Welcome to the 5th Edition of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Newsletter. This quarterly bulletin is aimed at raising your awareness of national and local safeguarding children issues and has been developed especially for all those agencies that work with children and young people in Staffordshire.

As always, this edition which is longer than normal is packed with safeguarding children information that you need to know in order to promote the welfare and safety of the children and young people you work with in Staffordshire. There are also hyperlinks to other websites if you wish to read more information on the areas discussed.

We always welcome feedback and if you or your service has any important safeguarding children news or advice on how to improve this newsletter, please contact Lynne Milligan (SSCB Development Officer) on 01785 854572 or sscb.newsletter@staffordshire.gov.uk

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition of the SSCB newsletter. The next issue will be out in September 2013.
In the News!

Updated Working Together 2013

New guidance on effective multi-agency working to safeguard children has been released, representing a radical shift in the way that the child protection system will operate in England. This includes a new approach to the oversight of serious case reviews, new guidelines for assessing the needs of vulnerable children, and a huge reduction in the level of national child protection guidance.

The Government originally consulted on a suite of documents aimed at reforming the English child protection system in June 2012, cutting down more than 700 pages of existing guidance to just 68. The consultation process provoked a wide range of views from stakeholders, and the documents have undergone several revisions over the past 9 months. Working together to safeguard children (2010), the Framework for the assessment of children in need and their families (2000), and the Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (2007) have now been merged into one piece of statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, which makes several important changes to the existing safeguarding children framework.

The new guidance focuses strongly on legislative requirements, and removes large sections of non-statutory practice guidance. However, Working Together 2013 is lengthier than the documents originally issued for consultation (now reaching 97 pages), and includes more detail on the roles and responsibilities of partner agencies such as health and the police. The guidance is clear that “safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility” and other headlines include:

• The reinstatement of statutory timescales for assessing the needs of vulnerable children, which had been removed from the consultation documents;

• A removal of the distinction between initial and core assessments, replaced by ongoing, locally developed, assessments of need;

• A change in the governance arrangements for independent Chairs of local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs), who will now be appointed and held to account by the local authority Chief Executive rather than the Director of Children’s Services;

• The establishment of a national panel to hold LSCB Chairs to account on whether serious case reviews should be carried out, which independent reviewers should be commissioned to lead the review, and to challenge any decision that the report should not be published;

• A strong reiteration of the government’s intention that all serious case reviews should be published in full, and more detailed guidance on what this means in practice;

• A reversal of the consultation’s proposal for all future serious case reviews to be undertaken using so called “systems methodology”, with LSCBs instead free to use any model that is broadly in line with stated principles; and
• A requirement on LSCBs to develop a local framework for learning and improvement, including regular reviews of cases that may not meet the criteria for a full serious case review, as part of an ongoing process of learning and development.

Working Together is the Government’s statutory, multi-agency child protection guidance, and was last updated in March 2010. The significantly slimmed down 2013 edition is intended to reduce the burden on professionals who felt compelled to follow a wide range of prescriptive guidance, which the Munro Review of Child Protection2 considered to have created an over-bureaucratised culture that stifled local innovation and professional judgement.

Therefore, much of the good practice guidance contained previously in Working Together has been removed, and the Government intends that practice guidance will no longer be centrally issued. Instead, individual sectors are encouraged to lead on the development of their own professional guidance, informed by local research and evidence.

The guidance can be broadly split into four main headings, dealing with assessments, partnership working, LSCBs and Serious Case Reviews. For more information please click on the following link:


The SSCB have put together a range of documents which highlight the changes for agencies, including a quick practitioners guide accompanied with a briefing. These documents will be available on the SSCB website under latest news. www.staffsscb.org.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) update

New legislation (Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) changed the law regarding who can be checked from September 2012 as a result of two national reviews of criminal records checking and barring (new guidance on disclosure eligibility is available here: http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/jobs/CRB/CRBinformation.aspx ).

