Welcome to the Autumn/Winter edition of the WSCB Newsletter.

In this issue we have included Bitesize news articles which you will find on pages 1 and 2, with a spotlight on key learning that has been gathered from a recent Serious Case Review, learning review and a local case review undertaken by WSCB Special Cases Sub-committee – see pages 3 - 5.

If you have any comments or suggestions about the newsletter, or articles that you would like to see included, please email wscb@warwickshire.gov.uk.

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**NEW – WSCB Safeguarding Website**

You will have hopefully seen the new Safeguarding Warwickshire website, a joint website for both Warwickshire Adults and Warwickshire Children Safeguarding Boards.

The website includes information for parents/carers, children and young people as well as for all professionals working with children and their families in Warwickshire.

The new website address is: www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk

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**Cyberbullying**

A new campaign has just been launched by Royal Foundation’s Cyberbullying Taskforce, supported by NSPCC, Google, Snapchat, Diana Awards and Facebook.

The campaign has been designed by young people for young people and it aims to help young people stop cyberbullying, know what steps they can take to stop it happening, and provide support to the person being bullied. It is aimed at 11 – 18 year old bystanders in online bullying situations, with a supporting campaign for parents. The campaign highlights three simple steps that bystanders can take if they witness bullying – **Stop, Speak, Support**.

Click ‘**Stop, Speak, Support**’ to view the campaign.

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**NEW – WSCB Inter-agency safeguarding procedures**

In November, WSCB published new **Inter-agency safeguarding procedures**.

Hosted by Tri.x, this is a joint project with Coventry Safeguarding Children Board which aims over time to increasingly align our core procedures and guidance, to simplify arrangements for professionals whose services are provided to children living in both Coventry and Warwickshire.

The new procedures can be accessed from the new website, from the home page select:

1. Safeguarding Children
2. I work with children & young people
3. Interagency safeguarding procedures

Please take the time to view the new procedures and layout.
Reminder – medical appointments for children

Record children as ‘was not brought’ instead of ‘did not attend’ for any medical appointments.

A short but powerful video clip, made in conjunction with NHS Nottingham City CCG and Nottingham City Council, is a reminder that children do not take themselves to appointments, they have to be taken by parent and carers.

The video clip encourages practitioners to consider the impact of using ‘did not attend’ on the child’s treatment and potential safeguarding risks – possible indicator of neglect.

Click ‘Was not brought’ to view the video clip.

MARAC – Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference

A reminder – anyone can make a MARAC referral!

MARAC’s are multi-agency meetings focusing on the safety of victims of domestic abuse identified as being at high risk. MARACs are attended by a core group of representatives from a range of statutory and voluntary sector agencies. Agencies include police, probation, children’s services, adult’s services, health, education, housing, substance misuse services, specialist domestic abuse services and the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor service

Referrals can be made, and are encouraged, by any agency which identifies a victim of domestic abuse as being high risk.

For further information, please access the Safer in Warwickshire Partnership Board website and Inter-agency procedures via WSCB Safeguarding website.

WSCB Annual Report

WSCB Annual Report for 2016-2017 has now been published which can be accessed via WSCB website.

The report includes information about the effectiveness of safeguarding in our area, progress and achievements that have been made during the year and any challenges that remain.

Early Help Single Assessments (former CAFs)

WSCB Audit Sub-Committee have identified that Early Help Single Assessments do not always address the needs of all siblings, particularly when they are based at different schools.

An effective Early Help Single Assessment is holistic; looking at the whole picture rather than each situation or child in isolation.

Parental consent is however required before contacting any other agencies, which include different schools.

To access Early Help Single Assessment training, click here to access WILMA and search for the following course:

SCC CS361 Early Help Single Assessment Training

DfE Consultation – Working Together to Safeguard Children - Revisions to statutory guidance

The DFE are seeking views on proposed significant changes to Working Together to Safeguard Children, the statutory guidance on what's expected of organisations, individual and jointly, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The revisions are being made to reflect the legislative changes introduced through Children and Social Work Act 2017 and new ‘child death review’ guidance. To read further details about the consultation and proposed changes, please click here.
NEW – Serious Case Review and Learning Review

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse/violence is a huge issue, with an estimated 6.5 million people over 16 years to have been a victim and many of these episodes are witnessed by children.* The impact upon children witnessing domestic abuse/violence cannot be underestimated.

