

## **Serious Case Review Learning Bulletin**

**This learning bulletin outlines the learning from the Overview Report for Family X that was published by SSCB on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 . The SSCB expects that this bulletin will be used by every team in every setting to review the team's practice against the learning, identify what the team needs to do and engage actively in transforming practice.**

## Serious Case Review Learning Bulletin Family X

<b>Theme of SCR</b>	Neglect/ sexual abuse/domestic violence/ risk taking behaviours/missing from home/drug and alcohol misuse/self-harm/sexual exploitation /sexual abuse
<b>Date Published</b>	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2017
<b>Case details :</b>	
<p><b>Family History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The family is White British with English being their first language</li> <li>• 2 Fathers</li> <li>• Large sibling group</li> <li>• Family came to the attention of services from an early age Children made subject to Child Protection Plans on two occasions for a total of five years</li> <li>• Parental alcohol misuse and low level mental health issues</li> <li>• Poor and chaotic parenting</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Points of Learning:</b>	
<p><b>Indicators of risk and vulnerability:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposed to, and were suffering from, chronic neglect</li> <li>• Domestic abuse for which the father of the older children was imprisoned</li> <li>• Lack of attendance at health appointments due to parents not taking children</li> <li>• Risk to the family home due to physical conditions</li> <li>• Criminality of the children</li> <li>• Possible drug dealing</li> <li>• Chronic non-school attendance</li> <li>• Sexualised behaviour by one or more children</li> <li>• High level of accidents suggestive of low level supervision</li> <li>• Impact of poor parenting made children vulnerable e.g., going missing, sexual exploitation</li> </ul> <p><b>Learning from the Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better outcomes would be achievable for children at risk from neglect if multi-agency activity was underpinned by a common assessment tool supported by clearly defined parameters of acceptable standards of care</li> <li>• To avoid drift in achieving positive outcomes for children, it is necessary to give specific focus to parental capacity for change when assessing parents in a safeguarding context</li> <li>• For children at risk of harm, a multi-agency approach is best delivered through a child protection plan that adopts SMART planning techniques</li> <li>• Ensuring the most appropriate categorisation of a Child Protection Plan is significant to the understanding and targeted response to the primary reason for risk</li> <li>• When working with chaotic families it is important that professionals remain focussed on the children and their voice, and not be distracted from this by the challenge of working with parents</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations for SSCB</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In order to improve the effectiveness of multi-agency practice when working with children who experience neglect, support and challenge parents/carers to improve</li> </ol>	

their parenting abilities, develop resilience in children and improve outcomes for these children the Board is:

- Supporting the Children's Strategic Partnership (CSP) to develop a clear neglect framework, assessment tools, processes and practice models.<sup>1</sup> This will include a set of quality standards to support practitioners when assessing neglect.
- Work with the CSP to develop and implement a model for assessing capacity to change that can be used across all assessment activity

This work will be complete by December 2018

2. To strengthen the multi-agency responsibility to develop and implement robust child protection plans with children and their parents, the Board will review, refresh and implement the SSCB Core Practice Standards for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children in Sunderland through Child Protection Conferences and expand it to cover the child protection process. This work will be complete and part of the SSCB procedures by April 2018
3. The Board to oversee the introduction of quality assurance processes which ensure that children subject to Child Protection Plans remain categorised to the most appropriate source of risk. This work will be complete by April 2018
4. In order to maintain a focus on the voice of the child in multi and single agency practice around neglect the Board will act on the findings of both the recent SSCB audit on the Voice of the Child and the Section 11 Audit undertaken in 2017 by March 2018

The Overview Report was published on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 alongside two other SCRs, one regarding neglect and the other regarding serious harm to a teenager. The report and accompanying documents can be accessed at [SSCB SCRs and Documents](#)

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<sup>1</sup> (X reference with the [SSCB Business Plan 2017-2019](#) – Theme 4.1 & 4.2 and CYPP 2012- 2022 – Priority 1 & 5)