



Winter Newsletter

Welcome to our Winter Newsletter

There have been many changes in safeguarding since the new Darlington Safeguarding Partnership went live in July 2019, not to mention the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficult year we have all encountered. However, here we are at the end of 2020 already! This time last year, few people had heard of COVID-19, Clap for Carers, Sir Captain Tom Moore, or Jay Flynn's record breaking Virtual Pub Quiz—yet all these headlines had the nation gripped and lifted our spirits during these unprecedented times.

Despite the ongoing pandemic, work continues to safeguard children, young people and adults with needs for care and support and their families throughout Darlington. The fact that we have been able to continue to work as a partnership and pull together, working tirelessly to improve outcomes for those we work with is positive and testament to the hard work and dedication of staff across all organisations. We have created new ways of working, using different technologies to assist with day to day working we never thought would be possible. We have included information and guidance on a number of subjects in this newsletter, which we hope you will find useful and helpful in your work.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued dedication during these unparalleled times. Whilst there are some positive prospects ahead with the roll-out of vaccines, these challenges will remain with us for some time to come.

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*This newsletter is
available on the
DSP website;
[https://darlington-
safeguarding-
partnership.co.uk/](https://darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/)*

*Season's
Greetings*

Ann Baxter, Independent Chair/Scrutineer

James Stroyan, Interim Director of Children and Adult Services

Adrian Green, Detective Chief Superintendent

Jean Golightly, Director of Nursing



Partnership Working Behind the Scenes



This has been a challenging time for all organisations and there have been some significant changes to the way organisations deliver services and statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities, to ensure children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners have committed to meeting every 3-4 weeks to have a strong collective oversight of all safeguarding arrangements and to ensure fulfilment of their statutory obligations.

Whilst the wider multi-agency Safeguarding Partnership Group is not meeting, the Statutory Partners continue to engage with wider partners and are inviting key leads along to meetings on a rotational basis, to obtain an understanding of current issues and safeguarding challenges their organisation may be facing.

You may be aware of the Critical Safeguarding Partnership Groups (child and adult) that were created at the beginning of the Pandemic to have oversight and understanding of the risks to the most vulnerable within our community. These groups continue to meet on a frequent basis to address safeguarding issues and concerns, and to identify those most at risk to ensure services and support are in place.

The children's group continues to discuss and review the changing cohort of children who may not be accessing services including education and health, due to parental anxiety or shielding/self-isolating in the family home and continue to liaise with relevant partners. Further work is to be undertaken within the adult group to obtain an understanding of the most vulnerable adults, as there may be less sight on adults who are vulnerable and living in their own homes.

The standing sub groups continue to meet and develop key pieces of work including ensuring policy and procedure is up to date and some of those revised policy, procedure and guidance are included within this newsletter.

Safeguarding Training is now being delivered in a virtual way and the Partnership is offering the full training programme, details of training is included on page 6 of this newsletter. We continue to raise awareness of key safeguarding campaigns and identify opportunities for learning. The Quality Assurance sub group is working on how it can seek assurance that the learning from reviews and audits is embedded within organisations.

The DSP website continues to provide information and updates on key guidance including links to revised Covid Guidance.

[Read here; COVID-19 Information for Partners](#)

Thematic Learning

The continuous identification of learning is a priority for Darlington Safeguarding Partnership and it was agreed to carry out a thematic review of all its Serious Case Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews, Learning Lesson Reviews and audit activity that had been undertaken over a four year period (2015-19). Although historically the number of reviews are low, it was clear that a number of key themes were beginning to emerge for the Partnership to consider.

A thematic briefing has been developed which outlines the key issues identified along with details of the learning, with signposting to tools and learning opportunities to help improve practice going forward to support those working with children and adults.

[Read it here: Thematic Briefing](#)

Key Messages

Launch of 4Kids

December saw the launch of a new project for Darlington—a partnership approach to tackling domestic abuse in the family home, with particular emphasis on the harm caused to children in the household.

4 Kids recognises the children as victims and both parents as causing harm. Through a restorative approach, the aim is to have both parents acknowledge the impact of their unhealthy relationship and to recognise how their behaviour affects the development of their children.