In December 2012 the DBS was created when the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB – responsible for managing the disclosure of criminal records) merged with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA – responsible for managing the barred lists; formerly List 99 for education). There are no changes to the legal duty to make safeguarding referrals to the DBS - this duty is triggered when a member of staff has been dismissed or moved to other work not involving contact with vulnerable groups including children; or might have been if they had not left because the person has harmed or posed a risk of harm to vulnerable groups including children.

The DBS now manages both disclosures and barring list checks, and will launch a new service in the summer of 2013 – an online update service. This will potentially change the way you carry out criminal record checks, making it easier and quicker to recruit or recheck employees and volunteers. It will cost around £10 for staff, free for volunteers.
When you take on new staff, if they have registered with the DBS Update Service, all you need to do is ask to see their DBS certificate and carry out a free, online check to see if it is still valid and up-to-date. When launched, applicants will apply for a DBS check (in the normal way), they can, at the same time, apply to register online for the Update Service. If they do they will be able to take their DBS certificate with them, from job-to-job (in the same sector), and may never need to apply for another one, ever again. You also benefit, as you will be able to check the DBS certificate online and get instant results. The DBS now have a new web page and more information can be found by accessing the link: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

There are also a couple of handy links within the gov.uk pages and include:

- [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check) (an information and guidance page aimed at customers, stakeholders and the public)
- [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check)

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**National Safeguarding News**

**CEOP App for smart phones**

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre and Microsoft have created a new app, free to download from the Windows store, to allow parents and children to access CEOP’s educational videos, see the latest campaigns, report suspicious or inappropriate contact online or follow CEOP’s Facebook page or Twitter feed updates.

*Source: CEOP*

*Further information:* Windows Store

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**Family Nurse Partnership**

The Department of Health has announced that the Family Nurse Partnership is to be extended so that by 2015, 16,000 more young and disadvantaged new parents under the age of 20 will receive tailored support from a specialist nurse who visits the mother at home from early pregnancy until the baby is 2-years-old.

*Source: Department of Health*

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**Looked after Children**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published guidance on best practice for the health and wellbeing of looked after children and young people. This standard applies to all settings and services working with looked after children from birth to 18 years and care leavers.

*Source: The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)*
Domestic Abuse and Young Men

Findings from the Boys to Men Project, looking at boys’ and young men’s experiences and attitudes towards domestic abuse, have been published. These include: over half of 13-14-year-olds had some direct experience of domestic abuse, 44% of boys and 46% of girls who had been on a date had experienced at least one of the types of domestic abuse measured; anti-violence campaign material is a useful resource in encouraging discussion about domestic abuse, although opportunities to prevent young men becoming perpetrators of domestic abuse are being missed.

Source: From Boys to Men Project

Additional Information:
- Phase 1 research findings
- Phase 2 research findings
- Phase 3 research findings

Ofsted Report on the effectiveness of Adult and Children services supporting parents with mental health or substance abuse problems in England.

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have published a report looking at how children’s and adult services work together to support parents with mental health or substance abuse problems in England.

Findings include: thinking about the impact of parental problems on children was much more embedded in drug and alcohol services than in adult mental health services; at least partly because, unlike mental health services, drug and alcohol services are required to collect data on the number of parents they treat.

Source: Ofsted

Further Information:
- What about the children? (Word Version)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The BBC reports on findings from a North Bristol NHS Trust study into female genital mutilation (FGM). The Trust’s midwives identified 117 cases of FGM in the last nine months.

Source: BBC Online 14 March 2013

For more information on these articles and many more please follow the link to NSPCC Inform
National Serious Case Reviews

- Bridgend Local Safeguarding Children Board has published the executive summary of a serious case review in to the death of a 16-year-old girl from a drugs overdose. Issues include: domestic violence and substance misuse in her family; evidence of the girl’s sexual exploitation from the age of 13 by much older men. Source: Bridgend Local Safeguarding Children Board (executive summary Child P)

- West Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board has published the executive summary of a serious case review in to the death of a 10 month old baby who was the subject of a child in need plan. The mother’s boyfriend was convicted of manslaughter. The mother was 16 and living in a hostel. Source: West Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board. Further information: Executive summary of the serious case review relating to Child G (PDF version)

