



# EALING'S CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING CHAMPIONS NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Raise awareness. Share learning. Together we can make a difference.

Quote of the month:

**"If you want to go fast, go alone.**

**If you want to go far, go together."**

**African proverb.**

## Welcome to the June edition of our newsletter.

Highlights from this month's edition include another direct work tool, a final call for expressions of interest to join us at the first ever Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network meeting and our interview with Kaesha Richardson who is Ealing Council's Serious Youth Violence Co-ordinator.

Wishing you a fantastic month ahead,

Cat, Catherine, Shannon and Suzy.

## Direct Work Tool: Relationship Building

Hi, it's Shannon here again with another direct work tool.

As a group of Champions we've been thinking about how important a helpful and trusting relationship is when we're supporting the people and families we work with to achieve positive changes. Linking this to Contextual Safeguarding as an approach to helping young people to be safer from the risks of extra-familial harm, we know that young people are not typically going to open up about what they are experiencing unless they feel they can trust their worker, understand what their worker will do with the information they share and know that their worker is genuinely hearing them.

As such, we're sharing this tool as a option for you to use when developing your relationship with a young person, child, parent or carer. We've attached the template for you to look at alongside this guidance.

As you will see, the tool lists various statements that you can ask the individual you are completing the activity with about as a way of getting to know them better. If you feel ok to do so, you can also support in that relationship development by answering some of the statements about yourself (in an appropriate way of course). By sharing some things about yourself, you'll show the young person that you are personable, that you can relate to each other and that, actually, you may have some things in common including similar interests.

Try this out with your young people or the families you work with. Please let us know how it goes - send your feedback to [cschampions@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:cschampions@ealing.gov.uk)

## Join Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network

Ealing's first Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network meeting will take place at 11.30am on Thursday 17th June. As well as sharing resources and information about Contextual Safeguarding in Ealing, we'll be asking attendees what the best possible use of our time together would look like going forward. We'll also discuss the realities of safeguarding against extra-familial harm.

To find out more or to express an interest becoming a Contextual Safeguarding Network Champion, please email: [cschampions@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:cschampions@ealing.gov.uk)



## A conversation with Kaesha Richardson, Ealing's Youth and Community Serious Youth Violence Co-Ordinator

### ***Please can you tell us a little about your role?***

I've been in this role for nearly 2 years. I am based within the Youth Justice Service.

My role includes working with young people in schools who are at risk of Serious Youth Violence (SYV). I also work in the community with young people who have been identified as victims of SYV as well as those who are not yet known to the Youth Justice Service or who police have identified as potential nominals within gangs. I engage with young people at risk of permanent exclusion or missing from education too. I can also take referrals directly from two local hospitals following serious trauma incidents.

I undertake intensive direct work with young people on a 6-month basis. I focus on the violence perpetrated or experienced, safety planning, helping the young people understand risk, increasing protective factors and promote positive choices and aspirations moving forward. If young people enter the Youth Justice System, I will support them through court or the Out of Court Disposal process. If they are permanently excluded, I will continue supporting them through the transition to their new provision. If they find themselves remanded to custody, I will continue providing support to complete the identified interventions.

### ***What is Serious Youth Violence?***

Serious Youth Violence is '***any offence of most serious violence or weapon enabled crime, where the victim is aged 1-19 i.e., murder, manslaughter, rape, wounding with intent and causing grievous bodily harm***'. Youth violence is defined in the same way, but also includes assault with injury offences.

### ***Many of the young people you work with will know and spend time with other young people. How do you go about gaining the information you need to understand those dynamics?***

It is important for me to have an awareness of the different groups/cohorts in Ealing and of any ongoing or rising conflict or patterns between groups, I gain this knowledge from speaking to young people as well as information shared with me by YJS practitioners, the police, schools, Safer Communities, my counterparts in other boroughs and attending strategic meetings about SYV and gangs. I also attend Ealing's Multi Agency Vulnerability and Exploitation Safeguarding (MAVES) panel and s47 strategy meetings when they pertain to young people I'm working with.

### ***What have been the main challenges you have faced in your role?***

One thing that has been a particular challenge has been working through the Covid-19 pandemic. I was not able to undertake face to face sessions with young people when we were initially locked down.

Due to social and communication difficulties of some of the young people that I work with and the lack of confidentiality due to overcrowding at home, they tended to be worried about sharing information over the phone.

Since the Covid-19 restrictions first began, SYV does appear to have increased in Ealing. It has been challenging to engage young people in a meaningful intervention.

### ***If you were to pick one thing that you are most proud of in your work what would it be?***

I am proud of the work I have undertaken with a 13-year-old young girl who may have been a victim of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) from age 11. Over recent months, I have spoken with senior management about this young girl's history and needs to assist with their decision-making. I have undertaken intensive support with the young person, her mother and her school. Together we were able to avoid permanent exclusion.

