WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN

CACHE STL L3 Unit CYP Core 3.3
Understand how to safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people

By Gladys Briggs
What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding legislation and government guidance says that safeguarding means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

and “undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.”

*Working together to safeguard children (1.18 HM Government 2010)*

Why should children be Safeguarded?

It is part of their human rights

All children are protected by law – as a right under the UNCRC and Children’s act 1989

Children are very vulnerable

They are naturally innocent and trusting and this can lead to them being abused.

They are easily led

They may wander off from carer

They lack a sense of judgement. They don’t really know what’s good or bad for them or others.

They have no life experience so they haven’t really learnt much in life to know better.

They may be influenced by media (TV, Magazines, Internet, Adverts etc.)

They are not physically strong.

They can fall easily if they come under pressure especially if they are offered treats

They don’t understand what goes on inside the mind of different sorts of people

People may take advantage of them

They need to be safeguarded from wrong or negative stereotypes (e.g. If you grow up in this part of the country, or you come from this part of the world, you are less likely to succeed in life.)
What is Partnership Working?

Working Together sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. It is important that all practitioners working to safeguard children and young people understand fully their responsibilities and duties as set out in primary legislation and associated regulations and guidance.

Safeguarding acquired priority status following the death of Victoria Climbie. There was an inquiry and the government responded by introducing the Children Act 2004 - Every Child Matters.

The guidance requires that agencies and professionals work together bringing in their different roles to share the responsibility of safeguarding the child. The Children’s Trust was created. Local Safeguarding boards were set up. All agencies now have a duty to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority, working in partnership with other public organisations, the voluntary sector and children and young people, parents and carers and the wider community.

Schools should create and maintain a safe learning environment for children and young people; and identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.

Health professionals and organisations have a key role to play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They should aim to ensure all affected children receive appropriate and timely therapeutic and preventative interventions.

The police have child abuse investigation units (CAIU) and should be notified as soon as possible where a criminal offence has been, or is suspected of, being committed.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will cooperate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.
A Child Centred Approach. Why?

A child centred approach is basically where every child can communicate, make connections and have a choice, which goes on to freedom - think, experience, explore and ask questions and search for answers.

Essential to safeguarding and encouraging the welfare of a child or young person is having a child’s centred approach.

This could include seeing and keeping a child focused through difficulties they could be experiencing. Listening and ascertaining a child’s wishes and feelings will be important for the child, especially if they have formed a strong bond with the professional they are opening up to.

It will also be imperative to a child if that professional close to them understands their daily lives and what they might be experiencing, no matter how hard it could be for the adult to hear.

Crucially the child or young person will know there are people out there to help and support them when they need advice or guidance.

A child centred approach will also include seeing the child and keeping the child in focus throughout assessments, while working with the child and family, and when reviewing whether the child is safe and his or her needs are being met.

Undertaking direct work with the child is key, including:

- seeing the child alone when appropriate,
- ascertaining the child’s wishes and feelings and
- understanding the meaning of their daily life experiences to them.
The NSPCC was founded in 1884 and it’s vision is to end cruelty to children in the UK. They focus on 7 priority areas:

- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Babies (under the age of 1)
- Looked after children
- Disable children
- Children from minority ethnic background

The NSPCC is named in section 31(9) of The Children Act 1989 as an authorised person, which means it also has the power to apply directly for a court order if it believes a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

An emergency protection order allows a child to be removed from home for up to 8 days. Another option is the exclusion order, which would ban the alleged abuser from the family home but allow the child to stay with the non-abusive parent.

They have a confidential helpline and online service which is dedicated to children and young people call CHILDLINE. They work closely with local communities through their services for children and families, their campaigning work and vibrant network of community supporters and partners.

It has a Service Centre in three different parts of Wales. One of them is in Cardiff. It provides direct service to children in Wales. The centres are supposed to be places where the children can feel safe and be supported and better able to overcome the trauma they have experienced.

In the Cardiff Centre the offer the following services:

- Assessing the risk, protected child
- Caring Dads: Safer Children
- Treatment of Young People with harmful sexual behaviour
- Preventing non-accidental head injuries in babies
- letting the future in.
The Social Service

The Director of Children’s Services, under section 18 of the Children Act 2004 has responsibility for ensuring that a local authority meets their specific duties to organise and plan services and to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Each local authority is responsible for establishing a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in their area and ensuring it is run effectively. An LSCB can cover more than one local authority area.

Social workers take a lead role in:
- Responding to children and families in need of support and help undertaking enquiries following allegations or suspicion of abuse
- Undertaking initial assessments and core assessments as part of the Assessment Framework
- Convening strategy meetings and initial and subsequent child-protection conferences
- Court action to safeguard and protect children
- Coordinating the implementation of the child protection plan for children on the child protection register
- Looking after and planning for children in the care of the council.
- Ensuring that looked-after children are safeguarded in a foster family, children's home or other placement.

In Caerphilly County Borough Council, the Directorate of Social Services provides a range of services for children, young people and their families.
It has a legal duty under the Children Act 1989 to help and protect children in need.
It undertakes an assessment to determine the support a family may require to help them promote the well-being and development of a child or young person.

It provides support and advice when a child:
- Is in need because their family is in crisis
- Is in need because a parent has a disability
- Is in need of protection and safeguarding due to the risk of harm, abuse or neglect
- Has a disability
- Is cared for away from their family
- Is in need of support after leaving the care of the local authority

Services available include: Adoption, Assessment of need, Child protection, Childcare, Children with disabilities, Children's rights officer, Family support service, Fostering, Leaving care, Transition into adulthood, Looked after children,private fostering, Youth offending service.
References

HM Government
Department of Education
Child Protection: Role of LA Children’s Social Care
http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/

NSPCC Child protection factsheet

Newcastle Safeguarding Children’s Board
http://www.nscb.org.uk/staff-and-volunteers/procedures/

Caerphilly Safeguarding Children’s Board
http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/cscb/english/home.html

HM Government
Department for children, Schools and Families
Working Together to Safeguard Children

What is safeguarding and why does it matter to my organisation?
http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/getting_started/Pages/Why_does_safeguarding_matter.aspx

Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools(Primary)
By Louise Burnham and Brenda Baker

Teaching Assistant’s Handbook Level 3
By Teena Kamen