

Tri-borough Local Safeguarding Children Board Newsletter

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(Please click on the links for more information)

Welcome from LSCB Chair

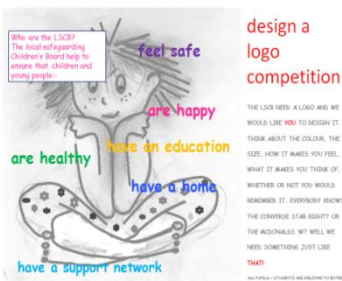


This is the first newsletter from the LSCB for the three boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster. The LSCB is keen to tell you about some of our more recent work together and we hope that you will share this with colleagues, the public and children, families and carers. The newsletter is aimed at those who work with children and young people but we want knowledge about the LSCB to reach others who are involved, as we think that 'safeguarding children is everybody's business'.

The LSCB brings together those who have statutory responsibilities for children and others whose work promotes their welfare and education. Some children and their families will be receiving early help, others will have a child protection plan and others will be looked after children.

The LSCB meets four times a year but, in addition, we have a number of sub-groups of the Board and a partnership group in each borough, as well as some 'task and finish' groups working to bring about improvements in how we provide services together. This newsletter tells you about some of that work and we hope you will want out find out more about what we do and get involved at a local level.

Our business manager is Tim Deacon (Tim.Deacon@lbhf.gov.uk)



Design an LSCB logo competition

Children in schools in the 3 boroughs will be asked to design our LSCB logo.

LSCB Development officers - [click on the link](#)



Prior to the merger of the 3 individual LSCBs, each borough completed a self audit which identified 'Safeguarding across Faith and Cultures' as a high priority that required development. As a result, one of the first short-life working subgroups developed by the Tri-borough LSCB was aimed at reviewing the key issues relating to the community and looking at how these could be addressed.

Tri Borough Safeguarding in Schools and Education Officer



Hilary Shaw, delivers a variety of training sessions, including general training for school staff, Designated Teachers and Governors.

Training - [click on the link](#)

Learning and Development - Carline Benoit is now in post as a New LSCB Multi-agency trainer. She is currently working on the e learning and also a training strategy as a preparation for OFSTED.

Welfare Reforms - [click on the link](#)



The benefit cap was announced in the Spending Review 2010.

The Government will "cap household benefit payments from 2013... so that no workless family can receive more in welfare than median after tax earnings for working households."

KEY MESSAGES FROM THE REVIEW SUB GROUP OF THE LSCB



The LSCB case review sub group has reflected on the local case reviews conducted over the year and national lessons and has summarised the key findings in the following 5 key messages - [see the link for more details](#)



Update from self harm and suicide sub group - There was wide representation from the LSCB partner national policies and best practice on prevention of suicide and self harm, data on local need, and reviewed what was available in the Tri-Borough in line with these. Where there were gaps identified, multi-agency solutions were proposed. A report will be available soon.

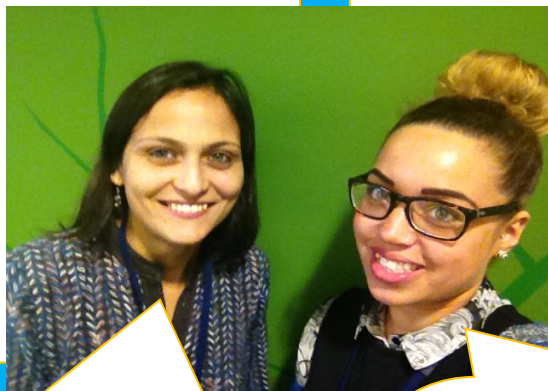
Update from a Teenage conference - [see below](#)

LSCB

For any more information on the key messages, please contact Iwona Puszczewicz-Moreno@lbhf.gv.uk

Community Development

Prior to the merger of the 3 individual LSCBs, each borough completed a self audit which identified 'Safeguarding across Faith and Cultures' as a high priority that required development. As a result, one of the first short-life working subgroups developed by the Tri-borough LSCB, was aimed at reviewing the key issues relating to the community and looking at how these could be addressed.



The recommendation of this sub-group was to develop a 'Community Development' post. On further evaluation, it was felt that this post should be divided into two; one that would look at building stronger relationships with the voluntary sector and faith groups and the other that would focus on engaging children and the youth.

Hello!

