

Keeping Connected - The CPCScotland Weekly Bulletin

Issue 65 - Tuesday 27th July 2021

Issued to support Child Protection Committees and partners with up to date information on child protection issues.

Welcome to Issue 65 of Keeping Connected.

Following the webinar led by Dr. Alex McTier Evidence and Evaluation Specialist at CELCIS on 14th July on the findings from interviews with 7 Scottish local authority areas and analysis of wider national data and evidence to help explain divergent trends, I am delighted to share that this report has now been published on the CELCIS website (Item 1). This report offers interesting insights into some local areas contextual factors in responding children and families during Covid-19.

I would also draw your attention to Item 3 the latest update from the Child Protection Improvement programme, which offers details of the various recent work stream activity.

Please note we will continue with fortnightly publication of Keeping Connected over the summer holiday period.

Keep safe.

Alan Small CPCScotland Chair

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The impact of COVID-19 on children and families in Scotland: Understanding needs and services through local social work Data

This report was prepared by CELCIS in collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders in Scotland to inform the Scottish Government Children and Families Collective Leadership Group's consideration of the impact of COVID-19 on children and families.

The weekly SOLACE data return provided by local authorities since April 2020 continues to be a key data source in helping to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Scotland's children and young people in need of care and protection. The data has been widely used by Ministers and to inform the Children and Families Leadership Group and local planning.

Read the report here: [CELCIS |The impact of COVID-19 on children and families in Scotland](#)

Staying Together and Connected: Getting it Right for Sisters and Brothers', National Practice Guidance

The Scottish Government has published 'Staying Together and Connected: Getting it Right for Sisters and Brothers', National Practice Guidance, [staying-together](#) which was informed and drafted by a national process led and facilitated by CELCIS, supporting implementation of the new duties for Scottish local authorities that every looked after child will live with their brothers and sisters, where appropriate to do so, and that siblings should be supported to sustain lifelong relationships, if appropriate, even if they cannot live together – foster carer David, and Mark Wallace from fostering charity TACT Scotland, were [interviewed](#) on BBC Radio Scotland's Good Morning Scotland programme speaking about the new legislation (at 01:54 and 30:34 minutes in): <https://www.gov.scot/publications/staying-together-connected-getting-right-sisters-brothers-national-practice-guidance/>

Guidance, Resources and Information

Child Protection Improvement Programme Update

The latest Child Protection Improvement Programme Update can be found on the Scottish Government website and can read here: [Child Protection Improvement Programme Update #19](#)

National Adoption Strategy Funding

The UK Government has announced £48 million of funding for a new National Adoption Strategy to improve support for families adopting and reduce the time taken for children waiting to be adopted: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-57962679>

1. Coronavirus: child protection system

The Department for Education (DfE) has published the latest data (wave 25) on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on children's social care in England. Findings include: the total number of referrals from 31 May–06 June 2021 was 17% lower than the usual number at that time of year (although this may have been impacted by the fact the time period fell during half term for most schools); and the total number of children who started to be looked after reported in waves 1 to 25 of the survey was 10,020 - this is around 29% lower than the same period in 2017-20.

Read the report: [Vulnerable children and young people survey](#)

Read the latest survey: [Vulnerable children and young people survey: summary of returns waves 1 to 25 \(PDF\)](#)

2. Online safety

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport has published a strategy and action plan setting out the government's plan to coordinate media literacy education in the UK and enable users, including children and young people, to make safe choices online. Initiatives outlined in the action plan include upskilling youth workers to support young people to manage their online safety, and make early interventions to prevent harm occurring online.

Read the strategy and action plan: [Online media literacy strategy](#)

3. Practitioners' experiences of protecting children during the coronavirus pandemic: survey

The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) is carrying out a survey of the experiences and perceptions of frontline workers who have been working to protect children from abuse and neglect during the coronavirus pandemic.

Read the news story: [Frontline practitioners' experiences and perceptions of protecting children from maltreatment during COVID-19](#)

Take the survey: [Frontline practitioners' experiences and perceptions of protecting children from maltreatment during COVID-19](#)

4. Scottish Government factsheet on Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board

The Scottish Government has [published](#) a factsheet on Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board: principles for participation and engagement.

5. Evaluation of Children and Young People's Mental Health Trailblazer programme

The University of Birmingham has published an [interim report](#) evaluating [the Children and Young People's Mental Health Trailblazer programme](#) in England,

which started in 2018 and will run until 2023. As part of this, the UK Government's Department for Education, Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England have selected test areas where mental health support teams work in schools and further education colleges to improve early intervention and access to support, and promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people.

6. Coronavirus Mitigation Measures Among Children and Young People

A summary of the evidence base on the COVID-19 mitigation measures aimed at children and young people in Scotland.

Read the summary here: [Coronavirus Mitigation Measures Among Children and Young People](#)

7. Cyber Scotland Bulletin

This month's Bulletin includes the NSPCC Report Remove tool designed to help young people under 18 remove sexual images of themselves online. [July 2021 – Cyber Scotland](#)

8. Updated early learning and childcare statutory Guidance

The Scottish Government have published updated [early learning and childcare \(ELC\) statutory guidance](#). Information on the updated guidance is set out in [this letter to all ELC childcare providers](#).

The guidance applies from 1 August 2021 and replaces previous guidance. Statutory guidance was originally published in 2014 and between December 2019 and March 2020, the Scottish Government ran a consultation on an updated version.

