



EALING'S CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING CHAMPIONS NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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

Quote of the month:

"At any given moment you have the power to say this is not how the story is going to end."

Christine Mason Miller



Welcome to the newsletter for March 2022.

Since it was National Child Exploitation Awareness Day on 18th March, we decided to make 'exploitation' the focus of this month's newsletter. The communications and learning events that led up to this day were designed to encourage professionals to be able to spot potential concerns and speak out against exploitation as well as fostering curiosity about adults developing inappropriate relationships with children/young people and peer-on-peer exploitation. This month's direct work tool, therefore, is aimed at supporting young people who may be a victim of Child Criminal Exploitation.

It was World Social Work Day on 15th March 2022, which is a special day to celebrate the profession and all the fabulous work of the profession. As social work professionals ourselves, we have an understanding of the challenges social workers can face. However, the many positive changes achieved for the families and young people we work with can go unnoticed by broader society.

This month, we interviewed two Ealing social workers who have undertaken outstanding work with young people at risk of extra-familial harm and exploitation: Taiwo Adedeji (Leaving Care Team) and Olivia Begley (SWiS team). Taiwo and Olivia kindly shared aspects of their social work journeys with us as well as some candid reflections on the day-to-day realities and challenges of the role. We hope you enjoy the read as much as we did!

As always, feedback is welcome.

Cat, Catherine, Shannon and Suzy

Vulnerability Screening Tool

If you have concerns about extra-familial harm for a young person you are working with please complete the Vulnerability Screening Tool on Mosaic. If you don't have access to Mosaic you can request the Word template via vulnerabilitiestool@ealing.gov.uk.

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.

Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network

We're aware there are new starters amongst our readers. We wanted to take this opportunity to update you about the Contextual Safeguarding Champions Network.

The Network meets bi-monthly and has a range of professionals in attendance from social care, health, Prevent, Safer Communities and education. Each session, we focus on a spotlight topic, which enables members to learn but also share their own professional experiences.

In a recent survey completed, the current members stated how valuable, informative and interactive the sessions are. One member said that they enjoy attending as it helps to keep them updated on current trends amongst young people as well as how to identify risk. They are also sharing what they have learnt with their own teams, which was a key objective when the Network was originally put together.

It's time to grow the network to include other services and partner agencies. This is your invitation to come along to our next session on 21st April 2022 at 11am. If you would like to attend or find out more, please email us cschampions@ealing.gov.uk.



Direct Work Tool

Hiya, Shannon here with direct work tools focusing on Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and building resilience. With all of these pieces of work, the young person can be as creative as they like - all you'll need is paper and pens to hand.

If a young person is open about what they are involved in, you might want to explore their offending history. This will help to build an understanding about their decision-making and how much choice they have regarding their actions. You could also have a conversation with young people to ascertain what they understand about gangs. It might be helpful to print off a map of Ealing and asking them if they can identify any gangs in Ealing.

It is important to be curious about your young person's perception of exploitation - what language might they use to describe exploitative situations for example? Do your opinions differ about language? What benefits might they associate with gang membership? What is important to them and how can that concern be addressed? Using the Circle of Influence tool (bottom right image), we can start to understand who the young person recognises as people who have influenced them when they were younger and who they feel influences them now. Similarly, you can also focus on the young person and significant events they have experienced in their life (whether positive or negative). As part of getting to know them, you can complete the 'Things' worksheet (Top right image) which involves a series of lists - for example, "list 4 things you are good at".

These tools can help you to ensure that a young person who may be experiencing CCE feels heard and has a say in the plans made to safeguard them. It's important they never feel blamed for any harm they experience.

As ever, please let us know if you have comments or feedback on these tools by emailing us.

Things.

5 things that make you happy

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3 places you feel safe?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4 people you respect

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

3 brands that you like

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4 things you are good at

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

4 things you dislike in others

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

3 things you want in friendship

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

2 places you feel unsafe.

