



Association of
Independent
L S C B C h a i r s

Integrated Safeguarding Boards
challenges and opportunities

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Issues for social workers specialising in substance use
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Safeguarding developments

Care Act 2014

- Safeguarding Adults Boards statutory
- Making safeguarding personal
- LA duty to ensure safeguarding risks investigated
- Duty to cooperate

Working Together 2013 & 2015

- radical reduction in guidance – but inspection
- SCRs more flexible – but required to be published

Domestic Homicide Reviews

Social work reform programme



Safeguarding areas - children

- Neglect
- Early help
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child sexual abuse in the family
- FGM
- PREVENT
- Physical injury (NAI)
- Domestic violence
- CAMHS and adult mental health
- Looked after children
- Family structures & separations/divorce/custody



Safeguarding areas - adults

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse - Residential & hospitals
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self neglect



Public sector developments 1

- Austerity – public sector funding cuts
- Changing face of public services –diversity of providers and more complex partnerships
- Devolution, regionalisation, single tier authorities – future of LSCBs?
- Reductions in senior and middle management capacity to sustain partnership working
- Emergence of dominant provider groups, possibly international



Public sector developments 2

- Changing relationship with citizens – changing expectations of role of public and non-public services
- Rise of policing state– managing/controlling ‘poor’ and excluded?
- Increasing expectations of ‘volunteers’?
- Europe – refugees, Brexit, implications?



Family realities 1

- Increasing family poverty – benefit sanctions continue and increase but possible reduction in unemployment
- Continued social housing pressures
- Continued dispersal of poorest out of London and cities?
- Reducing public services – particular pressures on early help and family support
- Will early help be sustainable?



Family realities 2

- Police cuts force a focus on managing crime and disorder with reduced capacity for partnership working
- Exacerbated tensions in education between attainment and welfare roles
- Health resources under strain
- Residual child protection function



Parents who misuse substances

- SCRs published since 2010 where substance misuse is a key factor
- Repository of SCRs – AILC/NSPCC

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/case-reviews/learning/parents-misuse-substances/>



Learning from serious case reviews 1

In these SCRs, children died, or were seriously injured in a number of different ways:

- sudden infant death syndrome - co-sleeping
- accidental ingestion of drugs
- accidents (fire, drowning) due to inadequate adult supervision
- parents deliberately giving children drugs



Learning from serious case reviews 2

- Work with adults often focused on individual needs – or on family group - rather than role as parents - immediate risks to child not prioritised
- Assessment of relationship between substance abuse and parental mental ill health and/or domestic violence
- Professionals too often trusted the parents' self-reporting of their drug and alcohol consumption
- Reassess in new circumstances – new risks



Recommendations from SCRs

- Drugs & alcohol securely out of reach of children
- Risks of children ingesting drugs or alcohol explained to parents/carers so they understand
- Children not able to get close to potential hazards in the home (eg ponds or heating appliances)
- Risks of co-sleeping explained
- Professionals with families who abuse drugs or alcohol check compliance on every visit / meeting



Final comments

- Drugs & alcohol workers are part of the multi-agency network
- Understand role in safeguarding frameworks
- Different approaches for children and adults
- Assess parenting skills whenever children present
- **Never ignore needs of children**





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