

Newsletter










Issue 2

Autumn 2011

What does Solihull LSCB do?

Solihull LSCB has been in place since March 2006 and is the statutory multi-agency body responsible for ensuring all services work together to safeguard children and young people and that these arrangements are effective.

Our work includes:

-  Developing multi-agency procedures
-  Delivering multi-agency training
-  Conducting audits and analysing other performance management information
-  Reviewing every child death
-  Carrying out a Serious Case Review if abuse or neglect are a known or suspected factor in a child's death or other serious child care incident and it is considered that there are lessons for multi-agency working.
-  Communicating with the professional and wider community about how to keep children and young people safe.
-  Producing an annual report that identifies priority safeguarding areas to address in Solihull.

The LSCB is supported by a small team of staff and more information on our work, including many resources for those who work with children, young people and families as well as adults who are parents, can be found at www.solihull.gov.uk/staysafe



Colleagues

Welcome to the autumn edition of the LSCB Newsletter.

As ever, there is much to report on and keep abreast of and perhaps the best place to start is by reminding everyone that the LSCB's Annual Report is hitting the newsstands. The Report is important both for looking back over the last year and giving an account of the impact of the work of the Board, but also because it sets out the areas that will be the future focus for our collective attention.

Board members will already know that neglect, domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation are the three priorities that have been identified as requiring our close attention. Dissemination and discussion of the Annual Report provide important opportunities to spread awareness of these priorities more widely, and seek sign up and commitment to them – including commitment to action. So, please “do your bit” to ensure that all those who need to engage do so.

November is the month of the LSCB's Annual Conference and, in line with one of the three top priorities, this year we are focusing on neglect. If you have yet to sign up, then please do so as this promises to be a really stimulating event and will bring together children's and adults' professionals to ensure that learning is developed and shared across the workforce.

Although it has been a little quiet on the Munro front over the summer, it doesn't mean that there is nothing happening behind the scenes. And, as we await more details about the implementation action plan, it is timely to remind ourselves that a key theme running through the review and the final report is the need to understand the child's journey and reflect on the extent to which services are committed and geared up to seeking “customer feedback” and responding to it to ensure a child-centred system. One way of helping in the endeavour is to join the Practitioner Forum where you can share and learn in a professional, enabling environment.

And, finally, a plug for the NSPPC's “Ten pitfalls and how to avoid them; what research tells us” publication. The document itself is, of course, excellent – but it is the way that it brings together learning from research that reminds us that effective practice is made of many elements: expertise gained through experience certainly: personal and joint reflection undoubtedly; and empirical evidence tested and validated through research.

Best wishes,

Mark

Spotlight on Child Sexual Exploitation

Barnardo's have recently called child sexual exploitation the "single biggest threat facing children and young people in the UK today" and high profile cases as well as a report by Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) have highlighted the need for LSCB's to take action to ensure children and young people are safeguarded from child sexual exploitation.

Solihull LSCB has identified tackling child sexual exploitation as a priority area of business for 2011/12 and established a steering group to co-ordinate work across partner agencies to:-

- (i) Raise awareness to improve early identification of child sexual exploitation
- (ii) Improve statutory responses and the provision of services
- (iii) Improve the evidence base
- (iv) Improve prosecution procedures

Any child/young person is vulnerable to being targeted for the purposes of sexual exploitation and local data indicates that young women aged 14-15 are most at risk.

To support the children's workforce to identify children and young people at risk of harm via sexual exploitation, a lead professional has been identified to provide advice and guidance on child sexual exploitation.



Deborah Harvey took up the post on 1st September 2011 and is based in DART. Deborah will also support the collation of data regarding the extent and nature of child sexual exploitation as well as ensuring effective information sharing arrangements.

A revised set of **multi-agency procedures** will shortly be available on the LSCB website and provide a framework for professionals to identify and respond to concerns of sexual exploitation. This includes a risk assessment framework as well as signs and indicators.