- Wirral Local Safeguarding Children Board has published the overview report of a serious case review in to the killing of a 17-year-old girl by her boyfriend. Issues identified include the girl’s learning difficulties, ADHD and behavioural problems; her underage sexual activity; family conflict; and the girl previously being subject to a child protection plan for neglect. Source: Wirral Local Children Safeguarding Board Further information: Serious case review: child G (PDF version)

- Manchester Safeguarding Children Board has published the executive summary of a serious case review into the death of a 4-year-old girl. The review highlighted the problem of working with a mother who was hostile and difficult to engage; and uncovered a combination of risk factors including the mother’s mental health problems, allegations of domestic violence and substance misuse (known as the toxic trio). Recommendations include: multi-agency services using mental health input to inform assessment and case planning even without a firm diagnosis of mental illness. Source: Manchester Safeguarding Children Board. Further information: Executive summary of the serious case review in respect of Child U. (PDF version)

- Torbay Safeguarding Children Board has published its review into the sexual exploitation of a number of girls in the Torbay area. This serious case review was instigated following the completion of Operation Mansfield, a multi-agency operation led by Devon and Cornwall Police investigating. The operation culminated in the conviction of one male and the cautioning of another for a number of sexual offences against several young girls. It revealed that the men were sexually abusing the girls mainly for their own purposes. The abuse was facilitated by the supply of alcohol and drugs to the victims, and the individuals involved where white males and were relatively young themselves. Source: Torbay Safeguarding Children Board. Further Information: Executive summary of the serious case review in respect of. Case 26
Every year, 300 babies in the UK die suddenly and unexpectedly in their sleep as a result of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Here in Staffordshire the SSCB have been working with agencies to look at how we promote clear messages to help parents reduce the risk of SIDS.

Consultation with a variety of parent groups across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent assisted both Board’s with the design of a leaflet and for some, had an immediate impact.

A group of young mothers from the Stoke based charity Gingerbread, told us that since reviewing the leaflet they had become more aware of the dangers of co-sleeping, with one young mum expressing her views below.

“I really liked the sleep safe posters. They made me think about what could happen. It makes you more aware of the risks when sleeping with your baby, I did not realise how dangerous it was and after seeing these posters I would never sleep with my baby again”. I know there are other people that sleep with their babies and I think these posters should be put everywhere to make people realise the dangers.”

While there is no advice which can guarantee the prevention of SIDS, there are a number of things parents and carers can do to reduce the risk to their baby:

- The safest place for a baby to sleep for the first six months is in a cot, moses basket or crib in their parents’ room.
- Place the baby on their back on a firm mattress, with their feet at the end of the cot.
- Don’t let them get too hot, keep the temperature in the room between 16°c -18°c. Falling asleep with a baby significantly increases the risk of SIDS if the parent is a smoker, under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or just very tired.

How you can get involved...

The SSCB are due to launch the Safe Sleeping Campaign on Monday 24th June and will run alongside Child Safety week.

If you would like to get involved in the launch then why not get in touch. We would welcome input from early years providers including childminders, health services, adult drug and alcohol treatment services, gp’s and any other organisation that works with young children and their families. please contact Lynne Milligan SSCB Development Officer on 01785 854572 or email: lynne.milligan@staffordshire.gov.uk

First Response: 0800 13 13 126
Staffordshire Police: 101 (non emergency)
Child Safety Week 2013

Child Safety Week is the Child Accident Prevention Trust’s annual flagship community education campaign and runs from Monday 24 June to Sunday 30 June 2013.

The aim is to raise awareness of the number of accidents that seriously injure or kill children every year and the steps we can take to help prevent them.

The theme for this year’s Child Safety Week 2013 is Be a Safety Hero. A free downloadable ideas booklet which has everything you need to run a successful Child Safety Week 2013 is available on the CAPT website and contains tips, advice, activities and seven Safety Hero stories to inspire you, as well as competitions and quizzes for the children.

The SSCB would be very interested in working with organisations and individuals so if you are thinking of becoming involved in Child Safety week why don’t you get in touch so that we can all work together to keep children safe.

