

Newsletter

Welcome to the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board (WSSCB) Newsletter.

The aim of this newsletter is to provide information about safeguarding for people working with children and young people and their families in West Sussex.

The WSSCB is a multi-agency group of different organisations and agencies that work across West Sussex together as partners to ensure a united approach to looking out for the wellbeing of children in this county.

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A message from Vice-Chair & Interim Director of Children's Services, WSCC

Kevin Peers

Welcome to the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board Autumn Edition.

I am delighted to have been asked to introduce the second edition of the WSSCB newsletter. An important issue for the WSSCB is to continue to promote the profile of the Board and to look at how to improve communication about safeguarding all our children and young people in West Sussex both for professionals but also for our young people.

Since the publication of the last newsletter back in the summer, the Board has 'gone out on the road' promoting the purpose and business of the Board, signposting people to the WSSCB website (of which more can be read about in this edition) and communicating messages about new initiatives. If you have not done so already I would recommend that you sign up to the website.

The world of 'safeguarding' children continues to be an increasingly complex and challenge environment. As a Board we hope that this newsletter assists in keeping you abreast of new developments in the county.

The Board also welcome any feedback and suggestions you may have with regard to future items for the newsletter.

Latest News

Anti-Bullying Week

National Anti-Bullying Week will take place 17th-21st November 2014. This year's theme is 'Let's Stop Bullying For All'. The [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) are calling on the school community to take action to stop the bullying of ALL children and young people, including disabled children and those with special educational needs.

Annual Pan Sussex Conference

This year the Pan Sussex Conference will be held on 22nd January 2015. The day will focus on looking at issues that are risks for children & young people throughout the county and reflect on how we best work together to keep children safe. The relevant agencies have been contacted to register their interest. Keep your eye out for an update in our next issue!

Training Course Processes

The WSSCB have reviewed the booking process and evaluations for our training courses. Visit the [Training page](#) on our website to find out more.

WSSCB Road Shows

In September the WSSCB went on the road to promote awareness of who the Board are and what we do. We visited sites across the county in Worthing, Chichester, Horsham and Crawley attracting interest from professionals, Council Members, parents & carers and children & young people. It was encouraging to hear that the majority of people we spoke to were aware of the Board and were very impressed with the Board's 're-branding'. Most popular was the new [website](#) which keeps the Board visible and feedback was that people feel it is good that the Board 'is no longer hidden'. At each event some visitors came specifically to see the Road Show and were very impressed with the information that was on offer. As a result of this success, the number of subscribers to the website have increased by 200%.

We will be holding more road shows next spring, so keep an eye out for more details!

Latest News

WSSCB Development Day

The Board held a successful development day on 14 October. The day provided an opportunity to consider external influences and expectations on Local Safeguarding Children Boards and some time to reflect on how the West Sussex Board undertakes its business and responds to the many challenges the partnership faces.

The day was facilitated by an external facilitator, Sue Woolmore, an experienced trainer who also has experience of chairing LSCBs and was a founding Director of the National Association of Independent Chairs.

The programme for the day included consideration of the current national 'landscape' and guidance on the role of LSCBs; reflection on the 'journey so far' in West Sussex; a powerful visual presentation illustrating potential weaknesses in the way in which agencies work with children and families and aspects of effective leadership which an LSCB can offer.

Outcomes from the day include plans to:-

- Set out our non negotiable principles and values as a board
- Sharpen our meeting management with shorter reports, collective engagement, challenge to one another and constantly asking the question 'so what?'
- Get beneath the data and information we receive and try to understand better the story the data is telling us
- Focus on how, as an LSCB, we can aim to inspire transformation in local services to strengthen safeguarding in West Sussex

WSSCB Training

The WSSCB are committed to delivering multi-agency training and are striving to look at new ways to deliver more effective training. An extensive range of FREE multi-agency training opportunities are offered to local statutory and not-for profit organisations* so that practitioners and managers can be supported in understanding how to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children & young people they work with.

Full details of our [training programme](#) and [e-learning](#) courses can be found on our website and booked through the [Learning and Development Gateway](#). Spaces are limited so book early!

