

# CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING CHAMPIONS NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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

Quote of the month:

**"True leaders don't create followers,  
they create more leaders"**

## Welcome to the May edition of our newsletter!

Thank you for all the positive feedback from last month's edition. We're excited that so many colleagues share our passion for this area of work.



## Join Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network

As mentioned in our first newsletter, we're setting up Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network which will meet every other month for 1 1/2 hours. The first meeting is due to take place at 11.30am on Thursday 17th June.

Network membership provides the opportunity for Contextual Safeguarding Network Champions to gain skills and knowledge in safeguarding young people who are at risk of extra familial harm, an insight into the Contextual Safeguarding needs of Ealing and specialist support through Core Champions and other network members.

Sharing and modelling practice with team members who are not Network Champions is a key expectation of Network Champions. Network Champions will also be expected to provide regular feedback on their use of any tools/methods/approaches shared through this process.

**If you would like to become a Contextual Safeguarding  
Network Champion, we would love to hear from you.**

**Please email: [cschampions@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:cschampions@ealing.gov.uk)**

## Direct Work Tool: Risky situations

Hi, it's Shannon here, one of your Contextual Safeguarding Champions. I wanted to share an effective risk tool I use with my young people.

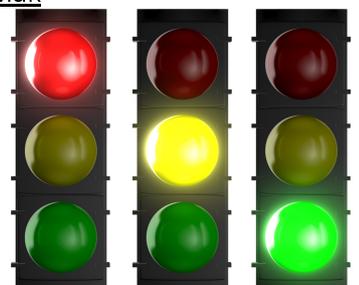
All you need is the worksheet (included in attachments) and a red, orange, and green pen. Simply work your way through each statement, asking the young person to label if it is high (red), medium (orange) or low risk (green). There could be more than one rating per scenario.

It's never a young person's fault if someone harms them and it's important to be mindful to not scare anyone through this exercise. However, these sorts of conversations will hopefully help young people make more informed decisions about personal safety and risk assessment both for themselves and their friends as well as encouraging them to seek out support if ever they're feeling unsure.

When I complete this tool with young people, I will advise them of risks they might have missed so you may want to complete the tool yourself for reference. An example I can give is that young people often think 'Accepting a gift from someone you have just met' is green or orange. They might say it could be a new friend or a passer-by on the street but may not think that this could be the start of grooming linked to Child Sexual or Criminal Exploitation (CSE and CCE) which could make the scenario a 'red'. Typically, young people can show that they know what CSE and CCE is, but this exercise may show that they benefit further support in understanding the motivations of others.

I have included an example of one young person's responses in an attached document. This young person has a lot of insight into risk and did not require me to make further suggestions. It was a positive session!

Try this out with your young people and please let us know how it goes - send your feedback to [cschampions@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:cschampions@ealing.gov.uk)



## A conversation with Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Coordinator

**Christina Evers is Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Coordinator and leads and supports Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Champions. We were excited to get to speak to her about her role for this newsletter.**

***Please can you tell us a little bit about your role and team?***

As the Contextual Safeguarding Coordinator I lead on developing and embedding contextual ways of working in Ealing. I work with colleagues from across the council and the safeguarding partnership to think about ways that we can respond to both individual young people and contexts to make them safer. I am the SPOC for the University of Bedfordshire Scale Up Project and meet regularly with staff from the University who are helping us with this work. I also network with colleagues from other Scale Up sites and other LAs in London to share learning.

I am supporting the Champions in the development of Contextual Safeguarding in Ealing and am looking forward to engaging with the Champions Network.

I also supervise Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Advisors who provide consultation to frontline practitioners around extra familial harm through the screening of Vulnerabilities Screening Tools, chairing strategy meetings and training.

***We understand that you/your team are currently working on some new projects. Can you share more about this?***

We are about to roll out a Contextual Safeguarding Framework for Ealing which is really exciting! This will provide a framework for enhanced ways of working with young people experiencing harm outside of their families and encourage young people to have more of an active role in planning interventions for them and their families.

We are also about to trial a Neighbourhood assessment in conjunction with the Trusted Spaces team and Safer Communities colleagues. This will apply a safeguarding lens to an assessment of an area which has been identified as having higher than average crime rates. The process will engage with community members and young people to think about how the area could be made safer.



***Have you been faced with any challenges thus far on your journey as a CS co-ordinator , and if so, would you mind sharing a few of them with us?***

I know that it can be challenging working with young people who are experiencing harm outside of their families. Some victims may have been groomed to not trust professionals or had negative past experiences with different services. They may also not recognise that the situations that they are in are harmful, especially at the beginning. This can lead to a number of different barriers and make the work exhausting. It's easy to become demoralised when constantly being told to go away (sometimes less politely!) or not having young people respond as we might hope they will. It is important for all of us to be curious without accusing or being judgmental. Supervision and support is really important in these situations.

***What do you think could help to try and overcome some of these challenges?***

We know that relationship-based practise can be challenging, but it is the thing that works! Consciously making the time and prioritising these relationships is a good place to start. It is important to meet the young person where they are. As mentioned, we have a new framework coming in shortly which aims to give young people more of a voice about the planning that happens for them and around them. It recognises that young people may not always agree with the professionals' assessment of risk. The framework aims to help young people to be recognised as more than the harm that they are experiencing.

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

It was a great feeling when Ealing was selected as a site for the Scale Up project with the University of Bedfordshire who are leading on the research around the contextual safeguarding approach. This bid was a joint effort with the partnership so I cannot take all the credit, however our successful bid affirmed that we are heading in the right direction! We are very fortunate to be receiving ongoing support from the University of Bedfordshire to help embed the approach in our policies and practice.

***What is your long term goal with the roll out the contextual safeguarding approach in Ealing?***

I am very keen to develop Level 2 contextual safeguarding work which will involve carrying out assessments on different contexts such as peer groups, schools and neighbourhoods. We would like to get to a position where we are thinking about ways to intervene in these different contexts and hope to see this develop over the next year to 18 months. I also hope that we will have a wider offer of services to meet our young peoples needs. This will also include additional early intervention support, to try and minimise the escalation of risk and not waiting for cases to hit crisis point.



## 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 [vulnerabilitystool@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:vulnerabilitystool@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

Annabelle Raza, Deputy Team Manager in MAST Adolescents, has done some outstanding thinking with a professional network about the safety planning for a young person who is at risk of exploitation.

Annabelle has helped the network to consider with the young person:

- How the young person can notice if they're feeling unsafe including what that sensation might feel like in their body
- How, realistically, the young person can let safe adults know how they're feeling including, in this instance, the use of pre-agreed emojis
- Planning with the young person what a helpful response from professionals and their family might look like
- Clarity about why and when the police might be contacted

Well done Annabelle!

Contextual Safeguarding Advisors and Champions, Cat and Catherine, will be facilitating a workshop on safety planning on 8th July. If you work with adolescents and are interested in finding out more about this aspect of supporting young people to be safer, we would love to see you there. Booking will soon become available via CPD.

We want to honour and celebrate any 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) including the name of the worker, team they're in and why you think the work they undertook was so great.



### Contact

Ealing has five Contextual Safeguarding Core Champions:

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

**Hazel Hanrahan:** Team Leader, Safer Communities

**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 proposed Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network, [please email us](#) and one of the team will get back to you as soon as possible.