For further details please contact either Lynne Milligan, the SSCB Development Officer or Dianne May, the SSCB Partnership Officer on 01785 277151 alternatively you can email us at: lynne.milligan@staffordshire.gov.uk or dianne.may@staffordshire.gov.uk

SSCB Training Update

Free Child Trafficking Training

ECPAT UK stands for End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes. They are a leading children’s rights organisation campaigning against the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the UK and on its international aspects. In particular, they focus on the protection of trafficked children and children exploited in tourism and the prevention of such crimes. ECPAT UK has produced a free-learning package around child trafficking that can be used individually, in small groups or during training sessions. To use the e-tool you will need to register first via the links below.
Online Training

Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB)

CFAB is a unique UK-based charity which identifies and protects children who have been separated from family members as a consequence of trafficking, abduction, migration, divorce, conflict and asylum, as well as other vulnerable individuals in often desperate circumstances.

CFAB and Ineque are delighted to introduce a new online Child Trafficking Training Course. This online training course is free and available to use now. It has been funded by Comic Relief, developed by CFAB in conjunction with INEQE and the Counter Human Trafficking Bureau.

This ‘web app’ has been designed for use on multiple platforms and consists of three modules, a reference page and tests. This link will take you direct to the Child Trafficking - Basics Course.

Escape Drama reaches over 5,000 children across Staffordshire

In conjunction with the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB), the Saltmine Trusts Escape drama has reached over 5,000 children across Staffordshire, helping children and young people to stay safe on the internet.

Schools were invited to take part in the theatre company’s production following the success of its previous e safety drama aimed at primary school children when over 22,500 children across Staffordshire took part in the event.

This new production, designed for older children, sets out to raise awareness of the pitfalls when using the internet with a workshop delivered at the end to advise young people on how to stay safe whilst using the internet, with guidance on what to do should you need any help.

The play explores the relationships between two main characters. One is a young girl who befriends an unknown male via a social network site, whom she later refers to as her boyfriend and the other is about a young boy who is groomed, both in the real world and on-line by his youth worker. Each of the storylines ultimately led to the abuse of both victims, one of which tragically results in her disappearance.

For more Information about this event including SSCB training courses please visit: www.staffsscb.org.uk/training
Islam Exhibition

Shaid Hussain and the Midlands Muslim Community recently organised a special three day event in Burton to offer people living in the community a ‘greater insight’ into the Islamic Faith. The exhibition was seen as a way to ‘remove the divide’ between people of different faiths in the town. The event featured discussions on a range of topics including film shows, food stalls, music and poetry. Shaid commented by saying that “There is a lack of understanding among all faiths and we wanted to organise an event that would bring people together to learn a bit more about Islam.

“It will allow anybody who wants to learn more to come along and ask questions and share experiences. Furthermore, it is an important step for the community and will hopefully help break down a few barriers and bring Burton together.”

The event was supported by a range of organisations, including Burton and South Derbyshire College and East Staffordshire Borough Council, with exhibitions ranging from the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board and community police teams to parent partnership groups.

Details of the event can be viewed by clicking on the link below:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJjmOF0MHug&feature=player_embedded

Shaid has previously worked with the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board on the development of guidance material for safeguarding children in Mosques and Madressahs, highlighting the safeguarding issues faced by those who provide educational and supportive services within such establishments. This document was widely promoted at the event along with a safeguarding poster which was put together with the help of Shaid. This poster was translated into Urdu and given out at the event. A copy of this can be downloaded from the website – www.staffsscb/voluntary/faith
Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board

SCVYS

Live Event

Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services supports over 100 voluntary youth organisations across Staffordshire providing activities for around 34,500 children and young people, supported by over 6,000 volunteers. The SCVYS Live event on Saturday March 9th 2013 showcased the talent, energy and valuable contribution of the voluntary youth sector within the County.

Phil Pusey, Chief Executive of SCVYS said “This is just how we imagined it lots of vibrant performances from young people, a diverse range of displays, tangible buzz of active networking and connecting groups to some really useful support services. The feedback from everyone has been excellent and we hope to improve the event for future occasions”

The Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board stand provided an opportunity for local youth group leaders to access our information, ask advice and guidance along with a chance to discuss the range of training sessions that the SSCB offer. Over 300 young people attended, with many visiting the stand who fed back saying that they were very interested in the Stay Safe leaflets and booklets all of which were designed by young people in Staffordshire.