I am Shruti Clayton. I applied for the post of Safeguarding Community Development worker (for faith and voluntary sector) because I strongly believe that partnership working between the faith and voluntary sector and the LSCB will help us all improve safeguarding for the children and young people in our communities. I am keen to hear the stories and opinions of the faith and voluntary sector so that this can be shared with the LSCB when developing policies for safeguarding as well as training for front-line practitioners. In this economic climate of scarce resources for both the voluntary/faith sector as well as statutory services, I believe that pooling in our resources is the way forward to deliver more effective safeguarding services for children and young people. Over the next 8 months, I will be involved in various streams of work that will help the LSCB develop a better understanding of the community. Some of this work will include improving communication with faith and voluntary groups, establishing links with experts in the communities to help us better understand issues such as FGM, honour based violence, forced marriages, abuse linked with faith and culture and child trafficking and working with interpreters and front line practitioners to maximise the use of interpretation services. If you are a member of the community, faith group or voluntary organisation, please contact me on 07739315079 or at Shruti.Clayton@rbkc.gov.uk as I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss your views.

Hello

My name is Mickella Jenkins and I am the LSCB Community Development Worker for Children and Young People. This is a new role and arose when the LSCB realised they did not have a direct line of communication with children and young people living in Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster. So my job now is to make sure children and young people are regularly consulted, updated and generally get to have a say about the work of the board. I also hope to build better links with professionals from agencies such as the police, health, education, family services and more to find out what work they are doing to engage young people and how successful they have been so far.

At the moment I am working on a few different projects including the Hammersmith and Fulham Takeover Day, a safeguarding survey AND editing our reports so that young people can read them with ease. In the coming months I hope to find out what the important safeguarding issues are for children and young people across the three boroughs, taking this information forward to the LSCB board meetings and to the other agencies we work with.

If you have some ideas about how I could better engage with children and young people or would like to talk to me about keeping yourself and others safe then please contact me at mickella.jenkins@rbkc.gov.uk. I'd love to hear from you!!!

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Tri Borough Safeguarding and Child Protection Schools and Education post

The Tri Borough Safeguarding and Child Protection Schools and Education post is a new post established from April 2013 to enhance capacity in providing a strategic lead across schools and education Tri Borough including FE Colleges, schools in the private and independent sector and supplementary schools.

Training

- *Hilary Shaw, Tri Borough Safeguarding and Child Protection Schools and Education Officer, delivers a variety of training sessions, including general training for school staff, Designated Teachers and Governors. To discuss your specific training requirements, please contact Marissa Asli Bangura, Tri-Borough Safeguarding and Education – Liaison and Training Co-ordinator, on the contact details below.*
- Building on the successful Bi and Tri Borough training delivered in 2012/13, a Tri Borough Training Programme for schools is to be distributed before the end of September 2013. The aim of the schools training programme will be to continue to strengthen the promotion of safe organisations and complement the LSCB Tri Borough Interagency Training Programme and will include:
 - Annual training for Designated Teachers for Safeguarding and Child Protection including guidance on Safe Practice and Professional Conduct.
 - Specialist training for Special Schools.
 - E Safety and Cyber bullying.
 - Referral and management of allegations against staff and procedures to be followed including notification to the Local Authority Designated Officer.
 - Centrally delivered training for Designated Governors for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Key messages and learning for schools from Serious Case Reviews will continue to be incorporated and will include the learning from the Coventry Serious Case Review regarding Daniel Pelka which is expected to be published at some point in September.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Training:

- Hilary Shaw – Tri Borough Safeguarding and Child Protection Schools and Education Officer (Tel: 020 7598 4876, Mobile: 07817 365 519, Email: Hilary.shaw@rbkc.gov.uk)
- Marissa Asli – Tri-Borough Safeguarding and Education – Liaison and Training Co-ordinator (Tel: 020 7598 4886, Mobile: 07739 315 432, Email: Marissa.aslibangura@rbkc.gov.uk)

Welfare reform: benefit cap factsheet

August 2013

The benefit cap was announced in the Spending Review 2010.

The Government will “cap household benefit payments from 2013... so that no workless family can receive more in welfare than median after tax earnings for working households.”

Background

The cap applies to the combined income from the main out-of-work benefits, plus Housing Benefit, Child Benefit and Tax Credit. The cap will be:

£500 p/wk for couples and lone parents

£350 p/wk for single adults

Exemptions

The following households (claimant, partner and any children they are responsible for when working out their housing benefit) will be exempt from the cap:

Those entitled to:

- Working Tax Credit

Those in receipt of:

- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- The support component of ESA
- Industrial Injuries Benefit (and equivalent war disablement pensions and payments under the Armed Forces Compensation scheme)
- War widows and widowers pension

Where the benefits cap would not apply

Claimants will not be capped where someone in the household (claimant, partner or any children they are responsible for when working out their housing benefit):

- Obtains work and becomes entitled to Working Tax Credit;
- Receives one of the benefits that exempts recipients from the cap.