Latest courses

Mind the Gap: Child Protection and Mental Health

The aim of this course is to highlight the impact that parental mental ill-health may have on family life, and in particular parenting capacity, and to promote effective communication and joint working in the assessment of this impact in order to keep children safe.

Introduction to E-Safety

The aim of this workshop is to introduce staff from other agencies and from within the voluntary sector to the concept of e-safety, exploring some of the key principals and risks that are relevant to this area.

Understanding Thresholds

This multi-agency workshop will help to develop our common understanding of how we assess and determine levels of need and intervention for children and their families in West Sussex. The revised Thresholds Guidance and Continuum of Needs can be found on the [WSSCB website](#).

Neglect: Affective Assessment and Intervention

This course will look at the complexities of neglect and how effective multi-agency assessments can inform appropriate interventions. You will have the opportunity to consider the key factors involved when identifying and assessing families where children may be suffering from neglect.

*Although training is free, a non-attendance/late notice cancellation charge applies.

Multi-Agency Audits

MAFAG (Multi Agency File Audit Group)

MAFAG themed Audits are carried out 5 times a year and involve representatives from a broad range of agencies who come together to share data and information from their own files and records. MAFAG met in September 2014 to review a selection of Child Protection cases and to gauge the level of impact that "Signs of Safety" principles and tools are having in improving the way we capture, record and utilise the "Voice of the Child" (VOTC). This was a follow on audit to see what improvements had been made since the last VOTC audit in June 2013. More specific information about the outcome of this audit will be contained in our next newsletter but overall the group found that there was some good evidence to show that the Signs of Safety tools have already improved the way in which we listen to and record the feelings and wishes of children. The audit also showed that sometimes it can be difficult for members of staff to gain access to the child or to talk to the child on their own, often this may be due to obstruction from family members. If you have experienced this yourselves in your work with families, then please take a look at our guidance within Pan Sussex Procedures on [dealing with hostile or uncooperative parents](#).

Watch out in future newsletters for more detailed results of audits on the following themes; VOTC, Young people that self-harm and Neglect (of disabled children).

Child Protection Audits

Child Protection Audits are carried out every 2 months and review practices and records that are kept at the key stages of the Child Protection process; Referral, Strategy Discussion, S47 enquiries, Initial Child Protection Conference and RCPC. The audit in June 2014 of activities carried out in April 2014 showed that all of the cases reviewed were graded as either ADEQUATE or GOOD and 52% of these were graded as GOOD. In all cases the auditors judged that there had been an improved outcome for the child as a result of CP procedures followed.

There were 2 areas for improvement identified: (1) the way in which the Voice of the Child is obtained, recorded and utilised and secondly (not done effectively in 20% of cases) and (2) making sure that all the relevant agencies are represented in Strategy and RCPC discussions (10 out of 25 cases audited had not fully achieved this).

Article Written by: Maggie Pugh (WSSCB Quality Assurance Officer) September 2014

Child Death Overview Panel

Local Priority: Rapid Response

When a child dies and the death is unexpected, a protocol known as **Rapid Response** is activated. This protocol applies to all unexpected deaths of children under the age of 18 other than those who are babies that die under medical supervision having never left the hospital. The protocol provides general guidance about how to respond and what the responsibilities are for each agency involved.

The Rapid Response process is activated as soon as the child dies and will involve front line staff across a number of different agencies. To ensure that appropriate members of staff understand their responsibilities fully, a number of multi-agency training days are being delivered by experienced practitioners from Sussex Police and the NHS. The Board has agreed that agencies should be asked to encourage and support the attendance of relevant staff on this important training.

For more detailed information on what you should do when you are faced with an unexpected child death please visit Pan Sussex Procedures [Unexpected Child Death](#).

October Board Discussions



Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Person Team



Over the past months, the West Sussex Missing Person and Child Sex Exploitation team have been making a positive impact on finding missing or absent children, reducing the harm and preventing the risk that these children often find themselves.

