



Welcome to the 22nd edition of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) Information Update.

Please share this as widely as possible across your organisation. If you have any feedback, suggestions for improvement, or want to discuss anything else relating to the BSCP contact the Safeguarding Partnership Manager, Vince Grey at Vince.Grey@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

The BSCP should agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents.

Message from Safeguarding Partnership Manager, Vince Grey

Since our last newsletter the world has changed somewhat with the arrival of Covid 19 and as you would expect that has had an impact on the way we have been working. Whilst our frontline staff have been continuing to do tremendous work in challenging circumstances, there have been some positives in the way that they have been able to interact with children and young people. For example continuing contact through virtual means has appealed to some and they have been very interactive with the process.

My team have been working from home for the last few months and whilst that has created some difficulties in continuing to build the new team we have been able to really forge ahead with a range of activities. As you would expect we have been supporting the services that our colleagues have been undertaking to ensure that children and young people are cared for and supported, more so with schools remaining closed and avenues that would normally be open to them for socialising also closed.

All of the sub groups that we support have been reduced in their activity due to members having to perform front line duties but we have still continued to work with our serious case review sub group to ensure that we imbed any learning and development outcomes into everyday practice at the earliest opportunity. We have also been working behind the scenes to prepare for a new Children's Partnership website. This will be a joint venture with our Safeguarding Adults Board and hopefully it will be in place by mid to late summer. This is an exciting opportunity to refresh our approach to the way our website looks and works and provide information to professionals and public alike. We are also in the final stages of writing our three year business plan for the Safeguarding Children's Partnership which will make children and young people the centre of all the work we undertake.

It would seem with some of the changes that the Government is making with regards to the lockdown that there is drive towards trying to return to some form of normality. That said I would still urge you to remain alert and follow Government guidelines about remaining safe and well to ensure that our frontline staff in Buckinghamshire are able to continue to deliver the amazing service they have been providing.

Information For Sharing

Black Lives Matter

Please see below link to view a blog reflecting on racism and it's impact: -

<https://equaliteach.co.uk/black-voices-reflecting-on-racism/>

The NSPCC Library and Information Service has created a reading list showcasing resources from the library collection on child protection and race. Childline has updated its website with information to support children and young people coping with world news.

Access the resources: [Child protection and race](#)

Visit Childline: [Coping with world news](#)

Thames Valley Police – Online Child Sexual Abuse: Information for Parents/Carers and Young People

Do you know who your children are speaking to online?

During lockdown, many of us are turning online to stay in touch and this goes for children as well as adults. Sadly, some criminals are using these extraordinary circumstances as a way to exploit and target young people when they are online.

Thames Valley Police have seen an increase in reports of online sexual abuse involving children since movement restrictions were introduced and are urging parents to take this opportunity to have honest conversations about online safety with their children and to review privacy settings on the apps and social networks that they are using.

To support parents during COVID-19, the National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection division are producing fortnightly activity packs to help discuss staying safe online with your children. These age-appropriate resources, containing two 15-minute activities for each age group, can be found at www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Please see below links for further information: –

[Article for Parents and Carers](#)

[Article for Young People](#)

[App Information](#)

[Info for Home Schooling](#)

[Useful Info and Links](#)



Cont'd....Information For Sharing

Key Facts about calling 999 & pressing 55

1. A silent 999 call alone **will not automatically bring help.**
2. **Pressing 55 will not bring emergency services to your door** and does not allow the police to track your location - it informs us you have an emergency.
3. **Please listen in and engage with the police call handlers** - they will try in a number of ways to find out what's happening and where you are, even if you can't speak.
4. **A police response is guaranteed if we can identify who and/or where the caller is.** Police call handlers can request subscriber checks and can carry out background checks.
5. **If you can say only one thing, please say your location.**



Domestic abuse will NOT be tolerated! More info on www.thamesvalley.police.uk

Silent Solution

(calling 999 and pressing 55)

Silent Solution is a police system used to filter out large numbers of accidental or hoax 999 calls. **It also exists to help people who are unable to speak, but who genuinely need police**

assistance. You will hear an automated police message, which lasts for 20 seconds and begins with 'you are through to the police'. It will ask you to press 55 to be put through to police call management. The BT operator will remain on the line and listen. If you press 55, tap or make a noise, they will be notified and transfer the call to the police. If you don't do any of the above, the call will be terminated after 45 seconds.

Further information can be found at: – <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/silentsolution>

Current awareness for policy, practice and research (CASPAR)

Coronavirus: Gang-Activity and Child Exploitation

The National Youth Agency (NYA) has published a report on how gangs have adapted to the coronavirus pandemic by grooming new children and changing locations. Findings from the report, which looks at official data and insight from youth work practitioners in local areas, include: youth workers report that gangs in some areas are using lockdown as a 'recruitment drive' for young people with vulnerabilities, including through social media and cyber grooming; gangs are grooming vulnerable young people who are outdoors in unsafe environments, for example young people who may be outside the home due to domestic abuse or strained family relationships; and lack of youth workers during the pandemic has restricted opportunities for young people to exit gangs safely.

