Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

Protecting Children and Adults

JULY

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Welcome to our July 2026 Newsletter

In this newsletter, we bring together information which we hope you will find useful and we highlight how the Partnership continues to communicate and keep in touch with all our agencies and provide guidance to support you in your role working with children and adults. In this edition, we bring you information in the spotlight about the Families First Partnership Programme, updates and also information about Partnership work, important safeguarding updates and new training dates.

Me Learning

Don't forget to log in to your Me Learning account and see our new e-learning courses

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In the Spotlight:
Families First Partnership

The Families First Partnership Programme represents the biggest transformation of children's social care in a generation, bringing a fresh approach to how we support children, young people and families through earlier help, stronger partnership working and greater family involvement.
As a partnership we are moving to a new way of working. By building stronger connections across services and involving families at every stage, we'll be better placed to help children thrive, keep families strong and ensure the right support is available when it is needed most.
Backed by more that £523 million of national investment, the Families First Partnership Programme is being implemented across the country, and Darlington is committed to making a real difference for local children and families. The reforms are built around three interconnected areas. Think of them as three pillars holding up a stronger, safer system:

Pillar One

Family Help

A seamless joined-up support offer from early help right through to child in need. One team, one plan, no gaps.

Pillar Two

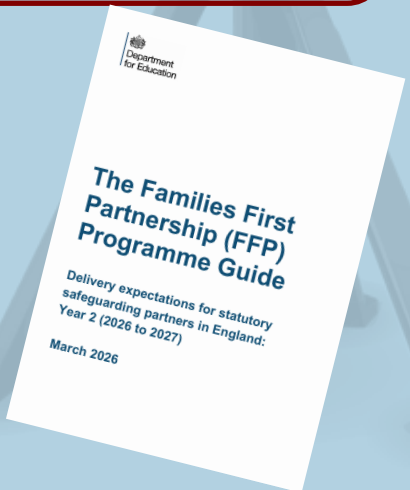
Multi-Agency Child Protection

Specialist, expert teams, social workers, police, health, and education working as one to protect children facing the most serios harm.

Pillar Three

Family Networks and Family Group Decision-Making

Harnessing the power of family, friends and community to keep children safe before statutory processes take over. Families design their own solutions, with our support.



New Safer Sleep Saves Lives Campaign Launched to Help Protect Babies

A new Safer Sleep Saves Lives campaign is launching across County Durham and Darlington on **27th July 2026** and we would encourage all partners to share the campaign materials internally and externally to maximise visibility, partner engagement and public awareness.

This campaign has been developed in response to:

· Local infant deaths where unsafe sleep was identified as a contributory factor

· Near-miss incidents reported across health and safeguarding partners

· Ongoing concerns around co-sleeping in high-risk circumstances

· Incidents involving sofas, alcohol, smoking and overheating

The campaign follows local reviews of infant deaths and serious incidents where unsafe sleeping practices were identified as a contributing factor. While many families follow safer sleep guidance, local data shows that preventable risks — including sofa sleeping, smoking, alcohol use and overheating — continue to place babies at risk.

At the heart of the campaign is a powerful new video filmed in a real home with local babies. The film demonstrates practical steps families can take to reduce risk.

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

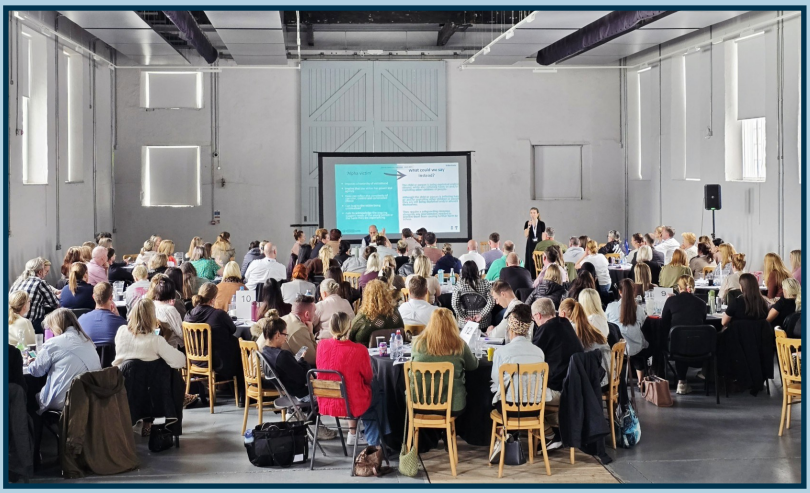
- Always place baby on their back
- Keep baby smoke-free
- Use a firm, flat sleep surface
- Avoid sofas and armchairs
- Keep baby in the same room for the first six months
- Avoid alcohol or medications that cause drowsiness

Every conversation about safer sleep matters.

For more information and tips please visit the safe sleep webpage https://www.cddft.nhs.uk/services/maternity/safe-sleep

DSP Harm Outside the Home Conference May 2026

Thank you to all who attended and supported our Harm Outside the Home Conference at the end of May. This was a very successful day with a range of speakers presenting of different aspects of this area of safeguarding including use of language, exploitation and online safety.
We were able to bring together over 140 delegates from a wide range of agencies and organisations to ensure that this learning event could reach a many professionals and volunteers across Darlington as possible.
Feedback from the day was extremely positive and we are collating responses both from the day and also subsequent feedback in order to inform our future learning and events.
Thank you to those of you who presented at the event, your input is greatly appreciated and continues to have an impact on the practice of others.
Some of the presentations shared on the day will be available from the DSP on request and on our website in due course.



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OUR PLEDGE

To have open, honest, bold conversations with each other as multi-agency partners in order to do the very best we can for adults and children in Darlington.

For many families across Darlington, multi-agency working is vital to maintain a focus on children and adults while also keeping them at the heart of all decisions.

Our Pledge is an opportunity to:

- Seek out professional conversations with each other at the earliest opportunity
- Have a shared understanding of the strengths and risks within a family
- Actively listen to each other and share important information
- Respect each other's expertise
- Be open and empathetic to the professional views of others
- Be professionally curios and evidence what we say
- Use common language that everyone understands

Concerned about a child?

Contact the Children's Initial Advice Team

Professionals on **01325 406252**

Public on **01325 406222**

Concerned about an adult?

Contact the Adult Contact Team on **01325 406111**

Statutory Safeguarding Partners

James Stroyan, Executive Director of People

Nicola Lawrence, Detective Chief Superintendent

Richard Scott, Chief Nurse ICB