Bruising in Non-Mobile Children Protocol

Bruising in non-mobile children is rare and there is a significant risk that bruising may indicate abusive or neglectful care. The Protocol has recently been revised, setting out the referral pathway and is incorporated into the Child Protection Procedures. [Read it here;](#)

Impact on Young People with Mental Health Needs

The pandemic is having an unprecedented impact on the lives of people across the United Kingdom, including millions of children and young people. For those with existing mental health needs, the situation is creating additional anxiety and uncertainty, coupled with increased difficulties in accessing support. **Young Minds** has completed their Autumn 2020 survey, [read it here;](#)

ICON

During this challenging time, stress levels at home may be increased and the ability for families to cope is increasing. Families may be faced with additional stresses which they cannot control such as; loss of income, self-isolation with children and potentially at risk adults, social distancing restrictions on activities which might lessen stress (e.g. sports, social engagement, entertainment and celebrations) or enhance support and coping (e.g. support groups, children/baby groups and classes, baby clinics). **ICON** provides information and details on coping techniques. [Read about it here;](#)



<https://tacklechildabuse.campaign.gov.uk>

Anything you notice can help a child at risk

We all have a role to play in protection children and young people from child abuse and neglect.

Many people do not act because they're worried about being wrong.

CHILD ABUSE. IF YOU THINK IT, REPORT IT.

Children's Services Front Door

As you may know, changes were made to the way you report a concern for a child when the Children's Front Door went live in March 2020 and the **Children's Initial Advice Team (CIAT)** established, to take contacts over the telephone.

Relational and restorative practice has shown to be effective in helping people (both families and professionals), to find solutions to issues and work together to lead to better outcomes for children and young people. Darlington worked with other authorities who adopted this model, as research showed the number of children receiving statutory intervention fell and the wellbeing of young people and their families improved.

The new practice requires partners to telephone the CIAT and have a conversation with a social worker who will make sure the children are safe and ensure the right support is put in place. The process is being evaluated at key timelines by Professor Thorpe and colleagues at Lancaster University, who were initially commissioned to research this work as part of the Strengthening Families Programme.

Prior to the new process, the Children's Access Point (same period 1 year ago) were receiving 92 telephone and 2,942 email contacts. The CIAT are now receiving 530 telephone calls and 1,757 emails, which demonstrates the move towards a more conversational based relational practice. These figures evidence the new process has been embraced by all as there has been a dramatic increase in telephone calls and reduction in emails. Initial feedback indicates partners are welcoming the opportunity for discussion with richness in having a conversation to support families.

The conversion from contact to referral has reduced by 22.6% which has also resulted in a reduction in the number of strategy discussions, evidencing the model is proven to be effective. There has also been a reduction in the number of single assessments with those resulting in no further action reducing by 39.4%, which can be attributed to consistency at the front door and evidencing there has been a reduction in unnecessary or inappropriate interventions with families.

Weekly review meetings (internally) are taking place which look at all referrals from the previous week to ensure appropriate action has been taken, providing an opportunity to change outcomes for families if deemed necessary. It is proposed to extend these weekly meetings to include partner agencies in the new year.

It is not yet clear if the data is providing a true picture of the new process, or whether it is due to COVID-19 and further work will be undertaken to compare data with other similar local authorities.

If you have a concern for a child, please contact the Children's Initial Advice Team on **01325 406252**. The CIAT is open Monday to Friday 08.30 to 17.00 and Friday 08.30 to 16.30. If you need to get in touch out of hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team on **01642 524552**.

Stalking became a criminal offence in 2012

Stalking is about fixation and obsession. It is a high risk factor for serious harm and homicide, as well as serious psychological harm if left unchecked.

Why was the DASH developed?

There was widespread agreement that a more proactive risk based approach was needed to keep victims safe. Many domestic homicides and serious case reviews showed:

- A lack of understanding and training regarding risk identification, assessment and management
- insufficient risk identification, assessment and management
- insufficient information sharing
- failure to manage the intelligence
- failure to make the links across public protection and serial offending.



Raising Awareness of Stalking

Stalking is one of the most frequently experienced forms of abuse; abuse that can destroy the lives of its victims and escalate to rape and murder.

