Barbara Trevanion, has stood down from the role after two years. Sue Nash took over as the new chair on 12 June.

Sue has worked for the local authority in Peterborough since 1968. She qualified as a social worker in 1972 and the main focus of her work has always been with children and families. For several years she chaired child protection conferences.

She welcomed the changes which led to parents being fully involved in these meetings and, more recently, children and young people. She retired on Friday as child protection and review manager, having held this post in children's services since Peterborough City Council became a unitary authority in 1998.

She said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed my career as a local authority social worker and manager. In the posts I have held it has been crucial that I work with all the agencies which contribute to safeguarding children and that we are prepared to challenge each other in seeking to achieve the best outcomes for children.

"I believe the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board will be in a strong position to build on the firm foundations laid down by the Area Child Protection Committee in promoting inter-agency working to protect children.

"I am very much looking forward to working with board members. A key area for us will be to explore with children and their families their views on the services available to them and to involve them in planning services for the future."



Peterborough City Council's assistant director for specialist services for children, Maureen Phillips, said: "We are sorry to say goodbye to Barbara who did an excellent job spearheading the transition from the area child protection committee to the setting up of the new Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board as interim chair from 2004-2006.

However, I am delighted to welcome Sue to her new position and look forward to working with her in the future."

PSCB Policy officer Judy Jones added: "Sue has been described by her colleagues from partner agencies as one of Peterborough's most significant champions for the rights and safety of children. They said the cause of child protection in Peterborough will be greatly strengthened by her appointment."

Barbara is also Chair of Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Boards.

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Tackling deep-seated social exclusion: Hilary Armstrong announces next steps and new arrangements in government

Social Exclusion Minister Hilary Armstrong announced in June a new Taskforce that will put social exclusion at the heart of government.

Speaking after chairing the first cabinet committee for social exclusion, she set out the next steps for the Government's drive to tackle deep-seated disadvantage.

Ms Armstrong's priority is to reach the one million people at risk of persistent social exclusion, who have not yet benefited from opportunities the majority of people can now take for granted.

The new Social Exclusion Taskforce will concentrate on identifying the most at-risk and focus on specific hard-to-reach groups including children in care, people with mental health problems and teenagers at risk of pregnancy.

The Taskforce draws together the expertise of some staff from the former Social Exclusion Unit in the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and policy specialists from the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit. It will be based in the Cabinet Office and report to Hilary Armstrong and Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Pat McFadden.

The Taskforce will continue to demonstrate the values that underpinned the success of the Social Exclusion Unit's work - including its commitment to evidence-based policy making, working with stakeholders and giving a voice to disadvantaged groups.

The Taskforce's work will complement the role of departments which will continue to have responsibility for delivering social exclusion policies on the ground.

Next steps

The Action Plan, expected this autumn and setting out how the Government will reach the most excluded in society, will focus on key groups and issues including:

- improving the early identification of the most at-risk households, individuals and children so that interventions can be targeted more effectively at those most at risk - to themselves or to others
- raising the outcomes and aspirations of children in care
- accelerating current progress in reducing the rate of teenage pregnancies
- ensuring that people with mental health problems receive effective services, with a particular focus on making sure that the cross-cutting review on mental health finds new ways to allow people with mental health problems to find and retain work
- supporting ongoing work by the Respect Unit, with improved programmes to help prevent the problem families of tomorrow.

The Minister will also:

- chair the new Cabinet Committee on Social Exclusion
- take forward a Ten-Year Strategic Review of the long term trends and drivers of social exclusion and the systemic changes needed to address them
- work closely with the Treasury and other Departments to help secure the best possible outcomes for excluded people and groups in the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review
- begin a programme of visits to investigate examples of good practice around the country as part of her goal of ensuring an Action Plan on Social Exclusion leads to real change at the frontline.

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Working to reduce the use of custody

The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) is continuing to work to reduce the use of custody for children and young people. While custody must, of course, be available to protect the public from dangerous and violent offenders, it should be used as a last resort. In general, custody delivers poor outcomes in the long run, particularly if young people enter the youth justice system early.

In order to help reduce the use of custody, the YJB strategy includes:

- seeking to influence legislation, to give the courts more robust alternatives to custody and make the purpose of using custody clearer
- helping youth offending teams to improve performance in relation to practice that has a bearing on the use of custody (for example, by providing good-quality pre-sentence reports)
- promoting a communications strategy with sentencers (both nationally and locally) to raise awareness about the effectiveness of alternatives to custody
- other measures – for example, the prevention strategy, which targets young children at risk of offending at a much earlier age.

The Home Office document *A Five Year Strategy for Protecting the Public and Reducing Reoffending*, published in February, endorses the YJB's approach to the use of custody. The document says that "prison should be used for the most dangerous, violent and seriously persistent offenders, and that others are usually best punished in the community." It also states that: "The prison population has been rising for decades, even during periods, like the most recent period, when crime has not been getting worse." In relation to children and young people in custody, the strategy says: "We believe that it is important to keep children out of prison if at all possible."

Following a peak in October 2002, the under-18 custodial population has fallen, at April 2006, by over 11%, and has not mirrored the rise in the adult prison population, which has risen almost 7%.

Numbers in custody of under 18s

The total under-18 population rose by 34 in April, from 2,785 to 2,819. Remands stood at 645 (up 32 from March), and the figure for those sentenced to custody stood at 2,174 (up 2 from March). There were 2,617 boys in custody, and 202 girls. Of these, 2,346 were in young offender institutions; 229 in secure children's homes; and 244 in secure training centres. The secure estate for children and young people is currently running at 92% capacity. It is normal to see a seasonal increase from March to April, although this year's has been higher than average. The under-18 population at the end of April was 92 higher than at the same point in the previous year (2,819, compared with 2,727).

Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. Tel 020 7271 3033,
Email secureestate.bulletin@yjb.gov.uk

POLICY MAKING

The Prime Minister has announced changes to the structure of Whitehall which has implications for Social Care and which is designed to promote joined-up policy making.

Main Changes:

Equalities

- Gender and sexual orientation move to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) from the Department of Trade and Industry.
- Race and faith move from the Home Office to the DCLG.
- Age and disability stay with the Department for Work and Pensions.

Communities:

- Community cohesion and active citizenship move from the Home Office to the DCLG, which retains local government, regeneration and housing.

Social Exclusion:

- Cabinet Office takes cross-government responsibility for social exclusion. The DCLG will have a role, but division of labour unclear.

Third Sector:

Cabinet Office takes responsibility from the Home Office. The DCLG is likely to have a role too.

Care homes - Child Prosecution Guidance Released

The number of children prosecuted for offences committed in a children's home should be cut thanks to new guidance, says the Magistrates' Association.

The Crown Prosecution Service has revised its guidance on prosecuting crimes committed in children's homes.

John Fassenfelt, chair of the Magistrates' Association's youth courts committee, said professionals must consider what impact prosecution would have on the child. "Children's homes are using the prosecution system as a means of disciplining children," he said. "I hope it will stop silly cases coming to court. I know of a young person with severe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder who was prosecuted for breaking a broom handle."

The guidance says a statement on how the behaviour management policy of the children's home has been implemented should accompany requests for advice on prosecutions.

www.cps.gov.uk/legal/section4/chapter_b.html#20.

Substance misuse

Children of alcohol misusers neglected

Professional working with parents who misuse alcohol are often ill-equipped to meet their children's needs, a new report claims.

Charity Turning Point also found that many staff in children's services lacked the skills to address parental alcohol misuse problems even where they affected children.

The report said direct services for parents who misused alcohol and their children had been "very slow" to develop.

Although five times as many children were affected by parental alcohol misuse than by drug misuse, services were focused on drugs.

The report urged the government to fund a national inquiry into the needs of children of alcohol-misusing parents.

It also suggested placing councils under a duty to develop local strategies on alcohol misuse services.

From www.turning-point.co.uk

Criminal Justice System: working together for the public

Campaign helps promote launch of DV court

The launch of the county's first specialist domestic violence court co-incided with a county wide media campaign to encourage the reporting of domestic violence.

A poster and radio advertising campaign in Peterborough and Cambridge, funded by the government, was followed by multi-agency press, radio and TV coverage across the county in connection with the county's first specialist DV court.

Cambridgeshire's criminal justice agencies and partners have been working hard in preparing for the introduction of the new court, which began in Peterborough at the Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 4 July.

Subsequent hearings will take place at the magistrates' court one day a week. Cases will be clustered together to take place on the allocated day, which will in turn make the courts run more effectively and speed up justice for victims.