Benefits that count toward the cap

- Bereavement Allowance
- Carers Allowance
- Child Benefit
- Child Tax Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance (except where it is paid with the support component)
- Guardian's Allowance
- Housing Benefit whether paid directly to you or to your landlord (but not including Housing Benefit paid for Supported Exempt Accommodation)
- Incapacity Benefit
- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Maternity Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Widowed Parents Allowance
- Widowed Mother's Allowance
- Widow's Pensions, including the Age-Related component

KEY MESSAGES FROM THE REVIEW SUB GROUP OF THE LSCB

INTRODUCTION

The LSCB case review sub group has reflected on the local case reviews conducted over the year and national lessons and has summarised the key findings in the following 5 key messages.

1 SETTING THE RIGHT CULTURE – IN SCHOOLS AND OTHER AGENCIES

1.1 The culture in agencies – in the cases the review group looked at the issues concerned schools but could happen in any agency - is crucial to the effective response to safeguarding concerns; reports (national and local) had examples of cases where;

- Concerns were dismissed: Obvious concerns were dismissed without investigation – “that is just teacher x” – even when a series of concerns were raised by teachers with the Head – and as a result children were abused in the school for a further ten years.
- Concerns were recognised but not referred on: the school took concerns seriously but managed them directly and without sharing information with Children's services e.g. doing a home visit where a parent had expressed a serious concerns about social not education matter.

1.2 Dismissing concerns because we think we know that they could not be true – because the new information doesn't fit with our existing mindset and view of that person – this is a well recognised trap that any professional can fall into – so this lesson has wide applicability.

1.3 It is essential that safeguarding concerns are treated seriously and investigated fully and this is done through the usual multi agency channels rather than schools or any other agency managing these issues in isolation.

1.4 Experiences elsewhere suggest that the culture of the agency response is crucial to abuse not remaining hidden. The publicity given to recent cases in the BBC, in the church and the conviction of Michael Brewer at Chetham's Music School appear to fall into the same category.

- A trusted relationship between an adult and a child where the roles give significant power and influence to the adult
- Concerns being raised and/or known about but either dismissed, or not followed up or not followed up in the agreed way through multi agency channels as outlined in Working Together.
- The organisation taking some internal steps (moving the abuser) which do not stop the abuse

2 SELF HARM -

- 2.1 A significant number of young people took their own life through suicide and others put themselves at risk from “risky behaviour”.
- 2.2 There was no consistent theme and the sub group recommended that further work be done on this.
- 2.3 Issues that arise on the individual cases were:
 - Not resolving the care planning limbo that a looked after child felt, thereby leaving him without a stable “home” attachment with an adult; his continued unrealistic desire to return home (after 8 years in care) coupled with his mother’s death and a family pattern of suicide led him to commit suicide.
 - A review report noted a lack of professional awareness of the impact of suicide websites – and the potential to misinterpret “positive” signs in the young person; this issue is being picked up in the LSCB multi agency training
 - Schools providing extensive support (counselling and a home visit in a family crisis) to a learner and the family but not communicating with the local Social Care services. This issue will be taken to the tri borough Heads Executive meeting.
- 2.4 There are continuing reviews taking place on other cases that will provide other lessons. This includes the self harm arising from older children and/or care leavers putting themselves at risk.
- 2.5 In terms of death and serious injury the children who came to the attention of the sub group reflect the recent Ofsted report “Ages of Concern” which highlighted to equally serious but different vulnerabilities of children under one and over 14.

3 INFORMATION SHARING

- 3.1 One review highlighted the difficulty of information sharing when there is discontinuity of participants in the key child protection meetings: case conferences and core group meeting.

case conference membership

- 3.2 The review commented that: “there was a false assumption that despite the discontinuity of professionals attending review case conferences from the initial case conference that all those present were aware of the original reasons for the safeguarding concerns and therefore could make informed decision and recommendation about progress in the case. Much more needed to be done to ensure that professionals attending the review conference were well briefed.”

case conference minutes

- 3.3 In addition that case conference minutes which we might have relied on as the vehicle for passing on information were not sufficient for that purpose: “Conference Reports (Minutes) do not contain sufficient information to enable (changing) members of the

network to be adequately informed.”

professionals only meeting assist in some cases

- 3.4 One review raised the need for there to be space for professional only meeting why the group could share soft, uncertain information – questions, feelings impressions, suspicions; and that without that opportunity the absence of firm evidence meant that professional did not voice concerns in front of the mother. The review said “Lack of professionals meeting – the proper ambition of being transparent and open with parents risks the loss of the ability for professionals to share the soft information, the what if questions, and their reflections on the case – in a case where the family are seeking to deceive the professional network the opportunity to test of faint suspicions etc is crucial.”