In the UK, stalking is estimated to affect one in 6 women and one in 12 men during their lifetime.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse Bill

The Domestic Abuse Bill is about to have its second reading in the House of Lords in January 2021. The new bill will offer many new protections for domestic abuse victims and their families which include:

- Create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that it is not just physical violence, but can also include emotional, coercive or controlling and economic abuse
- Children will be recognised as victims if they witness abuse
- Provision of Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders
- Place a duty on local authorities to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation
- Prohibit perpetrators of abuse cross-examining their victims in person in court
- All eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance.

DASH Risk Assessment Tool

The Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence (DASH) risk identification assessment tool has been revised - the tool helps practitioners understand the severity of the risk. The questions prompt discussion into behaviours that practitioners may not otherwise consider asking. If a victim of domestic abuse reaches a certain score on the DASH risk assessment, this would indicate high risk of abuse and a referral to MARAC will be required.

There is also a new Stalking and Harassment risk assessment form which helps practitioners ask questions to focus on the behaviours associated with stalking and harassment and the associated risk.

To access the new forms visit Domestic Abuse—Safeguarding www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/professionals/multi-agency-practice-guidance-and-additional-information

Hollie Gazzard Foundation

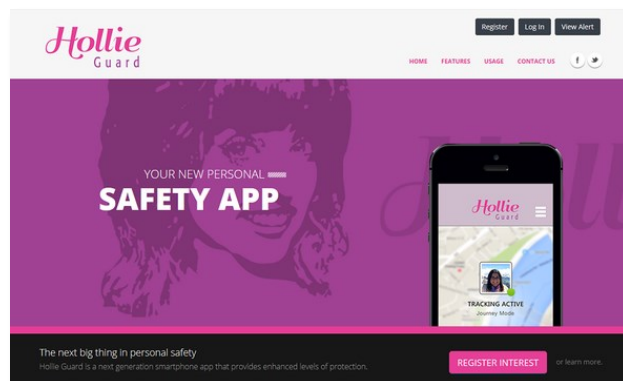
Hollie Guard App

Hollie Gazzard was stalked for months and then stabbed to death by her ex-partner in 2014 in the hairdressers where she worked.

The Hollie Gazzard Foundation has created an app to help keep people safe from domestic abuse.

This is a **free app**, and could be helpful for some people in domestic abuse/stalking situations. There is a Journey feature to give you the confidence to travel safely, a Deterrent mode and a Stealth mode.

So whether you are working alone, travelling to an unknown area or simply commuting around town, the Hollie Guard will allow you to feel safe with a simple shake or tap - activating the Hollie Guard immediately—even if there is no mobile phone signal or internet connection.



For more information go to;

<https://hollieguard.com/>

Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)

The government has told councils and other sector bodies “not to prioritise” implementing the replacement for the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards with the previously scheduled October 2020 go-live date now on hold.

Recent guidance updated on 30 November 2020, states the LPS was due to come into force in October of this year, but due to the delay in consultations regarding the code of practice and perhaps more significantly, the impact of the pandemic, the implementation will be postponed.

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said: “We are aware of the pressures the pandemic is putting on the health and social care sector and are not asking the sector to prioritise LPS preparation during this time.”

The target date for implementation is 1 April 2022. Prior to then, a revised MCA Code of Practice will be published, which, the sector trusts, will bring clarity to some outstanding questions about how LPS will work in practice.

For more information on LPS go to;
www.gov.uk/LPS

Replacing Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards system

The LPS will provide protection for people aged 16 and above who are, or who need to be deprived of their liberty in order to enable their care or treatment, and lack the mental capacity to consent to their arrangements.

“We hope you will find some useful resources for keeping children, young people and adults with needs for care and support safe.”

Key Safeguarding Campaigns and helpful information

Look out for details of key campaigns, recently published policies, procedures and practice guidance, along with other relevant safeguarding information on the website; <https://darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/latest-news/>

Coming soon;

1—7 February 2021; Sexual Abuse & Sexual Awareness Week. Too often male survivors of sexual abuse, assault and rape are silenced, blamed or ignore. We want all survivors of sexual abuse and sexual violence to be supported, respected, heard and get the help they deserve.

16 March 2021; Young Carers Action Day. Until now, the day has been for young carers up to the age of 18, but recent surveys of young carers and young adult carers showed that young people aged 18 to 25 are experiencing many of the same challenges as young carers.