WSCB have recently completed a Serious Case Review (SCR) and a separate Learning Review, both cases involved domestic abuse/violence. The learning that has been gathered mirrors key themes which are identified in national SCRs, across a number of years. There are 4 key learning messages that all professionals need to be aware of:

1. The ongoing safety of children in domestic violence relationships, even if the relationship has ended

A greater understanding is needed of coercive control, the ongoing nature and the impact that this has on women and children; their overall safety and well-being. Coercive control does not disappear even if the relationship has ended. For example, in cases of separation and issues relating to contact with the children.

Coercive control strips away any sense of self-worth, a pattern of behaviour which takes away a victim’s liberty and or freedom.** It is extremely difficult for people living with domestic abuse to be able to effect any change and we must be cautious when accepting assurances that circumstances have changed or that a violent partner will not present any risks to children.

We need to recognise the ongoing vulnerability of abused women as a result of coercive behaviour by their partners, ex-partners or other controlling adults and that change is hard to achieve; ongoing monitoring support is likely to be needed. Further advice and support can be accessed from the Safe in Warwickshire website, developed by the multi-agency Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board.

2. Professional curiosity of people in the household and other family relationships

Professionals should always be cautious with known or suspected domestic abuse cases. Be curious and ask questions – about a new partner, other family relationships or another male with mum. Have you seen someone during a health appointment, a visit at home or collecting the children from school or nursery?

3. Interagency sharing of information with GPs

It is really important that information is being shared with GPs, in particular when therapeutic services have been arranged by Children’s Services. This is to ensure all working with the children and family are kept informed and up to date.

4. Written agreements and their limitations

Written agreements are used as tool with parents to enhance their understanding of expectations, compliance and cooperation, perhaps as an informal plan for a case before early help, child in need or child protection plan is in place. They are also used in cases which are ‘out of hours’, until a full assessment is undertaken the next working day. They do not however ensure a child’s safety.

Written agreements can provide a false sense of security. In cases of domestic abuse, agreements tend to focus on the victim. If taking into account coercive control, victims will find it hard to comply with any of the specified agreed terms in the written agreement.
NEW – Serious Case Review and Learning Review

4. Written agreements and their limitations – continued

Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) recently reviewed the use of written agreements in cases where there is domestic abuse and concluded that the focus is usually on the victim and not the perpetrator, who is the source of the abuse. The recent SCR completed by Derbyshire LSCB into the death of Ayesha-Jayne Smith also highlighted issues in the use of written agreements.

In circumstances where a written working agreement may be suitable, it is essential that support and cooperation from all participants involved must be sought. This is particularly important for any adult providing safety for a child; that they understand their role and what they are protecting a child from. Without this collective agreement, a written agreement cannot be effective.

To access further research available on the use of written agreements:
Community Care
Ofsted and CQC

Training courses are available for professionals on Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control via WILMa.

VAW AG004 Understanding Domestic Violence and Abuse
VAW AG005 Domestic Abuse Risk Identification and Assessment
VAW AG006 Coercive Control
SCB CS159 Domestic Abuse and Child Protection: Exploring the links between Domestic Abuse and harm to children - dates to be agreed from March 2018 onwards

* Operation Encompass www.operationencompass.org/ ** EvanStark – Coercive Control

Local Case Review

Day trips, residential & educational visits

An independent local case review was recently commissioned by Warwickshire County Council, requested by WSCB Special Cases Sub-committee. Its purpose was to review the safeguarding practices and policies in relation to residential trips, and the selection of staff and volunteers in positions of trust accompanying the visits. Whilst the review focused on the practice of an individual agency, the valuable learning that was identified would apply to all organisations who are involved in organising day trips, residential and educational visits.