4 WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND HIDING THE TRUTH

- 4.1 Two issues were raised re professionals working with parents who undermine the ability of the worker to get to the truth and work effectively. Usually the issue faced by social workers and other professionals working with the family relates to anger or threats or rejection. In this case the issues were the opposite:
- 4.2 “A ‘warm, cooperative parent’ has considerable power to disarm and distract professionals from what may really be happening in a case so that the protection of children is compromised”.
- 4.3 “Professionals working alone in direct work with chaotic families, with multiple children, restricts opportunities for meaningful discussion and challenge with parents, even when concerns remain high”.

5 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ISSUES

- 5.1 Domestic violence is a common theme in safeguarding work. One of the reviews raised questions about the need for different practices in this area given the potential for family members to be silenced or subject to further violence.
- 5.2 The review report commented “Case conferences with the perpetrator attending undermined information sharing - family members and professionals were inhibited from full information sharing because of the risk of triggering further violence”.
- 5.3 It also raised another issue regarding case conferences: “Current local policies of Police and MARAC, about disclosure of DV and risks to a victim in CP Conferences, have the effect of prioritising confidentiality over information sharing among”.
- 5.4 In one case the protection plan included the requirement that the perpetrator should not be in the home. The review questioned if this was realistic. “Work with the perpetrator was limited to asking them to leave i.e. the parents to separate – which was not a realistic option for the mother and therefore put here in the position of having to lie to the agencies. And made agencies less concerned than they should have been.”

Teenage Relationships Conference: Shaping Today, Shaping the Future.

Teenage Relationships: Shaping today shaping the future came about as the result of work done by the RBKC Domestic and Sexual Abuse Management Committee: Children and Health subgroup. The group had undertaken some work looking at the issue of Teenagers and Domestic abuse because of the change in the government definition of Domestic Abuse to include 16 and 17 year olds.

In the course of looking at this issue the group identified that there was very little service provision across the tri borough and the concerning factor that Teenagers normalise abuse in relationships. At the same time the charity Against Violence and Aggression (AVA) was writing up research that it had undertaken in the borough. So the idea of a conference to raise awareness was born to encourage the commissioning of services across the tri borough that would help teenagers both today and in their future relationships.

The conference was opened by Cllr Joanna Gardener, Cllr for Children and Families in RBKC. She reminded people that our own experiences of life strongly influence our expectations of current situations. So children who witness domestic abuse as children then expect it as normal in their own relationships. She illustrated this with a story of a friend of hers who had done exactly this. Highlighting the pressing issue of normalisation of abusive behaviour by teenagers.

Jean Daintith, Chair of the Tri Borough LSCB highlighted the fact that this age range were amongst some of the most vulnerable and hard to protect group. That domestic violence is a priority area for the LSCB and this conference was very timely.

Jo Sharpen for AVA then presented the commissioning guidance from their research into domestic abuse. Highlighting the challenge to commissioners not just to extend access to adult services but to recognise the different needs of teenagers and to engage them with service development. Teenagers communicate in different ways and may not feel safe or able to talk in the same way that adults do. Dealing with Domestic abuse is very different with a teenager.

Fozhia Raja from Women and Girls Network then told us about their Young Peoples Advocacy Service. She helpfully explained the impact of trauma on the teenage brain and how repeated exposure to negative situations affects the brains ability to respond. However it was encouraging that she also told us that young people have the capacity to change if taught what is normal and healthy in a relationship. She also talked us through the model they used to help empower women to recognise the impact and signs of abusive relationships and to respond appropriately.

Gjori Langeland informed us of the work of YUVA, a service that has been previously commissioned in part of the tri borough that seeks to help young people towards respectful and non-violent relationships. She challenged us that we as professionals don't often acknowledge teenage relationships as real relationships but they are real. YUVA, the group were informed work both with the young people who use aggression, victims and parents to address behaviour through 1-2-1 or group work.

Finally; Jude Long, who formerly worked for Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Forum told us of the implementation of a whole school approach model. Jude showed us how to weave teaching about healthy relationships across many aspects of the curriculum in order to help teenagers learn what is normal to expect. She showed us a very moving clip of a mother who had lost a young daughter to domestic abuse, it highlighted the need of educating young minds whilst they are still malleable as to what healthy relationships look like.

After a short break, the delegates watched the Can You See Me DVD (<http://www.canyouseeme.coop/>) which shows the reality of teenage domestic abuse. Delegates were asked to consider what the impact would have been on the health, education and wellbeing of the teenagers involved in the relationship. They then discussed the type of interventions that their organisations could take on, or should be brought in across the tri borough in order to help address this issue.