Each year over 6000 people go missing or absent in West Sussex. 75% of these incidents refer to children, with the majority of these missing episodes coming from children in care, who present a real risk of harm to themselves. It is known that the being missing or absent is the highest risk factor to Child Sex Exploitation (CSE), so to reduce and prevent these episodes is integral to the teams agenda.

The team is dual located with a team on the coast, at Littlehampton Police Station and a team to the north, which is co located within the Multi Safeguarding Hub at County Hall North, Horsham. This co location provides partnership working at its optimum, with the majority of the safeguarding partnership elements being under one roof. The team work closely with Barnardos Children charity, who undertake 'Return Interviews' for those children who have been missing or absent, and provide 'one to one' mentoring, preventative and awareness raising advice over a series of individual sessions. This has proved to be successful in raising CSE concerns, building relationship with those children at risk and providing intelligence to identify and locate possible perpetrators.

To date, this activity has been able to reduce the total number of missing and absent episodes by 17% (in comparison to the same period last year), provide consistency and intelligence when assessing the risk posed to each child, a quicker and smarter method of dealing with each incident, (which has seen the average length of time missing halved) and in summary, demonstrated one of the team objectives to reduce the harm to missing children. This is an early successful start of long journey which, if proved by the embedding of the partnership team will greatly support the elimination of any risk that may be posed to a child who goes missing.

Should anyone have information that may assist in any way, they are encouraged to contact the team on 101 ext 586352, or email ws.missingpersonteam@sussex.pnn.police.uk

Article Written by: Inspector Jon Brydon (Sussex Police) September 2014

October Board Discussions

Safeguarding West Sussex Voluntary and Community Sector Forum

“Supporting Voluntary and Community Groups in Keeping Children and Young People Safe”

This Forum currently comprises of a group of 19 Safeguarding Leads from a diverse range of voluntary and community organisations from across the county. It was relaunched in September 2011 initially with support from West Sussex Council for Voluntary Youth Services until that organisation closed early in 2013, and has since continued independently. It meets four times a year to share good practice and training, and to update knowledge from both within the sector as well as in the wider world of safeguarding. Recent topical presentations from guest speakers have included Shona McMinn - WSSCB, Ellie Evans - Elective Home Education, Louise Fox - Signs of Safety and Amanda Radley - Early Help Action Plan. Attendees at the most recent meeting were from organisations working with over 28000 children and young people in West Sussex who it is aimed are kept safer as a result of the resource of this specific safeguarding forum.

A key role of the forum is to link into the WSSCB, both to bring the voice of the sector to the board table and also to disseminate information, guidance, training and procedural updates back to the members. The chair and vice chair represent the forum at board level, with the forum also having a seat at the Executive Group and Learning and Development group. More recently the chair has also represented the forum on the Think Family Partnership Board.

The forum has a signposting function, not only for its members but for other organisations seeking information and guidance on safeguarding matters. Enquiries are pointed towards reputable organisations providing policy guidance and appropriate training for volunteers and staff, including Safe Network, Safety Net and WSSCB . With the purchase of a domain name, this function will be developed as an on line tool.

The forum members have recently been considering the future direction of the forum. As more and more work with children and young people is devolved or commissioned to the voluntary sector, the focus of the discussions has been how we positively respond to this particularly in the face of a lack of finance, time and capacity resources. The big issue is always to ensure that the work of the forum supports our members and others to make a difference in keeping children and young people safer.

Article Written by: Su Parrish (Voluntary and Community Sector Form Chair) September 2014

World Mental Health Day 10th October



Emotional Wellbeing Project



The Emotional Wellbeing Project aims to engage young people who present to their GP with emotional wellbeing issues that do not meet the criteria for Mental Health Services Clinical intervention. Within the FindItOut centres, we aim to engage and support young people (aged 13-18 years) with emerging mental health difficulties by providing early intervention for their long term mental health needs. We aim to deliver this targeted support to young people in a non-clinical environment and in a timely manner.