Indicators include:-

- Going missing from home/school
- Preoccupation with mobile phone
- Frequenting places of concern
- Friendships with other young people who are being sexually exploited
- Returning after having been missing looking well care for,
- Possession of money and goods not accounted for,
- Having an older "boyfriend" and in some cases the "boyfriend" drives them about or picks them up from home as well as
- Signs of sexual activity/abuse including sexually transmitted infections, termination and pregnancy scares.

The LSCB will in the near future be hosting awareness raising training sessions as well as a training course aimed at those who work with children and young people at risk of harm via sexual exploitation. Dates will be added to the **LSCB training calendar**.

All training sessions will enable delegates to become familiar with the updated LSCB procedures on child sexual exploitation.

If you have any concerns or would welcome the opportunity to explore concerns please make contact with **Deborah** on 0121 788 4333.

It is important to remember that due to the impact of grooming and the nature of the tactics employed by perpetrators, victims may not readily acknowledge what may be an exploitative and abusive situation.

Findings of pilot of new model for ‘learning lessons’

In the last newsletter, we reported that we had been working with Social Care Institute of Excellence to pilot the “systems model” of Case Reviews.

A report was presented to the July 2011 LSCB and four key challenges were identified for consideration by the LSCB. These are:

- (i) How to respond to the cumulative impact of neglect in an incident focused child protection system?
- (ii) How to ensure parental co-operation as a means to an end as opposed to an end in itself?
- (iii) How to adequately assess family and friends who provide alternative care; especially given the legal and policy framework that promotes children and young people being placed with family members?
- (iv) How to ensure multi-agency ownership and implementation of a child’s plan?

Practitioners and teams may wish to reflect on these 4 questions and a member of the LSCB team is able to attend team meetings to provide further details about the learning identified during the review. The learning will also be embedded in LSCB training including the Level 3 courses Lessons Learnt from Serious Case Reviews.

If you would like to invite a member of the LSCB team to a team meeting please contact [Karen Perry](#) by email or on 0121 788 4325.

The Munro Review: Final Report

Professor Eileen Munro published her final report of the national review of the child protection system in May 2011. The report’s main finding is that the child protection system has become over bureaucratic and focused on compliance resulting in a loss of focus on the child.

The report sets out four broad themes for reform designed to promote a child-centred system. The themes for reform are:-

- A system that values professional expertise
- Sharing responsibility for the provision of early help
- Developing social work expertise
- Clarifying accountabilities and creating a ‘learning system’

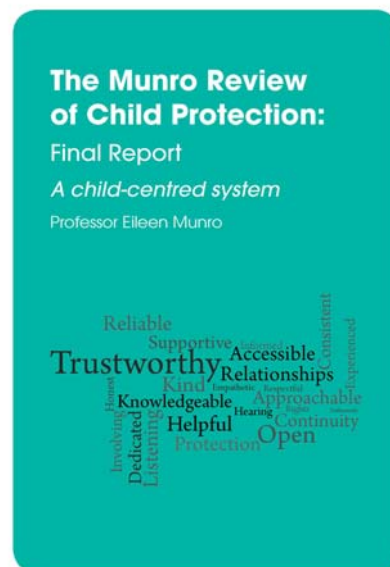
In July 2011, the government published it’s response to the Munro Review and the action that will be taken against the four themes set out above.

What can we expect?

The statutory guidance Working Together 2010, will be revised by July 2012; with interim amendments by December 2011. The aim of the revision will be to promote greater professional judgement.

To further support the exercise of greater professional judgement, the statutory timescales for the completion of initial and core assessments will be removed as will the distinction between initial and core assessments. Instead, statutory guidance will set out the principles of child-centred assessments.

There will be a shift away from performance targets towards performance information and a revised inspection framework that will focus on the experiences of children, young people and families who receive child protection services as well as a greater focus on measuring the impact of service provision.



Each Local Authority will appoint a Principal Social Worker who will report the views and experiences of the frontline to all levels of management and the government will also appoint a Chief Social Worker in late 2012.

The LSCB remit will be extended to cover the effectiveness of early help services and the LSCB Annual Report, will in the future, be presented to the Local Authority Chief Executive Officer and Leader of the Council.