This young person is in care now which seems to be the safest option for her. I've supported in the plan around her including a package to support her reintegration into education including Art Therapy and specialist consideration of her educational needs. We continue with our weekly sessions so I also represent a consistent professional in her life throughout all the changes she has experienced. Since she's been safer, I've found this young person to appear more confident and to now talk about her hopes for the future. I've been thinking with the social worker about the longer-term aim of this young person being able to live safely with her mum again.

### ***What is your long-term goal with respect to Contextual Safeguarding in Ealing?***

It is hoped in the next few months that there will be more shared awareness across the Borough about SYV and how to overcome and intervene appropriately and in a way that becomes embedded within services. I hope to support with rolling out Neighbourhood and Peer Group Assessments which will bring focus to the safeguarding needs of a particular area or group within the Borough (as opposed to an individual young person) and seek to ascertain how the community can support in the process of keeping young people safe.

I plan to help with reducing the disproportionality within the borough particularly focusing on the Black, Asian, Minority Ethnicity communities affected by extra-familial harm. They are overrepresented within the criminal justice system, stop and searches and school exclusions.

I am starting to work with schools to try and reduce the exclusion to prison pipeline; there is a clear correlation between those being permanently excluded and those finding themselves in custody.

I have also started working with West Thames and West London Colleges regarding them accepting known victims of CCE and CSE and young people with a criminal record into their college by supporting their understanding of the actual risk of harm to the college community through accepting them - often there is no risk.



## Vulnerability Screening Tool

Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Team provides consultative support for all Ealing professionals who are seeking to help a young person who may be at risk of harm from outside their family.

If you have concerns about extra familial harm for a young person you are working with please complete the Vulnerability Screening Tool on Mosaic or if you don't have access to Mosaic you can request the Word template via [vulnerabilitytool@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:vulnerabilitytool@ealing.gov.uk). You can also email the team for a consultation and the duty worker will aim to get back to you within one working day.



### Celebrating Contextual Safeguarding in practice

Leading on from our shout-out for Annabelle Raza's safety planning work in the May newsletter, this month we wanted to acknowledge **Chavel Charles'** (Youth Worker in MAST Adolescent) outstanding safety planning with the same young person.

Chavel understands that this work is not time-limited - it is ongoing with the young person and regularly revisited. Her and the young person have had a helpful conversation based on the young person's genuine surprise at Chavel's concern for her. They also agreed on emojis the young person would use if she was ever feeling unsafe when not at home and wanted to let her trusted adults know. The young person has made use of this system.

Chavel and the young person have used push and pull factors (see April newsletter) as a basis for safety planning. Chavel has also supported placement staff where the young person is living to reinforce the safety planning principals with the young person. She has discovered through her discussions with the young person that they didn't know what would happen should they ever be reported missing to the police. Chavel was able to demystify that process for her.

Well done Chavel on this powerful and invaluable piece of work.

We want to honour and celebrate good Contextual Safeguarding in Ealing through this newsletter. Please send your examples of excellent practice to us at [cschampions@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:cschampions@ealing.gov.uk)

### Feedback on a Direct Work Tool

In May's newsletter, Shannon wrote about her experiences of using the Risky Activities direct work tool. **Izzy Haslam**, a social worker in MAST Adolescent, got in touch to let us know how she has found using this tool:

***"I've used the risk activity tool with almost every young person I work with. It has provided a foundation for fascinating conversations including what young people do and do not view as risky activities. Before starting, I ensure the young person feels that there are no right or wrong answers but that the purpose of this activity is to understand each other's perspectives on risks. From there we can safety plan together. One young person I used this tool with rated every category as 'amber,' Another young person I have used this tool with rated some activities 'green' that I would rate as 'amber' or 'red.' The conversation that followed helped me to reflect on the differences in our perceptions of risk. I also found it helpful to be mindful that some young people may feel there is an expectation on them to indicate all scenarios as risky because their social worker is doing the activity with them. This direct work tool can provide invaluable insight into what our young people see as risks and how we can best support them."***

Fantastic work Izzy! Well done and thank you for taking the time to let us know what this tool is like to use.

### Contact

Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Core Champions are:

**Suzy Grihault:** Operations Manager, Youth Justice Service

**Catherine Imobeke:** Contextual Safeguarding Advisor, Contextual Safeguarding Team

**Shannon Upton:** Senior Social Worker, MAST Adolescents Team

**Cat White:** Contextual Safeguarding Advisor, Contextual Safeguarding Team

If you have any questions about this newsletter or the Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network, [please email us](#) and one of the team will get back to you as soon as possible.