Book Your Session

If you haven't already done so, why not book yourself onto a Virtual Training Session?

To book a session, email;

DSP.Training@darlington.gov.uk
with your preferred date and session
(see *Virtual Training Programme for course details*).

You will be sent a confirmation and a Virtual Teams Invite. Course overviews are sent approx. 1 week before the training session.

We are committed to continuing to develop the training offerings to ensure those working with children, young people and/or adults with needs for care and support have the necessary skills to recognise abuse and neglect and be confident in knowing how to report concerns.

Virtual Training

2020 has also been a challenging year for the Training function of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership. In March, all face to face training was suspended, however, we very quickly took the decision to move all training to an online format.



Initially, eLearning modules were provided for Safeguarding Children and Adults and other specialist sessions including PREVENT and Child Exploitation, and our comprehensive e-learning packages were well utilised by staff from all agencies who had time to focus on their professional development.

This e-learning continues to form an important element of the programme.

Since April 2020, we have provided virtual courses via Microsoft Teams, including Safeguarding Awareness, Managing Safeguarding Concerns, Child Exploitation and Neglect.

Moving forward into 2021, we are in position to offer further training virtually including Domestic Violence, Cumulative Harm, Formal Enquiries, Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Neglect.

New 2021 Virtual Training Programme

The new 2021 Virtual Training Programme can be accessed here; <https://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/training/training-programme/>.

This will be reviewed again in May 2021 to take account any new changes which may come into effect in the early part of next year.

The following free e-Learning packages are available and can be used for staff development and training purposes, to further support and enhance the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Programme.

PREVENT Strategy eLearning;

- Level 1 Child Safeguarding Awareness Workbook
- Level 1 Adults Safeguarding Awareness Workbook
- PACE (Parents against Child Sexual Exploitation) 'Keep them Safe' CSE Training Resource
- Local Approach to Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation - Multi-Agency
- Awareness of Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Understanding Young Minds
- The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) for 16 and 17-year olds



Who We Are

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership was established in July 2019 in response to changes in Children and Social Work Act 2018 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The Partnership replaces the Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB) and Adult Safeguarding Board (SAB).

Safeguarding responsibilities are placed on police, health and local authority. The new arrangements provide a greater opportunity to strengthen partnership working across adults and children and ensure effective multi-agency working throughout our whole system. The vision is 'to ensure Darlington is a place where children and adults live their lives safely'.

We work with key safeguarding leads from a range of organisations including, Education, Care Quality Commission, providers of Health Care, Local Authority Housing, Public Health and Youth Offending, Fire Service, Probation Services, CAFCASS and Voluntary and Community sector - all of which have responsibility for safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

The first DSP Annual Report was published in November 2020 and sets out what the Partnership has achieved over the past year, to ensure there are effective arrangements in place. [Read it here;](#)

If you have any questions or queries on any items in the newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Business Unit staff;

Amanda Hugill, DSP Business Manager

E: amanda.hugill@darlington.gov.uk

T: 01325 406450 M: 07870 600637

Marian Garland, Business Development Officer

E: marian.garland@darlington.gov.uk

T: 01325 406451

Chris Ashford, Multi-Agency Trainer

E: chris.ashford@darlington.gov.uk

T: 01325 406453

Joyce Bowler, Business Support Officer

E: joyce.bowler@darlington.gov.uk

T: 01325 406452

Thank you!

On behalf of the Statutory Safeguarding Partners, a huge thank you to each and every person who will spend the festive period away from their loved ones, by keeping some of the most vulnerable people in our own communities safe.

We would love to hear how we can continually improve our communications and engagement with our partners. If you wish to share any articles or good news stories or have any comments or suggestions for the next publication, please drop the Business Unit an email; DSP@darlington.gov.uk

The Partnership is committed to publishing a Newsletter 4 times a year. The next publication will be issued in Spring 2021.

Are you concerned about a child?

Contact the Children's Initial Advice Team

Professionals on 01325 406252, Public on 01325 406222 or Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team on 01642 524552.

Are you concerned about an adult?

Contact the First Point of Contact Team

on 01325 406111 or the Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team on 01642 524552.