Resources will be concentrated into the specialist court, involving dedicated prosecutors, specially trained magistrates, legal advisors and police officers who specialise in the issues involved in DV cases. It will also involve accredited independent domestic violence advisors who can offer victims one point of contact during their case.

Where possible there will be separate entrances, exits and waiting areas so that victims are not confronted by their attackers while attending court.

Richard Crowley, CCJB Chairman, said: "We are working closely on a multi-agency basis with the police, Peterborough City council and Cambridgeshire County Council, and other statutory and voluntary agencies to put in place a pilot court in Peterborough.

"Over the next two years we expect to develop the facility in both Huntingdon and Cambridge as new court buildings become available."

Domestic Violence and Child Protection: Directions for Good Practice

Book Review - A powerful look at domestic violence

This book should carry a health warning: reading the facts and figures will haunt your dreams and shadow your days. It did for me, even though I have worked in this field for years. Much was familiar, but to read one coherent narrative was immensely powerful.

The book looks at three broad areas: children's views and needs; protecting women and children; and working with perpetrators. To give a brief highlight from each section is hard when every chapter is packed with ideas, but let me try. There is the child who responded to an adult's plea for children to voice their needs more clearly, with the words: "Listen more loudly please." The Duluth power and control wheel is also outlined in the book. It makes complete sense to many women, who find it immediately empowering.

And there is the challenge from a Norwegian project that asked whether men who are domestically violent can be "good enough" fathers, showing how child abuse and domestic violence can be integrated into the single concept of family violence.

The overlap of domestic violence and other child protection concerns is important. In the introduction, after looking at the evidence, the editors state: "The association is such that where there is domestic violence, questions need to be raised about child abuse, and where there is child abuse, questions need to be raised about domestic violence." The Government has just published the new guidelines for Working Together and although this principle is in them, I wish it was set out as clearly as in the sentence quoted above.

Finally, working as I do for the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service, let me highlight the sections on families caught up in private law disputes. I intend to put them in front of our senior management team, as well as ensuring the messages are integrated into Cafcass's new domestic violence training programme for staff. We all need to listen more loudly.

Reviewed by Elizabeth Hall, regional director (policy lead for safeguarding and domestic violence issues), Cafcass



Home Office

Violent Crime Unit

4th Flr Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF
Switchboard 0870 0001585 Fax 0870 336 9130 Direct Line 020 7035 3274
E-mail suzelle.dickson@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk www.homeoffice.gov.uk

CONSULTATION ON GUIDANCE FOR DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEWS UNDER THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, CRIME AND VICTIMS ACT 2004

Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act creates a statutory basis for establishing and conducting domestic homicide reviews of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has or appears to have resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by: a person to whom they were related to; or had been in an intimate relationship with, or was a member of the same household.

During the passage of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 through Parliament, the Government agreed to a three-month consultation exercise to decide on the exact process and methodology that domestic homicide reviews should follow, prior to the commencement of section 9 of the Act.

In light of this agreement the consultation paper on guidance for establishing and conducting domestic homicide became available on 14 June. The sections of the guidance identify particular themes that need to be addressed by the agency/review body that eventually takes on responsibility for conducting the review. Therefore, it is important that we hear from as many people as possible to make that we are learning everything we can to ensure better services for future victims.

A copy of this document is available on the Crime Reduction Website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk/dv01.htm

We look forward to hearing your views by **13 September 2006**.

Domestic Violence Team

Violent Crime Unit

Home Office

4th Flr Peel Building

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

Or

DVHRGConsultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

LEARNING LESSONS TO KEEP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS SAFE

New guidance to ensure any lessons following a domestic violence homicide are learnt, and action to protect others at risk is taken, has been published for consultation by Home Office Minister Baroness Scotland.

This is the latest step in the government's ongoing drive to reduce domestic violence and bring more offenders to justice. Reviews following domestic violence homicides will be established under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

The purpose of the reviews is for the police, probation boards, local authorities and health bodies to ascertain whether policies and procedures were followed, as it is often the case that someone who dies at the hands of a partner, ex-partner or family member is already known to the relevant authorities.

Rt. Hon. Baroness Scotland QC said:

"The number of homicides resulting from domestic violence has fallen by 14 per cent over the past two years, but still over 100 women and 35 men are killed each year at the hands of a current or ex-partner, or family member.

"Each one is one too many and it is important that when this sort of tragedy does occur we look at what can be done to put systems right. Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews are not about laying blame, but about learning lessons on how to protect future victims better.

"We all need to take responsibility to bring about change and keep our family, friends and communities safe."

Under the new system, local agencies will have to consider whether a review should take place after every domestic violence homicide. The Secretary of State will also have the power to direct a person or body to carry one out.

The guidance out for consultation is based on the existing serious case reviews that already take place when a child dies or is seriously injured and abuse or neglect is known or suspected.

The Home Office has also published an annual progress report which outlines the developments that have been made against seven key policy objectives for addressing domestic violence, as outlined in the Government's National Domestic Violence Report.

In the past year, achievements include:

- * further expansion of the specialist domestic violence court programme;
- * £2 million funding for Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advisors, professionally trained specialists working alongside a victim from the point of crisis, such as their initial call to the police or visit to A&E;
- * the roll out of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) where local agencies work together to identify high risk victims and plans to keep them safe; and,
- * the roll-out of accredited domestic violence perpetrator programmes to every probation area in England and Wales.

The report sets out the priorities for the coming year and the emerging model of a co-ordinated community response for local partnerships, which provides a framework for local action so that victims are better protected.

Snippets

The Child Action Poverty Group wants the tax credit system to be reformed after it emerged that 529,000 families face bills of more than £1,000 to return overpaid tax credits.

Rape

Nearly 4,500 children called Childline to report being raped in 2004-5, but many victims are not receiving the therapeutic help they need, the NSPCC said. The charity said its 39 therapeutic centres for children who have been abused could not cater for the high levels of demand. ChildLine, which merged with the NSPCC in February, received more than 8,600 calls related to sexual abuse in 2004-5. More from www.donthideit.com.

Women's Aid has a national network of services and online services such as The Survivor's Handbook, which is available in 11 languages that can be found and downloaded at www.womensaid.org.uk.

It has sections on safety planning for women experiencing domestic violence, a guide to legal protection and details of housing options along with a range of refuge and other services.

The site also hosts the only UK online directory for local refuge services and other dedicated support services and www.thehideout.org.uk – the first domestic violence website for children and young people, which has won three awards.

Many professionals will work with people experiencing domestic violence, including social workers, NHS staff and youth workers and, by sharing information, we can ensure that support is available to those who need it.

Hundreds of children are being smuggled into the UK for use as slave labourers, states a report by End Child Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking.

Immigration - Asylum-seekers treated as migrants

Asylum-seeking children are being systematically excluded from measures designed to deliver better outcomes for children.

Heaven Crawley, a lecturer at the University of Wales, wrote the report for the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association. She said: "There is evidence that children subject to immigration control are treated as migrants first, and their rights as children are unidentified or ignored."

It coincided with the publication of a House of Lords European Union committee report calling for increased transparency on the detention of children. But a spokeswoman for Save the Children called for the detention of children to stop completely.

www.ilpa.org.uk.

Teenage Mothers

A scheme to help teenage mothers develop new skills has received a grant from the Young Person's Fund.

Peterborough Women's Centre has been awarded more than £73,000 to run a programme of weekly social activities for teenage mothers and their children.

Contact: Marie Flanagan, Centre Manager on 01733 311564

New Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre will be the most significant development in child protection to date

Tackling child sex abuse took a significant step forward in April with the launch of the new Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre. Jim Gamble, former Deputy Director General of the National Crime Squad, heads up the new organisation.

For the first time ever and, in a model that other countries are already studying, the organisation will bring together law enforcement officers, specialists from children's charities and industry to work in unison under one roof. This will provide a unique holistic approach to the growing problem of child abuse. Already, major corporations such as Microsoft, AOL and VISA, as well as children's charities including the NSPCC and Childnet International have put considerable resources and weight behind the new initiative.

