



SAFEGUARDING

6.03.15 at London Funders

Participants

Kerry	Luker	BBC Children in Need
Helen	Morton	BBC Children in Need
Nicola	Kelly	CAN
Katherine	Brown	Henry Smith Charity
Habiba	Nabatu	LankellyChase Foundation
Lisa	Reed	LankellyChase Foundation
Finola	Culbert	London Borough of Ealing
Isabel	De La Cour	London Borough of Hackney
Thomas	Flynn	London Community Foundation
Christine	Bass	London Youth
Sharon	Long	Partnership For Young London
Blanadah	Read	Premier League Charitable Fund
Kate	Smith	Safer London Foundation
Sheila	Powell	Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust
Kathryn	Berry	sported
Julie	Harris	University Of Bedfordshire

In attendance

Becky	Green	London Funders
David	Warner	London Funders

David Warner, London Funders, Chair, noted the importance of this topic and emphasized that the discussion would be an opportunity for people to be open and honest, emphasizing that the meeting would be following the Chatham House Rule to encourage discussion and learning. The meeting consisted of three speakers and included broad open conversation.

Safeguarding Children

Finola Culbert, London Borough of Ealing Children's Services

Finola began by outlining some current safeguarding pressures:

- Vulnerable adolescents e.g. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and gangs. CSE is an enormous challenge and local authorities have had a high awareness of this for a long time. LB Ealing is working closely with organisations such as Barnardo's, but it is a very challenging area. They are attempting not to compartmentalise the issues as there is the need for a more joined up approach.
- Domestic abuse- hugely significant. Greater awareness and understanding of this issue has led to a significant increase in police referrals. Domestic abuse underpins about two thirds of all social care cases. Early intervention and prevention work with families where DA is the key issue could have a significant impact on numbers of cases reaching social care thresholds. Significant role for the voluntary sector here . Gaps in work with perpetrators; little provision in this area.



- There are increased difficulties surrounding homelessness. With rent increases, the number of families coming for help is increasing dramatically (sometimes with no recourse to public funds) and the pressure on local authority budgets is therefore also increasing substantially. Sometimes the only alternative for families is to move to other areas where there is more affordable housing available e.g. Leeds, Birmingham and Manchester. This is not ideal as it is moving families to an area where they do not have their support networks, however there are often no other options. Families are also sometimes temporarily housed in B&Bs as there may not be anything else available.
- There has been an increase in referral levels into social care across London. This appears to be due in part to a wider awareness about abuse, neglect, CSE and also changing demographics as London has a very mobile and often highly vulnerable population.
- The new anti terrorism legislation due to come into place in April this year puts an onus on local authorities to treat radicalisation as a safeguarding issue and on schools and other agencies to refer it as such. The current child protection systems are not designed to address radicalisation though the London SCB is currently leading on developing new procedures to respond to this.
- Ofsted can come into local authorities with 24 hours' notice and stay for 4 – 5 weeks. While inspection of Children's Services are valid and important, the impact of a poor inspection is very destabilising on staff and creates a real pressure on the system, including with recruitment.
- While most local authorities have protected the very front line services so far, early intervention services have been significantly affected across London, which is likely to lead to increased pressures further down the line. As there are repercussions on other services such as IT and admin, more responsibility for this is devolved to those delivering services, leading to a hidden drain on resources. Budget pressures are expected to increase over the next funding cycle and the protection of some services will be harder to maintain.

Finola then discussed thresholds for Childrens Services involvement;

- The London continuum of need guide has been adopted by all London authorities and sets out 4 tiers of need. Level 1; Universal Services. Level 2; low level targeted needs. Level 3; targeted intervention. Level 4; social care intervention including Child Protection and Looked After Children. As budgets decrease and pressures on Children's Services increase, early intervention and preventative services are working increasingly at Level 3. This in turn places pressure on voluntary sector and universal services to provide more input at level 2 of the continuum. Most authorities are working closely with schools and other referral agencies to manage demand by using the CAF/Early help Assessment and Plan to meet need before it escalates into Children's Services
- Most local authorities have Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) or front door referral systems. While these have made referral more straightforward for families and for agencies, they have also contributed to an increase in awareness and understanding which has led to an increase in demand. Most front door services will be working with referral agencies to



support families within their own agencies unless a case meets safeguarding/child protection criteria or needs more specialist intervention.

- The role of the voluntary sector is crucial in preventing escalation of need and because budgets for the entire sector are reduced, it has become imperative for us to try to work in a more joined up way to address the key concerns for children and families eg domestic abuse.

