

Safeguarding children and young people: Early Years Spring 2022

Early Years forum

The Early Years Safeguarding Forum on 2 March was really well attended with almost 100 delegates. Thank you to all the practitioners who came to the event.

We had a very insightful SPA presentation by Deputy Manager Tom Jordan, who described the whole referral process and how, you, the practitioner, could be involved in meetings and what to expect.

We also heard a brilliant presentation about the impact of parental mental ill health on children by the Operational Team Lead at Newham Hospital, Laura O'Hanlon.



Next Safeguarding Forum: Dates for your diaries: on Zoom 22 June at 7pm – 9pm

New Guidance on Reporting Significant Events.

Ofsted has published amended guidance on significant events to notify Ofsted about. The revised guidance, which you can read [here](#) lists examples of significant events and changes to health that Early Years providers may be required to report to Ofsted and makes clear that:

- Ofsted need to be informed of significant events that are related to a setting's registered person and people connected to that registration, but they do not need notifications about managers or staff at early years settings as "they are checked by the registered providers themselves".
- Significant events are things that happen that are "likely to affect an individual's continued suitability to care for or be in regular contact with children".
- Ofsted only require information about any changes to health (of the setting's registered person or anyone connected to that registration) if it is "likely to affect the individual's suitability to care for, or be in regular contact with, children".

Understanding and influencing your setting's safeguarding culture



The concept of a safeguarding culture is difficult to grasp because it is intangible. A strong safeguarding culture is reinforced by every member of the setting's community constantly reinforcing the setting's shared beliefs, values and norms so that what is played out in behaviour reflects the beliefs values and norms of the setting.

A strong safeguarding culture can be measured by looking at the insert below. It demonstrates that culture is shaped by five interwoven elements, each of which Early Years leaders have the power to influence. This provides a useful formula to work out if your values and beliefs are connecting and feeding through to the reality of daily life. What is below the red line should (in a strong culture) mirror what's above the red line. In the example below, there is a weak culture.

Fundamental beliefs and assumptions – what do we think is true?

For example: "All children feel safe in setting"

Shared values – what do we think is right and wrong?

For example it is right to teach respect from an early age.

Norms – what is expected of us / how should we behave?

For example: "We do not tolerate any kind of abuse"

Patterns and behaviours – what is behaviour really like?

For example, inappropriate language is not challenged

Tangible evidence – what are the signs?

For example there are complaints about sexist or racist behaviour.

Source: Harvard School of Education, Shafer (2018)

Young Carers Action Day is Wednesday 16 March

The logo for Carers Trust, featuring the words "CARERS TRUST" in white capital letters on a blue rectangular background.

Think Family! Are any of your children regularly brought to your setting by an older sibling rather than the parent/carer? Do you know if any of your parent carers have additional needs such as physical disability or a hidden need such as mental ill health? Could there be Young Carers in the household? Young Carers Action Day, March 16, is a brilliant reason to work to identify any Young Carers in the families you work with.

Carers Trust resources are [here](#) Richmond [Carers Centre](#) info and resources for Action Day are [here](#). Kingston Carers Network website is [here](#)

Teaching Early Years about Consent and Respect

The Partnership is asking all agencies that work with children to do something to address emerging Harmful Sexual Behaviour in young children. Early Years have a role to play in teaching about consent and respect in an age appropriate way.

[Talk PANTS](#) for Early years: Share info with parents, Invite parents to info session Talk PANTS to children. Amnesty First Steps resource pack is [here](#).

In *First Steps* there are five themed lesson plans each focusing on relevant articles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights covering feelings, relationships and belonging, choices and voices, well-being and bodies. AfC Consent training [here](#)

Call it out, stamp it out

I have been asking Early Years practitioners to improve their recognition of racism and to do some early work around relationships and belonging – using the Amnesty

Resources [here](#).

KRSCP has two dates of training (6 April and 9 June) on Cultural Awareness Competency. You can book [here](#)



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Partnership message

Whilst regulations are lifting, children are still facing abuse and neglect and we want to urge all practitioners in every agency and sector to keep their **Eyes on the Child!** Please remember vulnerable pregnant women, infants and babies, children with disabilities and those 500 or so children in our boroughs who are not educated in school provision. Think who is missing? When children are not being seen face to face, we don't know how they are, we don't know who they are. And we don't hear their voice. **Please refer to the SPA (Single Point of Access 0208 547 5008 / out of hours 0208 770 5000)** as usual and escalate any situations where you are concerned about delay.

Domestic Abuse News

Physical violence is just one type of abuse – domestic abuse can be any behaviour which is used to harm, punish or frighten you, or make you feel bullied, controlled or intimidated. This includes mental, sexual, financial and emotional abuse and other harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), so called “honour” based violence and forced marriage.

National Updates

Domestic Abuse Victims in England and Wales to be given more time to report assaults. More information [here](#). Domestic abuse is often reported late relative to other crimes; so this will ensure victims have enough time to seek justice and that perpetrators answer for their actions.