The key objectives are to:

- Improve the pathway for young People needing early help, with regard to their emotional well-being
- Improve identification of the needs of YP with emotional health and well-being need
- Improve the pathway for those YP needing urgent assessment and risk management
- Improve access to the correct service to meet their needs at the earliest sign of difficulties by providing tailored services which reduce vulnerability and provide positive outcomes.

Within this framework the FindItOut provision provides:

- An impartial high quality Information Advice and Guidance service to Young People aged 13-25 years, in a confidential, safe, young person-friendly multi-agency setting which is located in areas of high population and Need.
- A specialist Caseworker to work 1:1 with those more vulnerable and high risk young people to support their needs in resolving their emerging emotional wellbeing problems.
- Family work in partnership with Think Family Teams

Partnerships

The Emotional Wellbeing Project Service will work in partnership with GP's, Primary Mental Health Workers in CAMHS, Think Family and YMCA Dialogue (Counselling) to offer the best possible interventions to those young people in need of support.

In addition, in order for this service to optimise its success it is key that there are clear links with a range of other partners from both the voluntary and statutory sectors including; Local Authority Housing, voluntary sector, Social Care, Family Support, Targeted Group Work, Intensive Support, Youth Offending Service, Think Family and Family Intervention Project, Supported Housing, Health and Wellbeing Team Worthing Borough Council, Integrated Services CYPFF, SEN specialist support, OLAC social Care Teams, Schools, Job centres and Sussex Police.

Link to all centres: http://www.yourspacewestsussex.co.uk/advice_and_info/organisations-1/organisations/finditout_centres_formerly_kn.aspx

Article Written by: Julie Ivey (Team Manager, FindItOut Service and Lead for Emotional Wellbeing Provision) September 2014

National Serious Case Reviews

Summary of September 2014

Links to all 2014 Serious Case Reviews can be found on our [website](#).

Reading Local Safeguarding Children Board

Child E

Reading Local Safeguarding Children Board have published a review into serious non-accidental injuries caused to a baby boy.

Issues identified include:

- Pattern of non-reporting by foster parents, concerning minor injuries to children in their care
- Impact of foster father's ill health on family's capacity to care for Child E
- Insufficient integration between child health & social care services and adult health & fostering services

Learning identified includes:

- Need for active participation of health care professionals in assessment, review and care planning for looked after children
- The association between shortage of affordable fostering resources and increased risks to children

Lancashire Local Safeguarding Children Board

Child R

Lancashire Local Safeguarding Children Board have published a review into the death of a 16 year old girl from multiple stab wounds.

Risk factors identified include:

- Going missing from home
- Sexual relationships with peers her own age
- Sexually exploitative relationships with adult males
- Pre-occupation with fire
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Self-harm

Diocese of Chichester

CO1

The Diocese of Chichester has published a report into the systematic grooming and sexual abuse of a number of young children over a period of 29 years

Contributing factors include:

- Perceived power of position as Head of Steward
- Standing of family in the community
- Relationship with teachers at the School and individuals associated with the Cathedral
- Accommodation in Church as a property near the school

Potential obstacles to improving safeguarding for the Cathedral include:

- The closed nature of the Cathedral Community
- Insufficient understanding within the community of the nature and impact of the abuse
- Attitudes to sexual abuse and complex views of homosexuality

Oxfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board

Child H

Oxfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board have published a review of a serious incident involving a 21 month old boy, who was admitted to hospital in September 2013, after ingesting 40-50mls of opiate-based medication.

Issues identified include:

- Normalisation of mothers drug misuse and acceptance of dishonest and manipulative behaviour
- Widespread inward focus amongst agencies, leading to unjustified assumptions that other agencies or professionals were managing child protection concerns

Key Contacts

West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board Team

Jimmy Doyle

Independent Chair of the WSSCB

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Children's Access Point

cap@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

01403 229 900

Emergency Out of Hours

5pm-8am weekdays

cap@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk subject marked
ALERT FOR EDT

0330 222 6664

Sussex Police Missing Person Unit

101 Ext. 586352 or 586461

ws.missingpersonteam@sussex.pnn.police.uk

If your organisation would like to contribute to future issues please contact
WSSCB at lscb@westsussex.gov.uk