Finola answered questions and a wider discussion took place amongst attendees:

- The group discussed at what point the state have a responsibility to be involved and whether at any stage this can create a 'dependency'. Most agreed that the state has a duty to intervene to protect highly vulnerable children and that intervention should not disempower families but should be carried out in a way which will ultimately empower them.
- Finola noted how statutory and non-statutory services have developed a solid evidence base for what works, including knowledge on children and adolescent brain development and on how families work. Governments have made innovation money available, and several local authorities, including Ealing are looking to innovate and do something different, becoming more evidence based. There are two key factors underpinning successful work with families [regardless of the programme or model used].
 - Relationship based work.ie Building a relationship with the family through which change can take place. Key to this are skills in engagement, empathy, partnership working.
 - Intensity (high levels of visiting – 2/3/4 times a week)
- Where building relationships is recognised as essential, the group discussed how you can recognise this approach within a funded organisation and encourage a particular way of working. Measuring the culture of an organisation is very subjective, however this thread generally runs through an organisation and where you can develop a positive working relationship with those at the top you can make good assumptions that this runs through.
- Being more joined up is very important and can save money, and avoid duplications. It will also mean the young people just dealing with one person which is generally also preferable.

Safe Network

Sharon Long, Regional Manager, Children England and Strategic Director, Partnership for Young London

Sharon introduced the activities of Partnership for Young London and also the Children England's Engage London programme. This will include an Engage London event with Safer London Foundation in June on safeguarding and looking at integrated work between local authorities and the VCS.

Safe Network is Children England's acclaimed partnership with the NSPCC which provides safeguarding information related to activities outside the home. Safe Network operates through its



website and local champions, often Councils for Voluntary Services, Councils for Voluntary Youth Services or Youth Associations, who in turn are supported by Safe Network's Regional Managers. Safe Network's activities include:

- A 9 step guide to safeguarding for leaders of VCS groups working with children and young people
- Core standards covering safer staff and volunteers; child protection; preventing and responding to bullying and avoiding accidents. This covers what groups need to have in place in order to secure funding.
- 'Everybody's Business', a strategic guide for trustees and senior members.
- A guide to developing proportionate and effective DBS checking and supervision.
- CYAR Standards, safeguarding standards for children and young adults at risk
- AN online resource for faith based groups and places of worship - multifaith safeguarding hub
- A resource to raise awareness in black and minority ethnic communities of positive and harmful childcare practices and ways in which children can be kept safe.
- A guide for voluntary and community sector groups on how they can contribute to multi-agency safeguarding activity, and what they can expect from partners.

Safe Network also organises regional seminars and events, as well as organising conversations with the London Safeguarding Board looking at how to improve communication and ensure organisations are networked into existing systems and using best practice.

Sharon noted how the hub is often referred to by funders as well as other VCS groups, and commented that although the Department for Education has chosen to stop funding this project, they would look to find a way to find alternative funding in order to keep the resource. Sharon will keep the group updated on what is going to happen to this resource.

Child Sexual Exploitation Funders' Alliance

Katherine Brown, Henry Smith Charity and Julie Harris, University of Bedfordshire

Katherine Brown from the Henry Smith Charity and Julie Harris from the University of Bedfordshire introduced the Child Sexual Exploitation Funders' Alliance. The Child Sexual Exploitation Funders' Alliance (CSEFA) is a group of independent funders with a strategy to position Child Sexual Exploitation as an integral part of mainstream Safeguarding and Child Protection activity with the long term aim of preventing child sexual exploitation, drawn from best practice and research evidence. The project has three key elements:

- Funding established, of expert voluntary sector organisations (Hubs) to embed CSE workers in neighbouring Local Authority areas, known as Spokes - the Hub and Spoke model. The effectiveness of this model is being evaluated by a team at University of Bedfordshire. These Spoke workers provide case-work support to young people and training to practitioners around CSE. They aim to work closely with the Local Safeguarding Children Boards.



- Creating a Knowledge Hub of learning and research for the wider sector;
- Embedding best practice in the participation of young people.

CSEFA has funded eight projects throughout England in Phases 1 and 2 of the project. In Phase 3 it has identified eight new projects, for which it is inviting applications (from these named voluntary organisations only). Two of these projects operate in London, and plan to place workers into the following areas; Merton, Tower Hamlets and Newham, Greenwich and Lewisham, Brent, Redbridge and Barking & Dagenham. Funders will be accepting applications in the next couple of months, with the intention of the projects being fully funded to start by autumn 2015. The alliance wished to make London Funders' members aware of the work, and to invite any funder who has an interest in Child Sexual Exploitation to become involved in the alliance; there is currently a mixture of big and small funders, with national and local remits. It is not a pooled pot, every funder makes their own decisions about who/how much they will fund. Anybody who is interested in finding out more, please contact Katherine Brown at kbrown@henrysmithcharity.org.uk.