

Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board

Newsletter

December 2014



We would like to wish all of our colleagues within the partnership a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Supporting Young People experiencing Domestic Abuse in partner

From 2nd January 2015 Portsmouth has a new service to support young people aged 13+ who are experiencing domestic abuse from their partners. The Association of Directors of Children's Services has committed to the appointment of Young People's Violent Advisers (YPVA) in each local authority. The scheme is in response to:

- The extension of the definition of domestic abuse to include young people aged 16 and 17 and change in the wording to capture coercive control
- The NSPCC have identified that 88% of young people are in some form of an intimate partner relationships, with 25% of girls experiencing physical partner violence, 11% of which is severe; 33% girls experience sexual partner violence and 75% of girls and 50% of boys reported some form of emotional partner abuse (NSPCC 2009)
- The increasing use of new technologies, with an increase in online grooming
- 67% of teenagers receiving services from adult IDVAs (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) experienced serious abuse e.g. stalking, rape, broken bones or strangulation. 26% self harmed and 22% were pregnant (Place of Greater Safety CAADA 2012)

Portsmouth has 2 trained YPVAs whose role will be to offer either direct support to young people, or to support the professional to identify the risks and develop a safety and support plan with young people. These are:

Alice Waters, social worker who will take referrals from Children's Social Care and

Vickie Sayers from the Early Intervention Project who will take referrals from the public and other professionals. Vickie can be contacted on eipadvocacy&support@portsmouthcc.gcsx.gov.uk or 023 9268 8472

More information is available from the Safer Portsmouth Partnership website

(www.saferportsmouth.org.uk)



Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board

Meet some of our partner colleagues ...

Grant Williams, CAFCASS

My role as Service Manager at Cafcass is to lead the Early Intervention Team (EIT) in Private Law Proceedings.

When separated parents or family members apply to the court for an order regarding the arrangements for a child or children, Cafcass receive a copy of that application along with a notice of the first hearing. The case is allocated to a practitioner in EIT to screen the case and analyse any risk indicators. Practitioners liaise with Children's Services and the Police to gather any information associated with safeguarding children and will attempt to speak with each party, via telephone, to discuss any concerns they have about the current or proposed future arrangements. Practitioner will then write to the Court prior to the first hearing with an analysis of the risks and to advise the Court about the most appropriate next steps.

The focus under the Child Arrangements Programme (CAP) is to promote the safe exercising of Parental Responsibility and therefore non-court resolution to the issues is a primary option where there are no significant concerns. Where there are concerns related to domestic abuse, drug and alcohol misuse, or adult mental health, for example, we will advise the Court about the most appropriate means of assessing these issues which may involve a Section 7 report from Cafcass or the Local Authority, if they are currently working with the family.

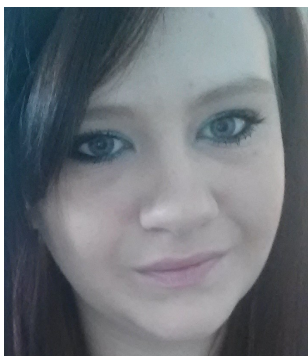
Cafcass had a National Ofsted Inspection in Spring 2014 where the organisation was graded 'Good' overall. Our targets are now to build on these strengths and adapt to the changes brought in with the introduction of the CAP.

I am leading the EIT to 'frontload' our intervention and to promote proceedings being concluded safely and quickly, which is in children's interests. I am the Cafcass representative on the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) where I can ensure that my staff are kept updated about the priorities of the PSCB, and initiatives, messages and training that needs to be cascaded to all practitioners. Thus ensuring we are working to the same high standards of safeguarding the board rightly demands.



Stephanie Nottage, Participation Apprentice, Portsmouth City Council

My name is Stephanie Nottage, I'm 22 years old and started my role as Participation apprentice for Portsmouth City Council in September 2014.



Part of my job includes working for the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board. My main role is going to be communicating the PSCB messages to children and young people. I'll do this by delivering sessions in schools around Portsmouth.

I am also helping to create the new young person's pages on the website for the PSCB. I'll be involved in the layout and ensuring the content is appropriate from a young person's perspective.

I'm enjoying my role and look forward to seeing what the New Year brings.

Successful partnership working—Neglect Matters

Neglect is the most common form of child abuse in Portsmouth and tackling it is a key priority for the PSCB. Over the last couple of months the PSCB has been finding out about the workforce's experience of tackling neglect and how we can improve the support in place for families.

Neglect Conference

In September the PSCB held a Neglect conference. Thank you to all those who attended and contributed to the day; it was a very successful and useful event.

The guest speaker Dr Harriet Ward from the Centre for Child and Family Research at Loughborough University talked through her work on 'Identifying Neglect & Understanding its Consequences', and there were additional talks by Dr Helen Coleman, Solent NHS Trust, and Dr Mandy Burton, CAMHS.

Throughout the event attendees were encouraged to identify challenges in addressing neglect and share ways forward. The responses from frontline practitioners speak volumes about their understanding of the lives of children living in neglectful circumstances in our city:

- Practitioners are confident that they know what neglect looks but there are barriers to identifying and addressing it
- Some of the barriers highlighted recurrent issues in working with parents and carers; some were around relationships between partner agencies
- People were confident that there are solutions to the barriers and were keen to share and learn from best practice

PSCB Contact Details

Web: www.portsmouthscb.org.uk

Email: pscb@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Phone: 02392 841540

Neglect Survey

We recently undertook a survey to find out how confident practitioners feel in identifying and responding to children who might be or are experiencing neglect.

Neglect Workshop

In November we ran a workshop which was attended by a range of practitioners from across the organisations working with children and families in Portsmouth.

The group of practitioners told us about how they work with Neglect and explored a range of tools that would help to identify children experiencing neglect and work out an appropriate response.

From their feedback, the PSCB are creating a neglect tool and related guidance for practitioners in Portsmouth. We aim to pilot the tool in April 2015.

A new and improved PSCB website is coming soon!

Work is underway to re-design our website. The aim is to have a one stop shop for practitioners, with resources available to a wide number of organisations, and to provide children, young people, parents and carers with access to key safeguarding information. We aim to go live by April 2015.

If you have any thoughts about, or would like to be involved in, identifying new content for the website, please get in touch.



Update from the Participation Team

In the New Year the Participation team and Stephanie, our new Participation Apprentice (see page 2), will be visiting a number of chosen schools to pilot some workshops aimed at bringing the work of the PSCB to children and young people and creating opportunities for them to have their say about how what Staying Safe means to them.

We have produced a children's and young people's version of the PSCB Annual Report for 2014 and will be giving this to the schools when we visit.

Initially we will be working with school councils or small groups selected by the school. We will be following an interactive workshop approach and will be asking young people for their ideas on who they would go to for help, how they think we can improve getting safety messages across to other young people, and also seeking their views on our website.

If you would like to help us with this pilot and visit pupils at your school please contact:

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OR

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Praise for the PSCB

The PSCB has been highlighted as an example of LSCBs doing 'fantastic work' by Edward Timpson MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families.

In his speech at the LSCB Chairs Annual Conference Edward Timpson outlined the findings of our recent Ofsted:

"In Portsmouth, for example, the inspectorate found a strong use of data across agencies to scrutinise frontline performance, effective handling of serious case reviews, and the development of a good strategy to tackle child sexual exploitation, in which the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board played a crucial role."

This is well-deserved praise for the robust and creative work of agencies and individuals across Portsmouth.

You can read the full report by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/edward-timpson-speaks-at-the-lscb-chairs-annual-conference>