The day provided a chance for everyone to network with each other, meet potential funding bodies, as well as showcasing their groups’ activities in a creative way to an audience of interested people from all sectors.

SSCB Priorities 2012-2013

• The development of the SSCB
• Responding to Munro and the revision of Working Together 2010
• Improve communications and engagement with all
• Engage in activity which is targeted at the following vulnerable children and young people:
  • Child sexual exploitation and children missing from home or care
  • Domestic Abuse and safeguarding children
  • ‘Hidden Harm’ (safeguarding children whose parents or carers misuse substances)
  • Child neglect (particularly for children under the age of 5 years old)

First Response:
0800 13 13 126
Staffordshire Police: 101 (non emergency)
SSCB - Agency Pages

News from other Agencies across Staffordshire

Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Safeguarding Arrangements

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<tr>
<td>East Staffs CCG, South East Staffordshire &amp; Seisdon Peninsula CCG</td>
<td>Joint Chief Nurse</td>
<td>Heather Johnstone, Lead for Safeguarding</td>
<td>01827 306137</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cannock CCG, Stafford &amp; Surrounds CCG</td>
<td>Joint Director of Quality &amp; Safety</td>
<td>Val Jones, Lead for Safeguarding</td>
<td>01785 221042</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designed Nurse Safeguarding Children for all above areas</td>
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Joint Named GP for both CCGs, Janey Merron, contact initially through 01782 401004 or by e-mail Janey.merron@northstaffs.nhs.uk

SSCB - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board

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<tr>
<td>North Staffordshire CCG and Stoke-on-Trent CCG</td>
<td>Joint Nurse Board Member</td>
<td>Jan Warren, Lead for Safeguarding</td>
<td>01782 298002 ext 4030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designed Nurse Safeguarding and Looked After Children – Paula Carr, SSCB and Stoke SCB Board Member</td>
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Staffordshire Police: 101 (non emergency)

Stafford’s Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

Domestic Homicide Reviews

In April 2011 the Government enacted section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 which made it a statutory requirement to undertake a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) where certain criteria surrounding a murder apply. These are where the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by:
- a person to whom they were related or with whom they were or had been in an intimate personal relationship or
- a member of the same household as themselves
- with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from the death.

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) covering the area in which the victim resided at the time of their death is responsible for conducting the DHR. A joint Staffordshire and Stoke protocol has been established which sets out how DHRs should be conducted across Staffordshire and Stoke. Within Staffordshire, the County Council is co-ordinating the DHRs on behalf of the CSPs.

Three DHRs and two Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Learning Reviews (where the DHR criteria were not fully met) are underway in Staffordshire; the youngest victim was 19 and the oldest was over 80. One victim is male. One review has now been sent to the Home Office for approval prior to publication. All the remaining reviews are currently approaching completion. An anonymised summary of the learning from all the reviews undertaken to date will be available later this year and will be shared with the SSCB and a wide variety of partners.

CCGs became statutory bodies on 1st April 2013 following the end of PCTs which have now ceased to exist. The Commissioning responsibility for Safeguarding has now transferred into CCGs and therefore key contact’s are detailed here for information.
Independent Futures: improving services for disabled people

Staffordshire County Council have been looking at ways to give residents quality and value for money services. This involved looking at how they can better support disabled people. In speaking with children and adults with physical and learning disabilities, their families and carers, the council have built a clear picture of how we could improve the way we support them.

Service user feedback has been used as the foundation for designing a new and improved service for disabled people. This new service is now called ‘Independent Futures’. Proposals for the new Independent Futures service went to the county council’s Cabinet meeting on 20 February 2013 so that elected Members could consider and discuss them. You can read the Cabinet papers and watch a webcast of the discussion online at http://bit.ly/VSIURo. (Please note that this link is made from lower case L’s and not capital i’s).