Most of the changes in the new guidance reflect previously announced legislative and policy developments since 2014. Following feedback from stakeholders, changes have also been made to make the guidance clearer and more streamlined.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot

For Children Families and Communities

9. Child Disability Payment Scheme Pilot

The Scottish Government has announced that the Child Disability Payment scheme, which will replace the UK Government's Disability Living Allowance for children, will be open for applications in Dundee City, Perth and Kinross and the Western Isles as part of the pilot scheme before a full rollout in autumn: <https://www.gov.scot/news/child-disability-payment-pilot-opens-for-new->

[applications/](#)

10. Child protection in sport: information for parents

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) has updated the information for parents on its website. Information provided includes: speaking out about worries that your child is being abused or put at risk during sports activities; how to spot abuse; making support safe; and supporting your child in sport.

Visit the webpage: [Information for parents](#)

11. Your Best Friend Resource

Safelives acknowledge that young people often seek help from each other and online, rather than from traditional services. Your Best Friend will reach young people from every walk of life, empowering them with the knowledge and confidence to spot abuse in relationships and support their friends. Young people's voices and experiences are shaping the solution at every step. Eleven organisations are working with them to solve this problem, from different angles: young people, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, culture and religion and digital impact.

Young people can contribute here: [Your Best Friend](#)

12. Autism & ADHD

Ann Craft Trust and The Marie Collins Foundation have collaborated to produce a resource to help parents and children understand various online risks. [Helping My Autistic Child Stay Safe Online](#)

13. Young Scot Survey

This survey is a chance for young people to shape Young Scot's future strategy – and decide what services they offer them. If you work with or care for young people, please encourage them to take part so they continue to be at the heart of everything Young Scot do.

[Young people's survey \(alchemer.eu\)](#)

Training, Learning Events and Resources

14. Learning from case reviews: domestic abuse

NSPCC Learning has released a podcast discussing what we can learn from serious case reviews published since 2019 where children experienced domestic abuse. The podcast highlights the main themes from the NSPCC Learning case review briefing on domestic abuse, including: why domestic abuse is not always recognised as a child protection issue; how domestic abuse impacts children and young people; the need to understand the dynamics of domestic abuse; and avoiding making assumptions about the capacity of both parents to care for children.

Listen to the podcast: [Episode 40: domestic abuse](#)

15. Safeguarding adolescents and young adults: delivering a strengths-based approach

This virtual conference, organised by Healthcare Conferences UK, takes place on 3 November 2021.

Further Information: [Healthcare Conferences UK](#)

16. Association of Child Protection Professionals 'Policing County Lines - Impact of COVID-19'

This session will introduce findings from a UKRI-funded research project by the [University of Nottingham's Rights Lab](#) – exploring the effect of COVID-19 on Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines. Through a dualistic focus on detection and enforcement, and vulnerability and safeguarding, we will highlight the impact of COVID-19 on the drug supply method through the voices of those working to address County Lines and the harms it causes. We will also draw upon previous studies to provide a rich contextual overview into Child Criminal Exploitation.

This event takes place on Tuesday 24th August, please note there is a charge for this session.

[Full information and how to book](#)

17. Safeguarding and Child Protection Association Annual Conference

The annual Safeguarding conference highlights the latest key themes and issues relating to safeguarding and child protection. Driven by member feedback, each session will consider a topic of significance for practitioners working to develop and adhere to high standards of care for the young people, children and vulnerable adults they work with.

Details of the event, which takes place on 18th November, can be found here: [Conference: Annual Safeguarding conference | Sacpa](#)

Research and Evidence Based Reports

18. Children with disabilities

Cerebra, a charity helping children with brain conditions, has published a report looking at the experiences of families with disabled children in their interactions with local authority children's services departments in England. Findings from analysis of the assessment protocols of 143 children's services authorities and a survey of 92 parent carer led support organisations include: national and local social care policies create a default position for those assessing disabled children that assumes parental failings; and the national guidance that directs the process by which disabled children are assessed is not fit for purpose, as it fails

to address the assessment and support needs of disabled children for whom there is no evidence of neglect or abuse.

Read the news story: [Institutionalising parent-carer blame](#)

Read the report: [Institutionalising parent carer blame \(PDF\)](#)

19. Research on similarities in tactics used by perpetrators of child sexual abuse

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) has [published](#) new research based on analysis of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) case files between 2017 - 2020, examining the offending strategies of alleged perpetrators across a wide range of contemporary institutional contexts, such as schools, sport and foster care, as well as the nature of abuse and responses of professionals.

20. Child Poverty and Disability

The Scottish Government have produced evidence about child poverty in families with a disabled adult or child. The report presents the latest data on the child poverty targets and includes further evidence on the drivers of child poverty among this priority group.

[Tackling child poverty - third year progress report: annex B - child poverty in families with a disabled adult or child](#)

News and Opinion

21. Good Law Project – Children in Care

In this opinion piece, the Good Law Project highlight that local authorities are placing children in care in the cheapest accommodation, rather than the accommodation that best meets their needs.

Read the article here: [Children in care - Good Law Project](#)

22. Bright Spots Blog

As CELCIS, in partnership with Coram Voice, launches the Bright Spots programme pilot in Scotland, their latest [blog post](#) reflects on the experience of North Somerset Council's participation in the programme in England over the last seven years, including what they learned and some of the changes they made.

Please let us know what you think about the bulletin and provide information for inclusion in future editions. Contact Alan Small or Susan Mitchell at cpscotland-liaison@strath.ac.uk.

Please note that the information included in this bulletin is provided in good faith. Inclusion does not indicate CPCScotland endorsement of the content of the linked documents or websites.