The CEOP Centre has a mandate to use national resources to focus on high risk, high impact offenders and will deliver:

- A dedicated 24/7 online resource for reporting instances of online child sex abuse
- Systems to track sex offenders and to disseminate intelligence globally - resulting in victim identification and the direction of those victims towards sources of support
- Specialist operational capability to boost domestic and international raids
- Dedicated operators to track and seize assets from those who trade in child abuse images, working in partnership with VISA to develop greater sanctions against those who use legitimate payment mechanisms to purchase such images
- Online awareness tools and offline education materials to encourage children to use the internet safely
- Direct input into making technological advances 'safer by design' e.g. the technical specification of new products will incorporate child protection features
- An international presence by maximising the potential of the Virtual Global Taskforce, an alliance between law enforcement agencies from the UK, Canada, United States of America, Australia and Interpol, by capitalising on existing relationships and bringing other countries on board.
- Specialist training services to help personnel in law enforcement, education, prisons, probationary services and child protection agencies.

The growth in the distribution of child abuse images continues to rise - one operation alone seized over 750,000 images - while latest figures show that over 8 million children and young people have access to the internet throughout the UK. Of those millions, one survey at least has shown a high proportion of those children - 1 in 12 - have met someone offline who they initially encountered in an online environment.

CEO of the new CEOP Centre Jim Gamble said:

The CEOP Centre is the most significant development in child protection in recent years and is a direct response to the explosion in online child abuse. Our challenge therefore is this - to make the internet a safer environment for your child.

What we have to understand is that behind every image online there is a child in the real world being abused. Behind every online chat there is the potential that your child may be speaking to a sex offender. That is a harsh reality

That is not to say of course that the internet isn't a great place. It is a great environment - one that is full of learning and fun opportunities. What we are saying to children, young people and parents is that by putting awareness first you will reduce the opportunities for harm.

So let us be clear. If you are a sex offender- get help or get caught. The internet will increasingly expose you to new policing powers and will cease to be the anonymous place that it once was.

If you are a parent, a child or a young person don't be afraid, be cautious. If you are a victim then approach us. Let us signpost you to sources of help, advice and support.

As well as tracking and bringing offenders to account the CEOP Centre will be allocating significant resources towards developing education programmes and public awareness campaigns. This will be kick-started by the 'Think You Know' programme which will be launched to schools later in the year, and will provide education on internet safety and advice on the very latest security measures.

None of our work in the CEOP Centre would be possible without partnership. If nothing else, one lesson is clear from past experience: modern-day policing cannot and must not work alone in tackling this horrendous crime. The CEOP Centre is about inclusion, sharing experience and pooling knowledge and above all working towards one cohesive aim.

The information below is taken directly from the CEOP website at www.ceop.gov.uk

What we do

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre works across the UK and maximises international links to deliver a holistic approach that combines police powers with the dedicated expertise of business sectors, government, specialist charities and other interested organisations - all focused on tackling child sex abuse wherever and whenever it happens

From e-world to real world, the work of the CEOP centre

Separating online child sex abuse whether it is chat-room grooming, distribution of illegal images or any other form of attack, cannot and should not be separated from offline consequences. People who prey on children whether for personal pleasure or other illegal gain do it in a way that exploits any possible opportunity. Any response must similarly be all encompassing.

This is the principle that lies at the heart of the new Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre. Launched in April 2006, the CEOP Centre works across the UK and maximises international links to deliver a holistic approach that combines police powers with the dedicated expertise of business sectors, government, specialist charities and other interested organisations - all focused on tackling child sex abuse wherever and whenever it happens.

That means working with parents, young people and children to safeguard their online experiences. It includes direct support to victims and their families and involves the relentless tracking and prosecution of offenders.

Intelligence is the central thread that runs throughout the organisation. Whether it is the need to understand how the criminal mind works or how sex offenders strive to exploit all situations. Whether it is more about working with children and young people in order to reach and safeguard their online experience, everything the CEOP Centre does is driven by knowledge first and targeted action second.

All of this means that the CEOP Centre is unique in the UK. It is a law enforcement organisation but with a very different approach. It is about fresh thinking and working across a wide perspective, co-ordinating action whether it is with local police forces or other relevant bodies and above all collectively working with all our partners and stakeholders to stay that vital step ahead of what can be a complex and multi-faceted area of crime.

Young people

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre has set up its own website which has been designed and written specifically for young people. It contains games and up to date information on having fun, staying in control and being safer online as well as details on how to report problems.

It will at a later date include content and interactive games for children.

The website is called 'thinkuknow' which you may have heard of already. You can access the site at www.thinkuknow.co.uk.

NEW DRIVE TO REDUCE SUICIDE RATE FOR YOUNG MEN

A new drive to reduce the suicide rates in young men has been launched by Health Minister Rosie Winterton. Speaking in June to mark Men's Mental Health week, she published a report outlining the findings of three pilots which have been looking at ways to reduce suicide rates in young men.

Suicide is the most common cause of death in young men, and although the last five years have seen a sustained downward trend in the figures, last year over 1,300 young men took their own lives. The three government funded projects were set up in 2004 to help identify the barriers that may discourage young men from seeking help and look at ways of reaching out to this particularly vulnerable group. The results of the pilots, published today, will be used to spread best practice and learning across the NHS.

The pilots - based in Camden, Bedfordshire and Manchester - found that:

Community-based locations such as youth centres and youth oriented services offered a more successful means of engaging with young men than more formal settings such as GP surgeries;

Front line staff, when given appropriate training, are better able to engage with young men;

Alternative terms to 'mental health' - such as 'dealing with stress' or 'wellbeing' - need to be adopted to encourage young men to engage with future projects and to ensure that mental health issues are discussed in a non-stigmatising way;

Proactive and community-based outreach programmes should be established as these approaches were perceived by young men as more acceptable, less threatening to their self-esteem and less risky, since staff were perceived as less likely to share information with other agencies, such as the police; and

Accessible information and advice needs to be available for family members and friends of young men, since they are likely to provide a more immediate and trusted source of support.

Have a national suicide strategy that is starting to have an impact but we need to redouble our efforts in getting young men to look after their mental wellbeing and seek help when they need it.

"I am pleased to publish the Reaching Out report. The lessons learned by these pilots will help services improve the way they engage young men. I would also like to congratulate the Men's Health Forum for the key work they are doing in promoting mental well-being."

1. A copy of the 'Reaching Out' report can be found at <http://www.nimhe.org.uk>

Learning disabled parents missing out

Negative stereotyping is stopping parents with learning difficulties getting the support they need to keep their children, new research shows.

The study published this week by Bristol University's Norah Fry Research Centre found that staff in some services had a negative attitude about parents with learning difficulties.

This included the presumption that people with learning difficulties were incompetent and would be unable to understand their children's needs.

These negative perceptions could prevent parents from parenting to the best of their ability, and some professionals supporting parents with learning difficulties felt staff working in child protection had fixed ideas about what should happen to children of these parents. "They also felt that children and family social workers wanted to ensure a 'concrete outcome' for children, which would prevent them from being exposed to any level of risk," says the research.

A psychologist quoted in the study adds: "Children's services do not have a concept of ongoing support to mitigate the effects of disability."

Neither do they have mechanisms or funds to mitigate this. They give the appearance of just wanting to get the child placed with other parents as soon as possible."

The Baring Foundation funded the research to find out how parents with learning difficulties could be supported to keep their children.

"Lots of parents we met had had children taken away in the past but were now being supported to keep their current child," said Beth Tarleton, research fellow at Bristol University. "All the workers in places we went said there were barriers but they were working to overcome them."

This included raising awareness about parents with learning difficulties and their support needs among professionals in generic services.

The research confirms the importance of preventative support. It says: "Such support can lessen concerns around child protection, reduce the stress on parents, boost self-confidence and enhance the ability to parent successfully."

The need for adult and children's services to work closely together is also highlighted.

Last year, a study of adults with learning difficulties in England found that 48 per cent of parents with learning difficulties were not looking after their own children.

Reviewed by Ruth Smith - www.baringfoundation.org.uk.

INTENSIVE SWIMMING 'TOP UPS' FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Primary school pupils who are unable swim by the age of 11 will be given additional swimming lessons under a new scheme launched by Schools Minister Jim Knight.

Swimming lessons are already compulsory for primary school children, leading to 83% of pupils able to swim competently by the age of 11. However, intensive swimming lessons will be introduced for children who are unable to swim the 25 metres required by the end of Key Stage 2.

The £5.5 million 'top up' scheme, run in partnership with the Amateur Swimming Association, will see pupils attend local pools every day for an intensive series of daily swimming lessons over two weeks during the school term.

The scheme will run over the next two years and is a key part of the Government's school sport strategy to raise participation in Physical Education and school sport.

Mr Knight said:

"Every child should learn to swim. It is an essential skill and is a fun way to exercise. We want to give as many pupils as possible confidence in the water, and the potential to enjoy a whole range of other watersports and activities."