Read the news story: [Drug gangs on 'recruitment drive' during lockdown](#)

Coronavirus: Impact on Child Trafficking

Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT) UK has launched a campaign calling for the government to ensure that all child victims of trafficking are given stable futures in order to prevent the coronavirus crisis becoming a child protection crisis.

Read the press release:

[The impact of COVID-19 on victims of trafficking, now and beyond](#)

Principal Social Worker Brief

Safety Planning – Covid-19 Update

Children and their families are facing unprecedented times with the expectation that families will spend most of their time at home. For many of our children the opportunity to interact with their peers and receive services from partner agencies has been severely restricted. Inevitably the risk to children has increased and therefore safety planning is key to ensuring that risks are safely managed and the children and adults are all clear on the support that can be provided and the actions that must be taken to keep people safe.

A robust safety plan is a way of supporting children and families to increase their safety and to know where they can go for help. It can help plan in advance for the possibility of violence or abuse. The child, family and all relevant professionals need to be involved in agreeing and implementing the safety plan. The plan should be specific to each child and their circumstances and should be reviewed and updated if risks escalate/deescalate or if new risks are identified. It is important that the plan is written in a way so that the child and family understand its purpose.

The following can be included as part of a safety plan; safety planning should be used in all cases that feature domestic abuse, physical abuse, mental health and exploitation.

- Plan in advance how the child or adult might respond in different situations, including a crisis. For domestic abuse cases consider safe/code words, packing a bag and leaving it at a friend's home (including key documents and money if possible). Liaise with the police regarding the actions they can take such as alarms and markers on addresses. Women's Aid can assist victims with legal orders and injunctions.
- Explore the different options that are available to the family, are there neighbours/family members/ key professionals that children can safely speak to if they are suffering significant harm or have worries or concerns. For children that are receiving their education virtually, can a plan be agreed for them to have a safe adult they trust that they can alert if something is wrong? For children not attending school could we work with parents to include in the plan that the children attend school for at least part of the week?
- Agree an escape plan and if possible rehearse this with children so they are clear what needs to/will happen if the risks escalate.
- Ensure that children and adults have the contact details for key agencies such as ChildLine, NSPCC and domestic abuse helplines.
- Teach children to dial 999 in an emergency and confirm what information they would need to say if they can, such as name and address. Discuss the #55 scheme implemented by Thames Valley Police. Identify where the nearest phone is if they don't have access to a mobile and consider how they can access this safely.
- For domestic abuse cases, discuss with the victim trying to avoid high risk rooms such as kitchens and garages (where there may be sharp implements/surfaces) if they believe they are about to be attacked.
- For mental health cases consider who is providing professional support and how this can be accessed during the current working conditions. What medication is taken and how can this be accessed. Discuss with children what changes they notice if a parent/care giver is becoming unwell and what to do/who to contact in these circumstances. Speak to the child about basic first aid should parents self-harm.

Cont'd.....

Cont'd....Principal Social Worker Brief

- For children who are at risk of or who are being exploited agree with the family/placement when they need to be reported missing and who will do this, gather information about family and friends they may make contact with when missing. If possible obtain log in details/ passwords for their social media accounts. Encourage parents/carers to report on 101 details of any unknown persons visiting the home/placement on a daily basis, provide the police with car details including make, model, colour and registration of any unknown vehicles that are picking up/dropping off the child. Ensure an up to date photograph is available should it be necessary to launch a media appeal. Discuss with the police any actions they can take to reduce the risks, such as markers, sharing intelligence.

Safety planning is a vital part of the dynamic risk assessment process. It ensures we have a clear understanding of the level of risk to the child and a clear plan in place to reduce the risks and ultimately protect children from significant harm.

Once you have completed a safety plan with a child/family please ensure the details of it are recorded clearly on the child's file in the "Case Summary". This will make sure it is easily accessible to duty workers or the Emergency Social Work team who may not be familiar with the case and the issues. As and when the safety plan changes, the Case Summary will also need to be updated to ensure this is reflected.

In all cases, please ensure that the child and family, and their wider support network where necessary, know what your working hours are and know that you will not be available outside of those hours (I.e. so they don't call your work mobile or send you an email expecting a response). Please ensure they have the telephone numbers for Police and Emergency Social Work Team so that an emergency response can be coordinated where required outside of normal office hours.

Safety planning is not an exact science and each plan will differ. Most of you will already be safety planning as part of your everyday work with families but if you are unsure, please do not hesitate to ask your line manager, Head of Service or the Practice Development Team for further assistance.

Sandra Carnall, Principal Social Worker, April 2020.

Serious Case Review Publication

Please see the following link to view the Overview Report for Baby S, which was recently published: -

https://www.bucksscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Serious_Case_Reviews/FINAL-Complete-Overview-Report-Baby-S.pdf

We hope you found this newsletter informative - if you would like to provide any comments (positive or negative), or if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email: bscp@buckinghamshire.gov.uk