The government has agreed to adopt the 'systems' methodology for serious case reviews and so changes to how serious case reviews are carried out can also be expected. Solihull LSCB is well placed to respond to such changes having piloted the 'systems' methodology for case reviews in conjunction with Social Care Institute of Excellence.

Spotlight on training



We are delighted to announce that Sally Andrews joined the LSCB team in July 2011 as the Training and Development Officer. Sally has extensive safeguarding knowledge as well as training experience and is enthusiastic about her new role and in particular supporting the children's workforce to be able to exercise greater professional judgement in their work.

Sally has responsibility for the co-ordination of LSCB training calendar. New courses will be added throughout the year and so you should regularly check the calendar for additions.

Fiona Meehan joined the LSCB team in September 2011 to replace Christine Stait as the LSCB Training Administrator. Fiona acts as the point of contact for anybody who has a query or wishes to book a place on a LSCB course.

Fiona will also co-ordinate the LSCB Annual Conference which will be held on Monday 7th November at The Bridge in Shirley. The theme of the conference is neglect and Professor Jan Howarth, University of Sheffield will deliver a keynote speech as well as the NSPCC and Children's Society. Delegates will be able to choose from a variety of workshops aimed at both the children's and adults workforce.

Each agency will be allocated a number of places at no cost. To register your interest, please contact Fiona by [email](#) or 0121 788 4478

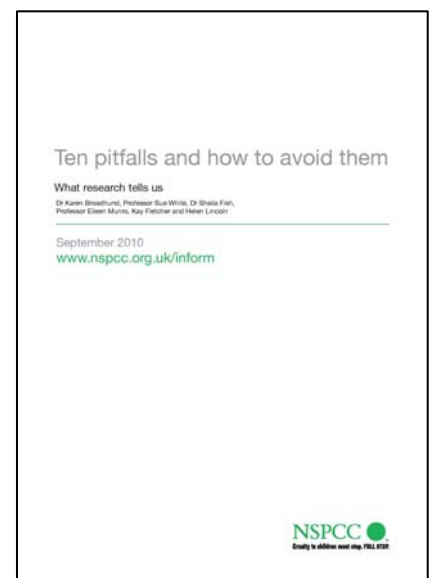
Lessons from Research

The NSPCC have produced a concise and accessible summary of research relevant to the initial stages of assessment of the needs of children and young people. The document is called "**Ten pitfalls and how to avoid them; What research tells us**". It has been written primarily for local authority practitioners, undertaking statutory initial assessments and making section 47 enquiries, but the material has broader relevance for the whole workforce.

For any practitioner, tasked to make robust, evidence-based judgements in child welfare, that pay due regard to needs and risks, **Ten pitfalls and how to avoid them** offers invaluable advice.

We know risk must be managed on each and every occasion through careful consideration of both case-specific and research evidence. This revised document offers practitioners an accessible guide to research evidence to support the second half of this equation. Research-informed practice provides a useful counter balance to intuitive or gut reasoning.

The guidance will be very useful for newly qualified practitioners, but will also serve as an aide-memoir for the more experienced.



Key messages are summarised for each pitfall followed by a list of critical questions for the reader, designed to promote critical thinking. Also included, is a set of critical questions for managers, designed to promote reflective as well as child-focused practice, and these could usefully be incorporated into supervision arrangements.

Click [here](#) to access document

Supporting parents/carers to prevent child sexual abuse: free training

Stop it Now!, the national organisation that aims to prevent child sexual abuse, is running an initiative called Parents Protect which provides free training to frontline practitioners (as well as to parents) to enable them to deliver workshops to parents about how to safeguard children from child sexual abuse.

Two types of training are available;-

- Frontline Practitioner Trainer (FPT) training – which will equip frontline staff to deliver Parents Protect workshops to parents themselves
- Practitioner “briefing sessions” – providing staff with sufficient information to cascade Parents Protect information to parents on a 1:1 basis, rather than in a training arena

For the Frontline Practitioner Trainer (FPT) training/briefing sessions at least 10 practitioners are required in order to make the event viable but up to 30 can be accommodated at any one time.