The scheme builds on trials of intensive swimming lessons involving over 800 children in Bristol and County Durham last year which showed a marked increase in the numbers of children being able to swim. Overall 57% of the pupils who had previously not reached the standard achieved this by the end of the scheme.

School sport partnerships, where groups of schools work together to increase sports participation, are working with the Amateur Swimming Association to organise the top up lessons.

David Sparkes, Chief Executive of the Amateur Swimming Association said:

"The Amateur Swimming Association is committed to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn to swim. Trials have already proven that with extra lessons and smaller group numbers more children are able to meet the minimum 25 metre requirement, and with the support of our regional coordinators we will be able to help many more children reach that target.

"The Top-Ups scheme is an excellent example of the Amateur Swimming Association working in partnership with the Government to promote the benefits of activity and ensure that every child attains a minimum level of ability in the water."

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006

Overview

'Working Together to Safeguard Children is a lengthy document (well over 200 pages). It is intended to provide a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level - individually and jointly - draw up and agree upon their own ways of working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It replaces the 1999 version.

The supplementary guidance documents issued under that version, Safeguarding Children Involved in Prostitution (2000), and Safeguarding Children in Whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (2002) remain in force and now become supplements to this guidance.

It is addressed to practitioners and front-line managers who have particular responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and to senior and operational managers, in:

- Organisations that are responsible for commissioning or providing services to children, young people, and adults who are parents / carers
- Organisations that have a particular responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Part one of the document (chapters 1 to 8) is statutory guidance. Practitioners and agencies will have different responsibilities that apply to different areas of the guidance and should look in the preface for a fuller explanation of their statutory duties. Part two of the document (chapters 9 to 12) is non-statutory practice guidance.

Briefing in full

Part One – Statutory Guidance

Chapter 1: Introduction: Working Together To Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children and Families

Chapter 1 sets the context for the revised guidance by discussing the reasons for the changes in safeguarding policy and practice since 1999. The statutory inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié (2003), and the first joint Chief Inspectors' report on safeguarding children (2002) highlighted the lack of priority status given to safeguarding. The Government response to these findings included the Green Paper *Every Child Matters*, and the provisions in the Children Act 2004. Three of the most important in this context are:

- the creation of children's trusts under the duty to co-operate
- the setting up of Local Safeguarding Children Boards
- the duty on all agencies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

A shared responsibility and the need for effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise are required if children are to be protected from harm and their welfare promoted. In order to achieve this joint working there have to be constructive relationships between individual practitioners, promoted and supported by: the commitment of senior managers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and clear lines of accountability.

Chapter 2: Roles and Responsibilities

Chapter 2 explains the roles, responsibilities and duties of the different people and organisations that both work directly with and whose work affects children and young people. It states that all organisations that provide services or work with children and young people should:

- have senior managers that are committed to children's and young people's well-being and safety
- be clear about people's responsibilities to safeguard and promote children's and young people's welfare
- have effective recruitment and human resources procedures including checking all new staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people

- have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- make sure staff get training that helps them do their job well
- have procedures about how to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people
- have agreements about working with other organisations

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and section 175 of the Education Act 2002 place duties on organisations and individuals to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority, working in partnership with other public organisations, the voluntary sector and children and young people, parents and carers and the wider community. A key objective for local authorities is to ensure children are protected from harm. Other functions in local authorities that play an important role in safeguarding are: housing: sport: culture and leisure services: youth services.

Health professionals and organisations have a key role to play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the general principles they should apply are:

- aim to ensure all affected children receive appropriate and timely therapeutic and preventative interventions
- those professionals who work directly with children should ensure that safeguarding and promoting their welfare forms an integral part of all stages of care they offer
- those professionals who come into contact with children, parents and carers in the course of their work also need to be aware of their safeguarding responsibilities
- ensure that all health professionals can recognise risk factors and contribute to reviews, enquiries and child protection plans, as well as planning support for children and providing ongoing promotional and preventative support through proactive work.

Standard 5 of the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services sets the standards for health and social care agencies' work to prevent children suffering harm and to promote their welfare.

The police recognise the fundamental importance of inter-agency working in combating child abuse, as illustrated by well-established arrangements for joint training involving police and social work colleagues. All forces have child abuse investigation units (CAIU) and whilst they will normally take responsibility for investigating such cases, safeguarding children is a fundamental part of the duties of all police officers. The police are committed to sharing information and intelligence with other organisations and should be notified as soon as possible where a criminal offence has been, or is suspected of, being committed.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) should have in place a protocol agreed between the local authority and the police, to guide both organisations in deciding how child protection enquiries should be conducted, and circumstances in which joint enquiries are appropriate.

Probation services supervise offenders with the aim of reducing re-offending and protecting the public. By working with offenders who are parents/carers, offender managers can safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Probation areas will also supervise 16 and 17 year olds on Community Punishment; second staff to Youth Offending Teams; provide a service to child victims of serious sexual or violent offences. Offender Managers should also ensure there is clarity and communication between risk management processes.

Governors/ Directors of all prison establishments must have in place arrangements that protect the public from prisoners in their care. All prisoners who have been identified as presenting a risk to children will not be allowed contact with them unless a favourable risk assessment has been undertaken by the police, probation, prison and social care services. Governors/Directors of women's establishments with Mother and Baby Units need to ensure that staff working on duty are prioritised for child protection training.

Governors/ Directors of Juvenile Young Offenders Institutions are required to have regard to the policies, agreed by the Prison Service and the Youth Justice Board, for safeguarding and promoting

the welfare of children held in custody.

Secure training centres (STCs) house vulnerable, sentenced and remanded juveniles aged between 12 and 17. Each STC has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in its custody. Youth offending teams (YOTs) are responsible for the supervision of children and young people subject to pre court interventions and statutory court disposals. YOTs have a duty to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Schools (including independent and non-maintained schools) and Further Education institutions should give effect to their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils under the Education Act 2002. They should create and maintain a safe learning environment for children and young people; and identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.

Childminders and everyone working in day care services should know how to recognise and respond to the possible abuse and neglect of a child. All organisations providing day care must have a designated person who liaises with local child protection agencies and Ofsted on child protection issues.

In care and related proceedings under the Children Act 1989 the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)'s responsibility is to safeguard and promote the interests of individual children who are the subject of family proceedings by providing independent social work advice to the court.

Looking after under 18s in the Armed Forces comes under the MoD's comprehensive welfare arrangements which apply to all members of the Armed Forces. There is already a responsibility placed upon social care services to monitor the well-being of care leavers and those joining the Armed Forces have unrestricted access to local authority social services workers.

The voluntary sector is active in working to safeguard the children and young people with whom they work and play a key role in providing information and resources to the wider public about the needs of children.

Faith communities provide a wide range of activities for children and as such should have appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Chapter 3: Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)

Chapter 3 explains the role, functions, governance and operation of Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

The scope of the LSCB role falls into three categories: firstly, they will engage in activities that safeguard all children and aim to identify and prevent maltreatment, or impairment of health or development, and ensure that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care; secondly, they will lead and co-ordinate proactive work that aims to target particular groups; and thirdly, they will lead and co-ordinate arrangements for responsive work to protect children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, maltreatment.

The core functions of an LSCB are set out in regulations and are:

- Policies and procedures including on
- Action taken where there are concerns, including thresholds for intervention
- Training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children
- Recruitment and supervision of people who work with children
- Investigation of allegations concerning persons working with children
- Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered
- Co-operation with neighbouring children's services authorities (i.e. Local Authorities) and their Board partners

- Communicating and raising awareness
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Participating in planning and commissioning
- Reviewing the deaths of children
- Serious case reviews

Local authorities are responsible for establishing an LSCB in their area and ensuring that it is run effectively. LSCBs should have a clear and distinct identity within local children's trust governance arrangements. It is the responsibility of the local authority to appoint the Chair.

Membership of the Local Safeguarding Children Board will be made up of senior managers from different services and agencies in a local area including the independent and voluntary sector. In addition, the Board will receive input from experts, for example the designated nurse or doctor. To function effectively LSCBs need to be supported by their member organisations with adequate and reliable resources. The budget for each LSCB and the contribution made by each member organisation should be agreed locally.

LSCB work should be effectively planned and will ordinarily be part of the Children and Young People's Plan. The LSCBs' work to ensure the effectiveness of work by member organisations will be a peer review process based on self-evaluation, performance indicators, and joint audit.