- 1.
- 2.

Direct work tool - 'Things' worksheet



Direct work tool - Events of life worksheet

Contextual Safeguarding Team Training Offer 2022

Over the coming months, there are various training sessions focusing on Extra Familial Harm:

- Wednesday 27th April 2022 - Child Sexual Exploitation.
- Tuesday 10th May 2022 - Child Criminal Exploitation
- Friday 27th May 2022 - Missing from care, home and education
- Thursday 9th June 2022 - Contextual Safeguarding
- Friday 10th June 2022 - CEOP training
- Thursday 23rd June 2022 - Safety Planning Workshop
- Wednesday 29th June 2022 - Return Home Interviews
- Wednesday 13th July 2022 - National Referral Mechanism and Trafficking

You can book onto all of these trainings via CPD, which can be found at www.ealingcpd.org.uk

Taiwo Adedeji and **Olivia Begley** took some time out of their busy schedules to talk to us about social work and some amazing work they have done with vulnerable young people affected by extra-familial harm. Well done Olivia and Taiwo, keep up the fabulous work!

Please introduce yourself and your role?

T: My name is Taiwo Adedeji, and I am a social worker.

O: I'm Olivia and I have been a practicing social worker since March 2019 when I started as an ASYE in MAST Acton.

What team are you based in? Please can you tell our readers about the nature of your team?

T: I am based in the Leaving Care Team. Our role is to enable young people to leave local authority care and make a successful transition to independence and adulthood. The team consists of social workers and leaving care workers. We ensure that young people have appropriate physical and emotional tools as they leave care.

O: I am currently based in the SWiS (Social Workers in Schools) Team at Villiers High School. The SWiS Team is a pilot working across 8 different schools in Ealing, embedding a social worker within the school to undertake both statutory (CFA, CIN & CP) and preventative work. Our preventative work includes 1-1 sessions with young people, parenting sessions, group work and professional consultations.

Please share one fun fact about you that most people do not know:

T: My name Taiwo means twin, so if you ever meet another Taiwo they have a twin. It's Nigerian tradition. My twin is called Kehinde.

O: I have been in the top 1% of Dolly Parton fans in the world.

How did you become a social worker and what does the role mean to you?

T: I used to be a Personal Advisor in another Leaving Care Team. My manager encouraged me to study for the social work qualification. Being a social worker means having the opportunity to meet people/children from all areas of life and to use a range of skills. I enjoy working with people and get a sense of achievement when I can see the changes and progress that a family/child has made.

O: I have worked with children since I was 15 years old. In my first job working with children, I remember seeing signs of neglect in a few of the children who I worked with and I wanted to understand how and why this was happening. For me, social work means that I am able to advocate, protect and empower the children, young people and families I work with. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing a family making sustained and positive change for themselves and getting to a place where they don't need us anymore!

What approach/theory mostly underpins your practice and why?

T: I really believe in a Strengths based approach, as it focuses on the family's/individuals' strengths. Families we work with may think that we are there to judge and criticise. It helps the working relationship if we start off by noticing the good things - including the strengths of the network around them - already happening.

O: I am a huge fan of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity & Empathy). I find that PACE helps to navigate and explore how someone is feeling and creates a safe space for people to share their thoughts, feelings and lived experiences without judgement.

Can you tell us about a piece of work you are most proud of concerning a young person who was affected by extra-familial harm?

T: I worked with a young man who was trapped in county lines and would go missing from the family home for long periods. He lived on an inner-city council estate and was groomed to join a gang. He felt that by "working" with the gang he would be able to support his mum who was a single parent on low income. When he realised the dangers of his situation and tried to leave, the gang started threatening him and his family. Working with the YOS team, housing and mentoring organisations we were able to move the family off the estate to a place of safety and clear rent arrears. Eventually the young person returned to education and is no longer associated with a gang.