Where to get more information
To access the series of updates please click on the following links:
- For those who have access to the county council intranet, there is more detailed information available in a series of staff newsletters at www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/services/people/independentfutures/Independent-Futures-Newsletters.aspx
- For those who can’t access the county council’s intranet, we’ve put a host of frequently asked questions online at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/independentfutures
- Alternatively, if you’d like to get in touch, you can call the county council’s Customer Contact Centre on 0300 111 8000 or email independent.futures@staffordshire.gov.uk with your questions.

Supported Lodgings

Room to grow: rent your spare room and share your life skills

Have you got a room to spare and do you think you can offer crucial support to a young person between 16 and 18? If so you could become a Staffordshire Supported Lodgings host. Staffordshire County Council’s Supported Lodgings Scheme helps vulnerable local teenagers become independent adults by finding them ‘hosts’ who can teach them the skills they need.

In return hosts receive a full package of support. This includes a placement allowance of £180 per week, on-going regular support from a project coordinator and training opportunities. We are looking for hosts in areas with good public transport links – particularly in and around Stafford, Lichfield, Cannock and Newcastle. If you have a room to spare and want to make a positive difference to the life of teenagers, get in touch.

You would rent a room in your home to a young person, who may have been in care or is in a crisis situation, and give them support, encouragement and guidance. By providing a stable home environment, you would help a teenager to develop skills ready to live on their own. If you would like further information, telephone 0800 169 2061 or go to: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/supportedlodgings
Lesley and Ian’s story

Lesley and Ian are hosts for Sean who is 17 and has just left care. Lesley said: “When we enquired about fostering opportunities with the county council, the team told us about the Support Lodgings Scheme. We were interested in looking after teenagers rather than youngsters and the way the scheme works meant that we could still work if we wanted to, so it suited us better.

“We’ve had five young people come to stay with us so far. The longest stayed with us for seven months and the shortest for about five weeks. “We basically do the same with them as we did with our own teenagers – there is an element of parenting but it’s mostly about teaching them to become independent. We teach them things like how to run a house, manage a budget and cook for themselves.”

For 17 year old Sean the scheme means that he doesn’t feel alone and is able to learn the life skills he needs to feel confident on his own. Sean said, “When I want some company, there’s someone there. I’ve never learned to cook and I don’t want to live on ready meals, now I’m learning the basics from Lesley so that I can cook for myself. Lesley and Ian motivate me to apply for jobs and support me to complete applications.”

Lesley said, “One of the biggest rewards we get from the scheme is knowing that we’ve given a young person the confidence and skills not to fall flat on their face when they leave to live on their own. If you’re considering fostering, I’d say definitely find out more about the Supported Lodging Scheme. It is a big step to take, but don’t be frightened. If you can get that mutual respect, you can’t go far wrong. We don’t regret it at all.”

If you would like further information, telephone 0800 169 2061 or go to: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/supportedlodgings
SSCB Team Blog

New Appointment

Bob Busk - SSCB Performance Officer
Hi, I’m Bob Busk and I have the pleasure of being the newly-appointed SSCB Performance Officer.
Anyway, just a little bit about me to start with! Prior to my new role, I worked in Criminal Justice for 11 years. I spent the past 6 years working with children, young people and young adults (under 21’s) both in the community and also in custody. Many of the young people that I encountered had not experienced the best start in life. Through my work I gained considerable experience of the impact that harm (in its many forms) can have on young people and how such experiences can continue to affect them, their families, their peers and other people within the community. Consequently, I am really pleased to be working with a multi-agency organisation whose role is to agree how local organisations will co-operate to safeguard children and young people and to promote better outcomes for them.

I joined the SSCB just over four weeks ago. Since that time, I have been busy with being inducted (induced?!), meeting staff from the SSCB and partner agencies (and I’d just like to say a big “thank you” to all of those people who have made me feel so welcome – you know who you are!), continuing the development of the joint SSCB/Stoke on Trent SCB performance management dataset, preparing for the Section 11 audit and completing internal management reports.