The learning from the case review highlighted the importance to ensure that policies and procedures are in place and that these are regularly reviewed. Policies that organisations should consider include:

✓ Transparent selection of staff and volunteers accompanying external visits
✓ Seniority, skills and experiences of accompanying staff and volunteers
✓ Safeguarding training of staff and volunteers accompanying external visits
✓ Pre-visit briefings that include safeguarding arrangements with the emphasis of safeguarding young people
✓ Whistleblowing procedures to report inappropriate adult behaviour - essential when young people are aware from home as they are in the standard provision of services
✓ Robust evaluation of practice and any concerns by Safeguarding leads after all visits
Learning and Improvement

Local Case Review

Organisations should also consider all the following as part of pre-visit briefings and risk assessments:

- Rules of taking photographs
- Use of mobile phones for children/young people (e.g. during the night)
- Details of specific staff responsibilities on the trip (e.g. no “down time”)
- Distribution of emergency telephone numbers
- What to do in the event of concerns regarding children, young people, staff and volunteers
- Bedroom supervision protocols
- First aid arrangements
- Relevant information about any vulnerable children and young people
- Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct, appropriate boundary keeping/use of language, etc.

WSCB Training Courses 2017 - 2018

WSCB are currently working towards finalising the multi-agency Safeguarding Training Programme from April 2018 onwards. Once agreed, we will advertise via the safeguarding website and courses will be available for booking using the learning platform, WILMA.

We have a limited number of courses available until April 2018 with places available for booking, for all multi-agencies working with children, young people and their families in Warwickshire:

**SCB CS166 Working Together to Achieve Effective Referrals (half day from 9.30am-1pm)**

31st January 2018 – Myton Park, Warwick
16th March 2018 – Kings House, Bedworth

**SCB CS164 Raising Awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation (half day from 9.30am-1pm)**

6th March 2018 – Myton Park, Warwick

**SCB CS165 Child Sexual Exploitation – Responsibilities, Reporting and Responding to CSE (full day)**

28th February 2018 – Pound Lane, Leamington Spa

**SCB CS170 Workshop Children at the heart of what we do – learning from serious case reviews (9.30am – 12.30pm)**

13th February 2018 – Saltisford Office Park, Warwick

If you are interested in requesting a place for any of the above courses, you will need to book using WILMA.

All the above training courses can be accessed on WILMA by either using the prefix code SCB or the full course title in the search bar.
WSCB Annual Conference – July 2017

Postcard Pledge Reminder

If you attended our annual conference earlier this year and were fortunate to ‘Hear the Voice’ of the young people from the Children in Care Council, in the closing speech you were asked to make a pledge about what you would do differently after the event. You recorded your pledge by completing a postcard and asked to return to WSCB after 3 months.

WSCB sent an email in October asking for feedback. We asked if you could complete the questions stated on the reverse of the postcard:

- Did you keep to your pledge? YES/NO
- If no, why?
- How has attending Hear My Voice made a difference to you?

Your feedback is really important about how attending made a difference to you and whether you kept to your pledge. Thank you to the people who have already sent us replies. We would encourage those who haven’t to make a response before Christmas as WSCB want to present all the comments and feedback to the members of Children in Care Council, who took immense courage standing up and sharing their personal experiences.

We would be grateful if you would be able to send your response to the following email address by the end of the year: wscb@warwickshire.gov.uk.

Private Fostering

SCC CS390 Private Fostering in Warwickshire eLearning

In conjunction with the Private Fostering team, WSCB wanted to raise awareness of an eLearning module providing an understanding into what Private Fostering is and what it is not that is now available for all multi-agencies.

Developed by Warwickshire County Council (WCC) for all staff, its aim is to help those working with children and families recognise when a child is in a private arrangement, the legal framework and safeguarding issues.

During a recent Performance Subcommittee, WSCB agreed with the Private Fostering team that this training can now be accessed by non WCC staff.

The eLearning module is available on WILMA, you will need to set up an account when you first access WILMA if you do not already have one. For any queries or further support, please email: wscb@warwickshire.gov.uk