Chapter 4: Inter-agency Training and Development

Chapter 4 is about training and development. Training for multi and interagency working means training which will equip people to work effectively with those from other agencies. Employers are responsible for ensuring their employees are confident and competent in carrying out their responsibilities and for ensuring employees are aware of how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns. They should also identify adequate resources and support for inter-agency training.

Local Authorities and their partners are responsible for ensuring that workforce strategies are developed in the local area, including making sure that the training opportunities to meet the needs of the workforce are identified and met by LSCBs. The LSCB should work within the workforce strategy to manage the identification of training needs; use the information to inform the planning and commissioning of training; and check and evaluate single- and inter-agency training.

All training in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children should create an ethos which: values working collaboratively; respects diversity; promotes equality; is child centred; and promotes the participation of children and families in the processes. It should also work within The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge (2005) for the Children's Workforce which sets out the six areas of expertise that everyone working with children, young people and families should be able to demonstrate.

Training and development for inter-agency work at the appropriate level should be targeted at practitioners in voluntary, statutory and independent agencies who:

- are in regular contact with children and young people
- work regularly with children and young people, and with adults who are parents or carers, and who may be asked to contribute to assessments of children in need
- have particular responsibility for safeguarding children.

Training and development is also relevant to operational managers and those with strategic responsibility for services.

Chapter 5: Managing Individual Cases

Chapter 5 provides guidance on what should happen if somebody has concerns about the welfare of a child (including those living away from home), and in particular concerns that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, significant harm. It also sets out the principles, which underpin work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The chapter is structured according to the four key processes that underpin work with children and families: assessment; planning; intervention; and reviewing as set out in the Integrated Children's System (2002). The Framework for The Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000) should be followed when undertaking assessments on children in need and their families.

The chapter sets out in detail the processes to be followed when safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. These include:

- responding to concerns about the welfare of a child and making a referral to a statutory organisation (children's social care, the Police or the NSPCC) that can take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- undertaking an initial assessment of the child's situation and deciding what to do next
- taking urgent action to protect the child from harm, if necessary; holding a strategy discussion where there are concerns that a child may be suffering significant harm, and where appropriate convening a child protection conference
- deciding whether a child is at continuing risk of significant harm and therefore should be the subject of a child protection plan, implementing the plan and reviewing it at regular intervals.

Effective supervision is important in promoting good standards of practice and supervisors should be available to practitioners as an important source of advice and expertise.

This chapter has included information about the welfare of unborn children and allegations of harm arising from underage sexual activity. There is also additional information about unsubstantiated and substantiated concerns, and administrative and staffing issues.

Chapter 6: Supplementary Guidance on Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Chapter 6 summarises the supplementary guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children. The following guidance is available:

- Department of Health, Home Office. *Safeguarding Children Involved in Prostitution* (2000)
- Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Skills, Welsh Assembly Government. *Safeguarding Children in whom illness is Fabricated or Induced* (2002)
- Home Office, Department of Health. *Complex Child Abuse Investigations: Inter - agency issues* (2002)
- Home Office Female Circumcision Act (1985). *Female Genital Mutilation Act* (2003). Home Office Circular 10/2004
- Association of Directors of Social Services, Department for Education and Skills, Department of Health, Home Office, Foreign And Commonwealth Office. *Young People and Vulnerable Adults Facing Forced Marriage* (2004). Practice Guidance for Social Workers
- Guidance on allegations of abuse made against a person who works with children, which can be found in Appendix 4 of the guidance document.

Chapter 7: Child Death Review Processes

Chapter 7 sets out the procedures to be followed when a child dies in the LSCB area covered by a Child Death Overview Panel. There are two inter-related processes for reviewing child deaths:

- A rapid response by a group of key professionals who come together for the purpose of enquiring into and evaluating each unexpected death of a child
- An overview of all child deaths in the area, undertaken by a panel.

Either of these processes can identify cases requiring a Serious Case Review. The functions to which chapter 7 relates will come into force on 1 April 2008, but can be carried out by any LSCB from 1 April 2006.

Chapter 8: Serious Case Reviews

Chapter 8 sets out the procedures LSCBs should follow when undertaking a serious case review. When a child dies, and abuse or neglect are known or suspected to be a factor in the death, the LSCB should always conduct a serious case review into the involvement with the child and family of organisations and professionals to consider whether there are any lessons to be learned about the ways in which they work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Additionally, LSCBs should always consider whether a serious case review should be conducted in other circumstances where a child has been harmed.

Following the serious case review an action plan should be drawn up and implemented.

Reviews are of little value unless lessons are learned from them. At least as much effort should be spent on acting upon recommendations as conducting the review.

Part Two – Non Statutory Practice Guidance

Chapter 9: Lessons from Research and Inspection

Chapter 9 summarises the impact of maltreatment on children's health and developmental progress, and sets out some of the key messages from research and inspection, which have informed this guidance.

The sustained maltreatment of children physically, emotionally, sexually or through neglect can have major long-term effects on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.

Professionals must take special care to help safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who may be living in particularly stressful circumstances. Some of these are:

- Families living in poverty
- Families where there is domestic violence
- Families where a parent has a mental illness
- Families where a parent is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Families where a parent has a learning disability
- Families that face racism and other forms of social isolation
- Families living in areas where there is with high crime, poor housing and a lot of unemployment.

Chapter 10: Implementing the Principles on Working with Children and their Families

Chapter 10 sets out in more detail specific aspects of working with children, young people and families. Family Group Conferences (FGCs) may be appropriate in a number of contexts where there is a plan or decision to be made. The family is the primary planning group in the process. Where there are plans to use FGCs in situations where there are concerns about possible harm to a child, they should be developed and implemented under the LSCB. FGCs should not replace or remove the need for child protection conferences.

Children and families may be supported through their involvement in safeguarding processes by advice and advocacy services, and they should always be informed of services, which exist locally and nationally. Local authorities have a responsibility to children and adults understand the processes that will be followed when there are concerns about the child.

Information should be available in the family's preferred language. Children from all cultures are subject to abuse and neglect and whilst professionals should be sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles they must be clear that child abuse can not be condoned for religious or cultural reasons.

Chapter 11: Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children who may be Particularly Vulnerable

Chapter 11 outlines the circumstances of children who may be particularly vulnerable. It gives advice to organisations and individuals on safeguarding in the context of:

- Children living away from home
- The abuse of disabled children
- Abuse by children and young people
- Bullying
- Children whose behaviour indicates a lack of parental control
- Race and racism
- Domestic violence
- Children of drug misusing parents
- Child abuse linked to belief in ‘possession’ or ‘witchcraft’, or in other ways related to spiritual or religious belief
- Child abuse and information communication technology (ICT)
- Children and families who go missing
- Children of families living in temporary accommodation
- Migrant children
- Child victims of trafficking
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).

Chapter 12: Managing Individuals who pose a risk of harm to children

The chapter provides practice guidance and information about a range of mechanisms that are available when managing people who have been identified as presenting a risk or potential risk of harm to children. The Children Act 1989 recognised that the identification and investigation of child abuse together with the protection and support of victims and their families requires multi-agency collaboration. As part of that protection, action has been taken, usually by the police and social services, to prosecute known offenders or control their access to vulnerable children. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced a number of new offences to deal with those who abuse and exploit children in this way.

The term ‘schedule one offender’ should no longer be used for anyone convicted of a crime against a child. The focus should be on whether the individual poses a “risk of harm to children”. Practitioners should use the new list of offences as a ‘trigger’ to further assessments. Where the offender is given a community sentence, Offender Managers will monitor their risk to others and liaise with partner agencies. Prison establishments will undertake a similar responsibility where the offender has been sentenced to a period of custody.

The Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) provide a national framework for the assessment and management of risks posed by serious and violent offenders. The responsible authorities need to ensure that strategies to address risk are identified and plans developed, implemented and reviewed on a regular basis. The MAPPA framework identifies three separate, but connected, levels at which risk are managed: ordinary risk management; local inter-agency risk management; and MAPPP – Multi Agency Public Protection Panels.

There are other processes and mechanisms for working with and monitoring people who may present a risk to children. For example: The Protection of Children Act (1999) gives the Secretary of State power to keep a list of people who are unsuitable to work with children in childcare positions. DfES List 99 is a confidential list of people who the Secretary of State has directed may not be employed by Local Authorities, schools and Further Education institutions as a teacher or in work involving regular contact with children under 18 years of age. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill, the legislation necessary to implement the Government’s response to Recommendation 19 of the Bichard Inquiry, to set up a vetting and barring scheme, was introduced to Parliament on 28th February 2006. People placed on the sex offender list are served with a notification that ensures the police are informed of their whereabouts in the community.