Whilst I have only been here for a short duration, I have been really impressed with the level of commitment shown by those who I have met to achieving better outcomes for children and young people. It is my hope that I can work with you to make Staffordshire an even better place to be a child or young person. Thanks for reading this far! If you would like to get in touch with Bob then please email: robert.busk@Staffordshire.gov.uk

Dianne May - SSCB Partnership Officer
Following my appointment as Partnership Officer for the SSCB I have had a busy 6 months as my time has been spent encouraging effective multi agency partnership working and promoting the Threshold Framework to ensure children and families access the right help at the right time. This has also helped me to promote the work of the SSCB and its priorities for the coming year.

Staffordshire Young People Service welcomed me to all their Area Team Meetings and explained how they assist young people. Furthermore, it provided them with an opportunity to explain how valuable the SSCB Training courses have been in highlighting issues surrounding child sexual exploitation (CSE).
Continuing with my work around engagement, I have met with the designated leads within schools responsible for child protection to try to understand what works well in their areas and how we can make improvements. My experiences tell me that the Colleges in Staffordshire are very proactive in safeguarding their young people but have mentioned they have not been aware of all the SSCB procedures. This is a piece of work I will be taking forward.

Engaging with the community has enabled the SSCB to become involved in a range of events such as the Islam Exhibition in Burton which was primarily aimed at promoting Islam. Over the course of 3 days, the SSCB spoke to members of the community as well as local groups and schools and handed out safeguarding posters which were translated into Urdu. Similarly the recent SCYVS Live event was a vibrant celebration of what voluntary groups in Staffordshire offer to our young people and also a useful networking opportunity.

Whilst being involved in the wider SSCB training programme participants have been asked to complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) questionnaire. We are now analysing the many responses in order to encourage and improve the use of CAF.

What’s next…….My programme for the next 6 months is to engaging with practitioners from Probation; improve links with school governors and school councils, to listen to the views of young people to understand what makes them feel safe; to continue to develop links with the voluntary sector and encourage schools to use the services of the NSPCC in assemblies to help children and young people understand how to keep themselves safe. If you would like to get in touch with Dianne then please email: diane.may@staffordshire.gov.uk

Ruth
SSCB Lay Member

In March this year, I attended my last University lecture for my Masters degree. I have one last assignment to complete and the significantly large task of writing my 20,000 word dissertation, then I will have finished completely. Due to no longer having to attend University for lectures, I am now looking for full time work in my current field of Probation.

I have now attended two Safeguarding Children’s Board meetings and both have been very informative and interesting. I am slowly getting to grips with the different terminology used by different people….this was quite daunting at first, but the more meetings I attend, the more I am learning. On Monday 15th April, I am due to attend the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to gain an understanding of what goes on there and how the agencies work together to safeguard children across Staffordshire. I am looking forward to this visit and meeting some of the people involved.
Clare – SSCB Lay Member

Well it’s been a steep acronym learning curve this last few months. The wonderful Carrie sat next to both myself and Ruth to stop quell the tide of SCIEs, PCTs, SARCs and MASHs, amongst many others, and all in all I felt it went well. I enjoyed the experience and felt I kept up with most of what was going on and almost said something but wasn’t quite quick enough on the draw!

Since then there has been another meeting which I was unable to attend, and after talking to Ruth, feel I missed out a bit. What I have found invaluable, was today’s visit to the MASH with Ruth my fellow Lay Person. John gave us a initial 'brief' then we were swept up the stairs to a Senior Practitioner who explained what happens from phone call to action being taken. We also had a chance to listen in to a call and see the people in work and how they search for relevant information etc.

It allowed me to fully appreciate the problems faced by professionals making these types of judgements.

I have nothing in the pipe line until the next meeting but will try to get some more online training done and it would be great to get a few more of these types of visit in to get a clearer picture of the work that is being done, when I hear the word MASH after today’s visit I am no longer having an image of lunch!

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The Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) and its partner agencies have now developed a professionals poster which outlines the responsibilities of the SSCB including how agencies work together to keep children safe. If you haven’t already got one displayed on your staff room wall or office then you can get copies of these from the SSCB website - www.staffsscb.org.uk/what/