O: I recently met with a young person who opened up about some of the worrying criminal activity they had been involved with. We quickly built a rapport through PACE. There had been a history of the young person not always being honest about what they had been up to, so it felt very rewarding that they felt comfortable enough to share!

What would say is one of the biggest challenges that face social workers today?

T: Lots of paperwork that can be repetitive. I often wonder if the families/children understand the paperwork and what difference does it make to their lived experience. I understand we have to do it, but it does detract from the direct work that is needed.

O: Following the pandemic, I would say that one of the biggest challenges social workers face today is responding to and managing the mental health of the children and families we work with. As mental health services have become even more over-stretched, this has caused a backlog in people being seen, which often means that we are taking on a lot of emotional A&E for children and their families.

Can you think of ways to combat this issue?

T: Streamlined paperwork.

O: Regular training for all staff around mental health and what services are available.

And lastly, if you had a magic wand and was given one wish for social work concerning young people, what would that be?

T: Time to be able to do more direct work, and to be able to put those theories we learnt into use.

O: I would love to see a better range of funding and resources for our children, young people and their families!

Contact

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.

EXERCISE: CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE

Intention: To gain a better understanding of how the participant views themselves and their place within their internal and external environments. This may also enable the worker to establish a connection with the young person and discuss alternative positive role models.

Activities:

- Map out the people that have influenced the participant when they were growing up (between 7- 11). Think family member, teachers, people in the community. Also include external influences like sports people and musicians, celebrities. This influence doesn't have to be positive. Don't make judgments. Try and get 5-8 people (see example)
- Repeat the exercise looking at who the Young Person looks up to at present.
- *Encourage discussion about alternative positive role models. Who is their most positive role model and why? what kind of relationship do they have?*
- Repeat the exercise again with the young person this time looking at who they influence (if anyone) and how they are viewed by others. Is this positive or negative?

Has this changed since they got arrested?

Tools, materials and resources:

Pen and paper, Circles print out?

Notes:

Use macro and micro environments

Is there positive male influences?

Father figures, uncles, older brothers?

Encourage them to be honest. We are not looking for a correct Answer!

EXERCISE: EXPLORING OFFENDING HISTORY

Intention:

This exercise provides the opportunity for the participants to think about and to reflect on their own behaviours and action regarding their offending. The exercise is also about facilitating building a relationship between the worker and the young person.

Activities:

- **Mapping of offence-** Ask the young person to talk through their offending (PWITS, possession etc)
- Explore with the young person what the events were that led up to committing the offence/s?

What was their decision making?

What were they feeling and thinking before, during and immediately after the offence(s)?

How much choice did they feel they had in committing the offence?

Who if anybody had influence on their decision making?

What impact has it had on them embarrassment, pride, remorse?

Tools, materials and resources:

Depending on learning styles this exercise can be completed as a short verbal exercise or can be mapped out using A4 paper. (see example)

Comments:

Softly challenge and probe for answers. Remain non-judgmental. Listen and ask questions. Encourage critical thinking.

EXERCISE: UNDERSTANDING “GANGS”

Intention:

To gain an understanding of the young person’s understanding of what a gang is and explore the risks associated with gang culture.

Explore with the young person the meaning of gangs and what they can provide to young people.

Activities:

Make a “Wordcloud” using word that the young person identifies with “Gangs”
Encourage them to use both positive and negative connotations.

Secondary activity (if the young person is involved in drug dealing)

What is the local structure regarding gangs and drugs dealing?

Asking the young person how they view things locally. Map this out on paper with them. (See example)

Explore with the young person what are their views about some of the risks of young people being involved in gangs in Oxfordshire.

Tools, materials and resources:

Laptop with internet. http://www.abcya.com/word_clouds.htm Pen and paper.

Comments:

The young person may not identify as being in a “gang” in the traditional sense of the word.

Gang wordcloud - Encourage them to use both positive and negative connotations. Acknowledge that gangs may provide protection and a sense of belonging.

Asking questions regarding local structure, gangs and dealing, county lines.