Safeguarding - making CRB checks mandatory

New regulations

On 12 May 2006, new regulations came into force which makes it mandatory to obtain enhanced CRB disclosures for all new appointments to the schools workforce and those who have been out of the workforce for more than three months. This change is part of an ongoing process by the Government to tighten current vetting and barring procedures to ensure that the system is as robust as possible.

The regulations apply to all maintained schools and include local authority appointed staff. The school workforce also includes anyone employed in a school including those employed to deliver extended services. Regulations have also been amended to ensure that these changes apply to staff working in Pupil Referral Units in addition to other settings. These changes will also ensure that supply-agency staff are subject to the same requirements as staff employed directly by a school. It is supply agencies' responsibility to request the checks/enhanced disclosures (or to make sure adequate ones are in place), and to inform the schools if checks for any of the staff they supply are still pending reply from the CRB. The Government is also in the process of formulating regulations that will make CRB checks mandatory for new teaching staff in further-education institutions.

However CRB checks are only part of the process. Heads, governing bodies and local authorities are expected to follow recruitment good-practice guidance, including undertaking mandatory List 99 checks and verifying references. This will ensure that employers make decisions about appointments in full knowledge of the facts of whether or not a potential employee has previously worked in the education sector and is suitable to take up a particular appointment.

Training package

The DfES and the National College of School Leadership, have developed the Safer Recruitment online training package to provide schools with useful strategies for :helping to identify unsuitable people; for reviewing and enhancing schools' recruitment and selection practices so that they include child-protection issues as an integral part of the process; emphasising the need for continuing awareness about possible abusers.

The full training package is available free to the head teacher and one nominated governor from every maintained school and non-maintained special school in England. It is also available free to two members of staff from every independent school and every local authority in England. It is expected that those undertaking the training will cascade key messages to colleagues back at their school or local authority.

A public version of the training with the core elements is also available from the NCSL website.

Guidance

Existing guidance is being updated to reflect the new changes and also to provide clarity where necessary. However, current guidance still applies, with the key exception that CRB checks are now mandatory.

www.ncsl.org.uk

BME RESEARCH PROJECT

Gillian Clarke is the BME Community Development Officer for PREC. She has been working in partnership with Cambridgeshire Ethnic Community Forum over the past seven months, undertaking a research project aimed at mapping the location and needs of Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) individuals/families/groups across rural Cambridgeshire.

A comprehensive assessment of the support needs of BME communities /individuals and their actual engagement with the voluntary & statutory sector has now taken place and a report of findings has been collated and produced.

To share and disseminate the report, a Conference was organised and took place on Friday 2nd June 2006 at Slepe Hall in Huntingdon. This showcased the report, with the main report issues such as ESOL classes, health, racial harassment being discussed in workshops, with future ideas for tackling assess/problems etc being the key theme.

If you would like a copy of the report or further information on the project please contact us.

ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE RACIAL HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION

Are you or do you know of someone who is seeking help and advice with regards to racial harassment or racial discrimination?

Telephone Advice is available on 01733 554630, Monday to Thursday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm and Fridays 9.00 am to 1.00 pm. Please contact us on the same number if you would rather make an appointment with one of our staff.

You can also call in to the office to see a member of staff or make an appointment at the same times as stated above.

If you prefer, you can write or e-mail us outlining the situation, by sending a brief summary of the incident(s), listing what has happened in date order.

We can also make referrals for higher level advice and support through our database of service providers.

If you are or know of someone who is a victim of racial harassment/discrimination, it is important that you:

- Get help/support at the earliest
- Report the incident(s) to the Police, the Open Out Partnership of which we are a member
- Keep detailed records of your treatment/incidents that have occurred

We need to fight racism together, don't face it alone.

NEW MEMBER OF PREC STAFF

Theresa Fyle is the new BME Capacity Development Worker for PREC who's post has been funded by **The National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund**. She started on Monday 5th June 2006 and is in the process of discovering Peterborough's services and getting used to the area, as she is originally from Hull, East Yorkshire and has moved to Peterborough to undertake this new opportunity.

Theresa is looking forward to meeting service providers and community groups in the area and of course the challenges the post will bring! If you would like to discuss the project or how your organisation can get involved please contact Theresa on 01733 554630 or theresa.prec@btconnect.com.

Low conviction rate for child sex attacks

Only one in 15 rapes reported by under-16s led to assailants being found guilty in court.

The Home Office revealed the figures to coincide with the launch of the NSPCC's Don't Hide It campaign. The campaign urges children to speak out against sexual abuse.

Between 2004 and 2005, 974 girls under 13 and a further 3,006 under 16 were raped in England and Wales. Among boys, 293 under 13 and 320 under 16 were raped.

The figures are the first of their kind because the Home Office only started to record the ages of rape victims following new age-related crimes created under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Chris Cloake, head of child protection awareness at the NSPCC, said the low conviction rate reflected the difficulty of getting children to give evidence of intimate sexual experiences in court.

He added that the rising number of calls about rape to Childline reflected the growing confidence of children to speak about it.

RESPECT

Home

Respect is the UK membership association for domestic violence perpetrator programmes and associated support services. Our key focus is on increasing the safety of those experiencing domestic violence through promoting effective interventions with perpetrators.

The Respect Phonenumber 0845 122 8609

The Respect Phonenumber 0845 122 8609 offers information and advice to domestic violence perpetrators, their (ex) partners, friends and family and to frontline workers who come into contact with perpetrators in their work.

Promoting best practice

Respect is currently developing accreditation for domestic violence perpetrator programmes and associated support services in the UK based on our principles and minimum standards document. All of our members sign up to these standards.

Member services

Respect produces a quarterly newsletter and fortnightly email updates for all members. We will be seeking funding to develop support, advice and information services for members.

Influencing public policy

Respect lobbies Government and other statutory agencies across the UK – nationally and locally – to influence public policy in relation to domestic violence perpetrator work.

Research Report on Local Authority use of secure children's homes

On 25 May 2006, the DfES issued the report of a qualitative study of the use by local authorities of secure children's homes for placements made under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 (known as welfare placements). The study was carried out to gauge the reasons behind the apparent fall in demand, since early 2005, for such placements, and the potential implications for the future of secure children's homes.

The report of the study can be accessed on the DfES website at external link

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/ContentImages/Misc/externallink.gif>
www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR749.pdf <<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR749.pdf>>

Guidance has been issued for the directors of adult social services that looks at their relationships with directors of children's services.

Are adult social services modelling themselves on children's social services?

Perhaps as the two volumes of statutory and best-practice guidance just published on the role of the director of adult social services (DASS) keep referring to the role of the new director of children's services (DCS). And one of the concerns expressed during the development of a more child-centred role was the growing division between adult and children's social care.

Are the roles the same for different age groups?

There are some broad similarities. But the issue is really one of parity in arrangements between the roles. Additionally, the Department of Health intends to introduce legislation requiring the appointment of a lead member for adult services to complement the existing lead member for children's services.

What will the DASS do? They will be responsible for local needs assessment, planning and commissioning services, workforce planning and managing cultural change, driving partnership working, promoting social inclusion and wellbeing, and delivering an integrated approach to supporting the adult community.

Where do families fit in?

For instance, the best-practice guidance refers to a strategic needs assessment that should take place in each area every three years or so, which should involve service users and their families. This is meant to help adult services to relate the level of need to the planning of services to cover a five- or 10-year period. The Government also proposes to rationalise current planning systems, and will issue guidance to that effect.

What about the workforce changes? The intentions around integration and working together ring a bell. The DASS is meant to work with the DCS to ensure there are sufficient staff in post who can demonstrate the necessary competencies to meet the social care needs of individuals and their families. There is also a real focus on safeguarding vulnerable adults.

What about transition from child to adult services?

The guidance states clearly that care leavers will be the responsibility of the DCS. It's less clear in relation to others groups like young people with disabilities, or young people caring for adults with disabilities and mental health needs. However, as part of its objective to deliver an integrated approach to supporting people, the DASS aims to ensure that all young people with long-term social care needs are assessed and in receipt of a service that meets their needs throughout their transition to becoming adults. And there's a further objective obliging all adult social services, and adult mental health services, to remain child protection focused.

What would this mean in practice?

Adult services staff need to know their responsibilities with respect to children. But sharing information is an issue. The best-practice guidance recommends establishing clear protocols between adult and children's services, and making sure that procedures for joint working are in place to ensure the needs of or risk to the child are considered when a social worker is assessing the needs of or providing a service to the parent.