To be eligible to attend the training/briefing sessions you must already have experience of delivering workshops or training to groups of parents/adults, be able to incorporate Parents Protect training into your own working practice and be willing to ensure evaluation forms are completed by parents for all courses.

The FPT training is a full day whilst the briefing sessions are a half day event.

The LSCB will arrange FPT training/briefing sessions based on local demand and so please register your interest with [Fiona Meehan](#), LSCB Training Administrator and indicate if you wish to attend the FPT training or a briefing session. We will then be in touch to advise further once we have sufficient delegates to run a course.

Finally, if you work with parents, and can co-ordinate a group of 10 (or more) parents, Stop It Now! will deliver the Parents Project workshop direct to the group of parents. To access this resource, please contact :-

Liz Maslen, England National Manager, Stop It Now! Campaign, Lucy Faithfull Foundation, Bordesley Hall, The Holloway, Alvechurch, Birmingham, B48 7QA

Tel: 01527 406915
07540 690314

Email: LMaslen@stopitnow.org.uk

Introducing the ChildLine/NSPCC Schools Service

The NSPCC ChildLine Schools Service was established in January 2011 is provided free of charge to all primary schools in the UK. It gives seven to eleven year olds:

- A clear understanding of abuse in all its forms, including bullying
- Knowledge of how to protect themselves and
- An awareness of how to get help and support through ChildLine and other support networks

The ChildLine Schools Service will deliver an assembly followed by an interactive workshop. The materials have been carefully developed and have been reviewed by child development specialists who have deemed them to be appropriate for Year 5 and 6 school aged children. All presentations and messages will be delivered in a child friendly, sensitive, interactive and fun style. The NSPCC has delivered the programme at several primary schools in Birmingham & Solihull and the initial feedback has been positive.

By 2016, the ChildLine Schools service aims to visit each primary school in the UK once every 2 years. This will also be supported by work to reach children/young people outside mainstream education.

To find out more please contact:

Emma Thompson, Area-Co-ordinator: Birmingham, Solihull, Sandwell & Dudley
ChildLine Schools Service

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk/schoolsservice

Email: emma.thompson@nspcc.org.uk

Tel: 07834 498395

Updated procedures

The LSCB has recently added or updated a number of chapters of the **LSCB multi-agency procedures manual** including:

- Working with Uncooperative Families Procedures
- Safeguarding Training Strategy
- Initial Assessments Procedures
- Fabricated or Induced Illness Procedures
- Female Genital Mutilation Procedures
- Child Abuse and Technology Procedures
- Safeguarding Children and Young People who may have been Trafficked Procedures
- Supporting Children and Young People Vulnerable to Violent Extremism Procedures
- Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme
- Serious Case Review Procedures
- Child Death Process - Flowchart
- Local Contacts

The LSCB multi-agency procedures manual can be accessed via our **website** and provides the framework for practitioners and agencies to work together to safeguard children and young people.

Updated or new chapters are clearly identified, and in the event of any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Liz Murphy via **email** or 0121 788 4325

Dates for your diary

Practitioners Forum

The LSCB has set up a practitioner's forum to promote an effective multi-agency system to safeguard children and young people.

It is hoped the forum will allow practitioners to explore and improve multi-agency working in Solihull.

The forum is targeted at all practitioners who work with children and young people and families as well as those who work with adults who are parents/carers.

The date of the next forum is **20th October 2011 at 10am – 12.30pm** and it will be held at The Studio, Solihull Arts Complex.

On this date the forum will host a discussion on child sexual exploitation.

Please contact **Fiona Meehan** by email or call 0121 788 4478 if you wish to attend or for further information.

Contact Details
Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
Bluebell Centre
Chelmsley Wood B37 5TN
Tel: 0121 788 4325
Fax: 0121 788 4414
Email: lscb@solihull.gov.uk
Website: www.solihull.gov.uk/staysafe