

7 Minute Briefing: Multi-Agency Audit – Child Sexual Abuse within the family environment

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What else?

- ❖ Partners from the CSA delivery group are developing pages on the WSP Website which will provide information and practical support for practitioners and managers.
- ❖ WSP have worked with the Centre of Expertise to develop a programme of CSA training for professionals www.walsall.event-booking.org.uk
- ❖ Look out for forthcoming partnership CSA events publicised in the WSP Spotlight newsletter and Website.
- ❖ **Subscribe to our newsletter for alerts** www.walsallsp.co.uk



1

Why?

- Strengthening the multi-agency identification, response, and prevention of child sexual abuse has been area of focus in Walsall and nationally for several years.
- In June 2023, CSA became a priority within Walsall Safeguarding Partnership recognising the interface with Adults Services particularly when working with victims/survivors.
- In Walsall, partnership working linked to ‘Operation Satchel’ resulted in the conviction of 21 adults from several families across several generations for CSA.

6

What you can do to improve your practice

- Strengthen your assessment of risk by also understanding the previous addresses, professional involvement with the family, adult/s of concern, other children and historical databases.
- Assessing the origins of possible sexualised behaviours, physical signs, disclosures, retractions in the context of CSA concerns is important.
- The Designated Dr for Safeguarding, ICB has developed a pathway for the [management of anogenital symptoms](#) for children with no disclosure of sexual abuse/assault.
- SARC should be routinely invited to strategy meetings where children are at risk of sexual abuse www.westmidsregionalcypsas.co.uk



2

What did we do?

A ‘deep dive’ audit of 4 randomly selected children subject to Child in Need, Protection and Looked After plans. In all 4 audits, multi-agency practice was rated as requires improvement with 3 including elements of good practice.

The children were aged 5-15, part of sibling groups and three were female and one male. Two were white/British, one white/British Caribbean and the other from Asian British/Bangladeshi descent.

Agencies and practitioners from Schools, Walsall Healthcare Trust (Health Visiting and School Nursing), G. P’s/Primary Care, Children’s Social Care, West Midlands Police, Housing, Probation, Sexual Abuse Referral Centre.

5

What you can do to improve your practice

CSA can be a complex area of work. Using individual and group supervision strengthens your ability to reflect, be professionally curious whilst remaining focused on the risks and needs of children.

Consider both the child’s views and behaviours when developing an understanding of their lived experience. Working with children and families to understand their history, developing three generational cultural genogram and multi-agency chronologies enables us to evaluate strengths and risks within their immediate and wider network.

Effective multi-agency working results in robust assessments and plans being developed.

4

Areas for Development

In 3 of the 4 audits, missed opportunities to identify and respond to potential early signs of CSA were noted. Improved information sharing both within and across agencies was required to make earlier informed decisions.

Some aspects of multi-agency assessment pathways and tools for assessing risk to children need to be strengthened.

Where professional difficulties or disagreements in decision-making featured, the WSP escalation process was not used.

Improved multi-agency plans and planning required particularly where there were ongoing Police investigations.

3

Good Practice

- All children were appropriately safeguarded from the risk of CSA and overall, effective joint working was evidenced.
- Positive relationship-based engagement with families resulting in effective interventions with children and their parents.
- Evidence of good joined up working particularly between Schools and Children’s Social Care.
- Schools were identified as active participants in the planning for all children.