FACT BOX

- About 149,000 children provide care for household members (2001 Census)
- 52 per cent of a sample of 6,178 young carers care for their mother or stepmother
- 50 per cent provide care for adults with physical health problems, and 29 per cent for mental health problems (Carers UK young carers' survey 2004)
- The guidance on the statutory chief officer post of the director of adult social services and the best-practice guidance on the role of the director of adult social services are available from the Department of Health at www.dh.gov.uk/Consultations/ResponsesToConsultations/fs/en.

Research report - Absconding from care

A report has highlighted reasons why looked-after children run away from residential and foster care and what young people think is needed.

Too many rules, physical restraint by staff and bullying are just some of the reasons why children run away from children's homes and foster placements, according to research published last week.

The Running Away report was carried out by the Commission for Social Care Inspection to find out what makes a young person abscond, what they do when they are missing, what dangers they face while on the run and what should happen when they get back.

Roger Morgan, children's rights director for England and author of the report, said: "We hope that the young people's views in this report will give the staff who run services some vital things to think about. Listening and talking to solve problems is essential."

Being bullied by other young people is a very common reason for running away. The children interviewed felt that "staff should be better at dealing with bullying". Another important message was that since a child may have run away because of a problem, they "should not be punished for absconding".

Once children take that decision to run away, the consequences can be very frightening. The young people interviewed in the report said they realised that by running away they were in danger of "get-ting kidnapped, killed, raped, hurt".

Some suggested "it would be better if there were safe hostels young people could go to" so they did not end up in danger on the streets. Other young people said there should be local centres with counsellors for young people to go to if they could not cope with where they were living.

Morgan said: "The messages from young people who have experience of running away is that they are less likely to do so if they have good staff who organise activities for them, deal well with bullying and are good at talking, listening and helping young people to sort out problems and cope with pressures."

FACT BOX

The report found that children run away for a number of reasons. These range from being separated from their brothers or sisters, being bullied or because of punishments deemed by the child to be unfair

Many children see being found by the police as dangerous because they might be harshly restrained or cuffed painfully

www.rights4me.org.uk/whatutoldus/default.htm

Message from the Editor

We are having a really busy time here at Peterborough Safeguarding Board. The new Working Together is out (see middle pages for a summary) so it is all systems go to develop new interagency procedures for Peterborough. We will be hoping to organise a launch/briefing later in the year. We are looking to place them on the web site, on CD and will have some hard copies. If you have not had the procedures in the past and want to ensure you receive them in 2006 please e-mail us. In addition we are undertaking 2 serious case reviews and a management review so we will need to organise some feedback again later in the year.

Hope you enjoy this 2nd newsletter. Thanks again to Charlotte Lucas for setting it up. Charlotte will be off on maternity leave at the end of September so we wish her well. We may have some news for you in the November edition. Any articles you want in next time please e mail me by 13 October judy.jones@peterborough.gov.uk

Child protection - Dentists sign up to children's agenda

Dentists should contact health visitors when children miss appointments, according to the first guidance to draw dentists into multi-agency child protection.

The move represents the first major initiative by dentists to join the children's agenda.

Dentists regularly treat children and are well placed to recognise and pass on information about facial injuries or unusual family behaviour. However, though a third of dentists suspect problems, only eight per cent follow them up, according to a recent survey by the Glasgow Dental School.

All dentists in England and Scotland will be sent the new guidance, which was drawn up by an expert working group and funded by the Department of Health.

Jenny Harris, a specialist in paediatric dentistry who led the development of the guidance, said it was triggered by Lord Laming's inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié, which criticised health professionals for missing numerous opportunities to protect her.

The guidance encourages the full dental team to recognise child protection problems, pass on information to professionals and to make their surgeries more child friendly. A form is included for dentists to fill out and pass on to health visitors when a child misses an appointment. Each practice is expected to appoint a child protection lead.

Professor Richard Welbury, professor of paediatric dentistry at Glasgow Dental School and a member of the expert group, said: "We're at the very beginning of becoming part of the multi-agency team. This document is just a starter. A lot of dentists have not received any child protection training as undergraduates or postgraduates."

However, Professor Chris Franklin, chair of the Committee of Postgraduate Dental Deans and Directors, said many dental teams, particularly busy single-handed practices, would be slow to put the guidelines into practice.

"How we reinforce this is key. We are going to do what we can, but it is hard to get some of the older practitioners to take on anything new," he said.

Practices were only asked to have a child protection policy by the General Dental Council from last year, when the first moves to oblige undergraduate schools to provide child protection training also began.

Franklin, also regional postgraduate dental dean for South Yorkshire and East Midlands, said he planned for the nine continuing professional development tutors in his region to put on courses to back up the guidance.

www.cpd.org.uk.



PSCB Contact Information

We would like to advise you that Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board have a new email account set up just for training purposes.

We would appreciate greatly if you would use the following email address for any training enquiries or application forms pscbtraining@peterborough.gov.uk

The old PSCB website www.peterborough-acpc.co.uk no longer exists. As from 1 May 2006 we have a webpage that is hosted under the Education and Learning section at Peterborough City Council. To make it nice and easy for members of the public to find out information we have also produced a direct link from the homepage of the council.

We have tested how 'easy' this page is to find by clicking in 'safeguarding board, Peterborough' into Google. We were very pleased to discover that it takes us straight to our new page!!

Click on www.peterborough.gov.uk to visit our site and find out about latest news and training courses. We would very much like to hear what **you** think about our web pages so email kay.mayor@peterborough.gov.uk with your feedback.

EMIE

EMIE is a co-operative venture which exists to facilitate information exchange between local authority education and children's services departments. If you have examples of good practice that you would like to share with other authorities, please send documents to emie@nfer.ac.uk or to the postal address above. If you are working in or with a local authority and would like to access EMIE services, such as EMIE publications and our database of local authority documents on our website, please use the Register option on the menu of our website homepage at: <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/emie>

Supporting parents, safeguarding children: meeting the needs of parents with children on the child protection register

CSCI, commission for Social Care Inspection
February 2006

Background to the project CSCI commissioned this report as they were concerned about the adverse impact of the increasing separation of children and adult services on support for families. There has also been an increase in the number of parents with serious problems of their own who have children on the child protection register, and the thresholds of eligibility for adult and children's health and social care services are also rising. The commission conducted the study to assess the extent to which problems undermining people's ability to parent their children are being recognised, either by adult or children's services, and addressed.

Aim The aim of the report was to identify steps that leaders in children's services can take to make sure that parents receive the help they need. The authors hoped to answer four questions:

- How parents' needs are being identified and addressed when planning and delivering services?
- Whether services meet parents' needs?
- What facilitates good intra- and inter-agency working in relation to supporting parents and what hinders this?
- What are the lessons from this study for policy, practice and future research?

Methodology In total, 12 councils were contacted about the study, and the eight that took part were Cumbria; Hounslow; Lambeth; Newcastle; Norfolk; North Yorkshire; South Gloucestershire; Thurrock. Walsall also supported the study by facilitating access to two group sessions with young people. Councils were asked to provide written information on child protection procedures and policies. The report is also based on: group discussion with young people; semi-structured face-to-face interviews with parents and telephone interviews with professionals. A small number of case files were studied. Key policy and practice documents were also analysed against a series of questions. The professional staff interviewed covered members of staff at senior, middle and front-line levels and included professionals from other organisations relating to child welfare.

Key findings

The findings of the survey are presented in relation to the four questions listed above and include the following points:

- a lack of evidence of a strategic approach to the identification of needs, resource allocation or service development
- information on parents' support needs is not routinely collated, and where it is it is not used systematically to inform the planning of services
- both young people and parents felt that many parents receive too little help, too late
- there is a need for: strategic leadership; good quality data about needs; and an understanding that all agencies have a contribution to make towards supporting parents facilitate effective inter- and intra-agency working.