Meanwhile, taking non-consensual photographs or video recordings of breastfeeding mothers will be made a specific offence punishable by up to two years in prison. It covers situations where the motive is to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm. Similar legislation introduced by the Government in 2019 that criminalised “upskirting” has led to more than 30 prosecutions since it became law.



Support for victims of domestic abuse

Richmond borough – Refuge (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) and Outreach Service) **020 8943 8188** Monday – Friday 9am-5pm

Kingston Borough - Domestic Abuse Hub, support and advocacy for survivors of DA: **0208 5476046** (Mon – Fri 9.30 – 5pm)

Concerned about a child, call the SPA: **0208 547 5008** (Mon – Fri 8am-5pm)

Talking with your pupils about Ukraine/Russia and other difficult topics

The situation in Ukraine could bring up tensions between children and families and require conversations that are tricky. There are few resources for Early Years specifically about this. For schools, AfC recommends the resources [here](#). You may find this useful. Save the Children has some good advice [here](#).

The Key has published useful resources [here](#) and the DfE Education Hub blog [here](#) is also useful.

For other difficult topics, [this](#) NSPCC resource is a useful guide for any kind of difficult conversation you may need to have.

What to expect in an Ofsted inspection

This [Vodcast](#) by the Foundation Years organisation, explains what to expect in an inspection under the new EYFS. It features two Early Years Ofsted Inspectors explaining what they look for when inspecting Early years.

The impact of parental mental ill health

The impact of parental mental ill health on young children was the topic of our recent Deep Dive learning work and culminated in a conference at the end of February.



[This](#) video, The Still Face Experiment, clearly demonstrates how children respond to detachment from a parent/carer. Mental ill health can impact on a carer's ability to respond appropriately to babies and children. It can leave them detached and unresponsive.

According to the Children Commissioner there are estimated to be over 2500 children under 5 years old in Kingston and Richmond living with Parental mental ill health. The recently published [Safeguarding Practice Review](#) about Baby D, demonstrates how mental ill health can be a significant safeguarding risk.

The Children Commissioner estimated vulnerability profiles for children under 5 in our two boroughs.

Vulnerability	Kingston	Richmond
Parental mental ill health	1208 (223 under 1 yr)	1306 (248 under Yr)
Domestic abuse	746 (138 under 1 yr old)	780 (148 under 1 yr old)
Drug & Alcohol dependency	437 (81 under 1 yr old)	434 (82 under 1)

The role of Early Years in safeguarding is so important – you are often the first professionals to come into contact with the family and are the eyes and ears on the child until they start school. It is so important to have professional curiosity in your role and not just think about the child but to consider the family context and ask yourself “*what is home life like for this child, who lives in the home, are they safe?*” The tragic death of Star Hobson was an example of vulnerabilities impacting on child safety. Star's mother was in a controlling relationship with a woman who may have had mental ill health. The first practitioner to alert Children's Social Care about concerns around Star was her childminder. The Safeguarding Practice review for Star will be published in May.

[This course](#) about father's perinatal mental health is being offered by AfC CPD on 17 March (3-5pm)

Do you have Young Carers in your setting?

If you know a child is in a caring role, perhaps an older sibling, please refer them to the local Young Carers groups for Kingston and Richmond. Caring responsibilities have a huge impact on young people and these groups can offer valuable support.

020 3031 2754 Kingston Young Carers Project

020 8867 2383 Richmond Young Carers Project



Young
Carers'
Project

Cruse Richmond Bereavement Support Service



Cruse has a strong, experienced group of volunteers, all having moved across to providing telephone and Zoom support, to new and existing clients. They can offer regular support to people within weeks of having registered with Cruse Richmond and are able to support families and children through bereavement. All volunteers undergo an extensive training programme and are experienced in providing emotional support to the bereaved - whenever and however that bereavement occurred. Leave a voicemail on **07495 777401** or email referrals@cruserichmonduponthames.org.uk. They will respond within 24 hours (not including weekends) to offer initial support and explain how to get regular telephone or Zoom support sessions with one of their volunteers.

Kingston Bereavement Service

Please contact us on 020 8547 1552 or email

info@kingstonbereavementservice.org.uk

For immediate help, you can call the CRUSE National Helpline on 0808 808 1677

LADO Service

If you have any concerns about an adult working with children you can contact the LADO service on 07774 332 675 or email:

LADO@achievingforchildren.org.uk

The LADO referral form is now online and can be accessed here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdYVca4qbvFJS71sD2PzYr8mhyot9GrOdzsHUUYOmJeM7uCKA/viewform>

When making a LADO referral remember that if there is a safeguarding concern for a child you will also need to make a SPA referral for the child.

Training opportunity: Disguised Compliance

AfC CPD is delivering [this](#) session

about disguised compliance on 22 April. Disguised compliance involves parents and carers appearing to co-operate with professionals in order to allay concerns and stop professional engagement (Reder et al, 1993).

Learning from serious case reviews have highlighted that there is a need for practitioners working with families to be able to recognise disguised compliance and to be aware of what actions to take. The session will take place online.