Recommendations

These are divided into messages for policy, for Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Directors of Children's Services, and for practice and future research. They include the following:

- the 'family support' responsibilities of the new Directors of Adult Social Services should be reaffirmed
- Local Safeguarding Children Boards should be active in engaging with parents and young people as well as front-line practitioners in all partner agencies
- examples of good practice should highlight the need for a clear vision of the importance of supporting parents, and information systems which routinely identify parents' support needs in an area
- future research on the impact of current changes on the experience of

Availability

The full report can be downloaded from the CSCI website at <http://>

**Teenage parenthood and social exclusion: a multi-method study.
Summary report of findings**

Wiggins, M., A., Sawtell, M., Austerberry, H., Clemens, F. and Elbourne, D.; the Social Science Research Unit; the Institute of Education, University of London; the Medical Statistics Unit, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; Teenage Pregnancy Unit, DfES

December 2005

Background to the project

This study was carried out over two years from March 2002. The research is part of a programme commissioned by the Department of Health for the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy. It looks at the experience of teenage parenthood in the context of social exclusion. The term 'social exclusion' in the report refers not just to poverty, but to polarisation and inequality: for example, an individual or groups are denied the opportunity of full social participation. The opinions of the teenage parents themselves have also often been overlooked. The report aimed to look at the causes and consequences of teenage pregnancy, to identify factors predictive of positive or negative outcomes and to examine any differences in the experience of teenage motherhood at different time points.

Methodology

The research drew upon existing datasets which had been collected for two previous trials of support intervention for mothers. New data was also collected for the study. Questionnaires were sent to the women from the two previous studies who could be traced; some were also interviewed with their children and partners. Focus groups also took place with new samples recruited through local community contacts with 31 women, both teenage mothers and older women who had been teenage mothers. A new questionnaire was also developed to explore longer term outcomes for teenage versus older mothers, with three slightly different versions allowing for age-appropriate specific questions. 13 interviews with men who had been teenage fathers were also carried out. In total, the findings in the report are based on the experiences of 1262 individuals in five areas in England who were studied by researchers between 1986 and 2004.

Key findings

Findings include the following points:

- many teenage parents report positive experiences, and some felt that having a child as a teenager helped turn their lives around in a positive way
- most teenage mothers felt that any sex education they had received at home or school was inadequate
- there is a strong association between teenage pregnancy and dislike of school or educational failure
- for young mothers, social exclusion is more of a problem than teenage pregnancy itself
- important factors for teenage mothers who do well in the long term include support from their family, a positive relationship with their partner and developing a career or having a job they like.

Recommendations

A number of recommendations for future policy and research are made, including:

- initiatives which could be set up to target the culture of schooling to allow young people at risk of educational disaffection to feel more comfortable in school and which could enable them to develop educational and career expectations
- implementing general policies to tackle social exclusion in order to help reduce the adverse effects of teenage pregnancy
- ensuring any initiatives set up with the aim of reducing teenage pregnancy are properly evaluated so that reliable assessment can be made of their appropriateness and effectiveness.

Availability

This report can be found by accessing the EMIE website at www.nfer.ac.uk/emie and following the fast link to Research Briefings on the left hand side of the page. EMIE document number XR23513. 

Common Assessment Framework Implementation in Peterborough An Update:

Since the last article in October 2005 the Family Support Strategy Team has continued to work towards implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) across the city.

A Training for Trainers event took place on the 4th November 2005. This was provided by the DfES and facilitated by Helen Davies from Training, Advice and Consultancy (TAC), the training provider who developed the DfES training materials.

Representatives from a broad range of organisations within the city including Early Years; Connexions, District Hospital, Pupil Support, Community Safety, Young Lives, Maternity Unit, Cross Keys, School Nursing Service and the Youth Service, attended and it was felt to have been a very informative day.

This group has gone on to become the CAF Training Group for the city and together we have delivered a number of Awareness Raising Sessions and more detailed training on how to use the CAF. The group has also developed a leaflet explaining the Common Assessment Framework.

In addition to the training task group, there are 2 other groups; one looking at processes and the other group looking at whether the Common Assessment Framework is making a difference in practice.

The process group has developed a tool to help identify when a lead professional is required and is looking at how the CAF fits with more specialised assessments.

The group looking at the impact of the CAF has developed an evaluation tool to measure the impact of CAF.

The Common Assessment Framework is now taking on a far higher profile. It is part of the integrated process project and a cross departmental group has been established to drive forward this agenda. The CAF is now being written in to Service Level Agreements, and is underpinning the development of extended schools services and children's centres, with the expectation that all universal services working with children and young people in Peterborough will be using CAF by April 2007, a year ahead of the Government's deadline.

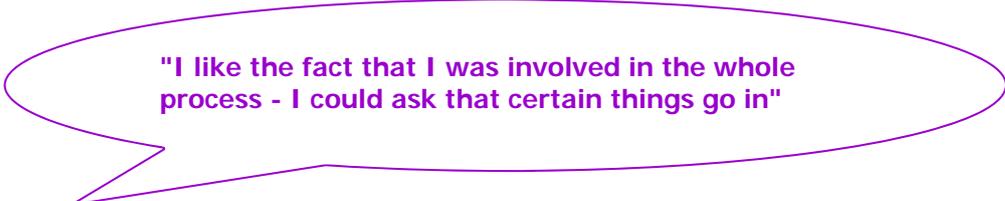
We are making significant progress with the CAF implementation but still have some way to go before it is fully embedded in everyone's practice:

At the 12th June 2006 194 CAF's had been requested by a spread of organisations and agencies, broken down as follows;

42% being requested by Health;
24% by the Voluntary Sector;
13% by Education

21% by other groups including Community Safety, Children's Centres; Youth Offending Service and Specialist Services.

Despite the difficulties and tensions involved in changing how we practice it is important that we remember that the Common Assessment Framework is not just a paper exercise, it is about making sure that children and young people get access to the universal services they are entitled to and to any support services they might need as early as possible and so I will give the last word to some young people:



"I like the fact that I was involved in the whole process - I could ask that certain things go in"

"It's cool that I can comment on what (Vikki) has put - if I don't agree I can write that I don't and put in what I want to say"

"It makes me feel like I am part of the process, it isn't something that is being done to me without my say so"

"I've had lots of forms filled out about me in the past - this is filled out with me"

For more information on the Common Assessment Framework contact Family Support Strategy Team on 01733 746038

A WRONG NOT A RIGHT: FURTHER MEASURES TO COMBAT FORCED MARRIAGE

A summary of responses to the consultation on the criminalisation of forced marriage was published today by the Government's Forced Marriage Unit (FMU), as part of its ongoing programme of work to tackle the issue. www.fco.gov.uk

The consultation document 'Forced Marriage: A Wrong Not a Right' was published in September 2005 and set out the potential advantages and disadvantages of creating a specific criminal offence relating to forced marriage. A total of 157 responses were received from organisations and individuals across the UK.

While there was no clear majority among respondents about whether or not a specific offence of forcing someone into marriage should be created, the majority felt that the disadvantages of creating new legislation would outweigh the advantages and potentially drive forced marriage underground.

Three recommendations for non-legislative activity will now be taken forward.

These are:

- increasing the level of training to professionals who work in this field and engaging more with affected communities;
- increasing the work done with statutory agencies in sharing best practice and implementing guidelines;
- ensuring that existing legislation is fully implemented including making better use of civil remedies and the family courts.

The possibility of developing new legislation will only be considered once there has been delivery in all three areas.

Home Office Minister the Rt. Hon Baroness Scotland QC said:

"Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights and a form of domestic violence which cannot be justified on religious or cultural grounds. This consultation has been very useful in stimulating debate and generating recommendations from those with expertise in the field.

"Before we consider the possibility of introducing specific legislation, we need to be convinced that it would definitely benefit the victims of forced marriage. Many respondents feared that the creation of a specific offence could isolate victims, prevent reconciliation and drive forced marriage further underground.

"In the future, we will continue to provide information and assistance both to potential victims and to concerned professionals who are confronted by this abuse."



A short-term counselling service for children and young people aged between 6 – 19 whose parents have separated or divorced or where there has been conflict. It is a Partnership project between Family Mediation, Relate and YMCA.

In autumn 2005 a grant to offer therapeutic support to children in Peterborough who had witnessed or experienced domestic violence was received . A combination of individual, sibling and group work is offered; in addition support for the resident parent can be given to assist them. The project runs in conjunction with Women's Aid Respectful Relationships Programme.

A Pilot group work programme using a specially developed course has taken place with 4 children. Feedback from the children, their parents and schools has been positive. Two further groups are planned to commence in September.



January – May 2006: 95 children have accessed Talktime, of those 40 have been affected by Domestic Violence and have been receiving individual support from our counsellors.

"I found the service excellent and for my family very helpful"

Therapeutic support is offered by qualified counsellors who use a range of techniques such as art, role-play, clay and play to help the children express their thoughts and feelings. All counsellors are CRB checked and have regular supervision.

"It is better to talk to someone about my problems than to keep them bottled"



For further information please do not hesitate to contact the Co-ordinator Sam Barnett on 01733 568281 during office hours on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.