

## **Serious Case Review Learning Bulletin**

**This learning bulletin outlines the learning from the Executive Summary for Young Person K that was published by SSCB on 13 September 2016. 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.**

**Executive Summary (Serious Case Review) Learning Bulletin  
Young Person K (YP K)**

<b>Theme of SCR</b>	Risk taking behaviours/numerous care episodes/missing from care/drug and alcohol misuse/self-harm/sexual exploitation /domestic violence/bullying via social media/suicide
<b>Date Published</b>	13 September 2016
<b>Case details :</b>	
<b>Family History</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The family is White British with English being their first language</li> <li>• YP K's parents separated, Mother commenced new relationship with YP K's Step-father</li> <li>• Domestic violence episodes between YP K's Mother and Step-father</li> <li>• Involvement of Social Care with the family (YP K and sibling were subject to Child Protection Plans for Emotional Abuse)</li> </ul>	
<b>Young Person K</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born 1999</li> <li>• Risk taking behaviour including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Episodes of self-harming</li> <li>• Drug and alcohol misuse</li> <li>• Sexual activity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Victim of sexual assault</li> <li>• Victim of bullying (via social media)</li> <li>• Witnessed domestic violence from an early age</li> <li>• Died 2013 (Coroner returned a verdict of Suicide)</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Points of Learning:</b>	
<b>Indicators of risk and vulnerability:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of Social Care involvement with YP K and her sibling</li> <li>• Unsettled family background, YP K experienced a number of house/area moves</li> <li>• Number of referrals into Children's Services around Domestic Violence led to YP K and sibling being made subject to Child Protection Plans</li> <li>• YP K's risk taking behaviour ie episodes of self-harming, drug and alcohol misuse, sexual activity</li> <li>• YP K going missing from care/home</li> </ul>	
<b>Key learning points</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of domestic violence on YP K as a child was not properly understood, addressed or mitigated by social care or by other partners</li> <li>• Sporadic interventions over a number of years lacked a coherent, consistent understanding of YP K's life, history, experiences and vulnerabilities and did not generate the changes needed early in her life to improve her wellbeing, keep her safe and promote her welfare</li> <li>• Assessments did not include explicit clear evaluation of the degree of risk and the best action to take to mitigate that risk and were frequently single agency in nature</li> <li>• Coherent understanding of, and analysis of YPK's own wishes, feelings, experiences and solutions was not available and YPK lacked 'her own' strong advocate whom she trusted to help her</li> <li>• The degree of professional anxiety about the risk-taking behaviour obscured the need for action to disrupt the perpetrators of risk</li> <li>• YP K's missing episodes were not adequately dealt with</li> </ul>	

- The degree to which her emotional wellbeing and mental ill health was affected by the risks and challenges she was facing was underestimated and explicit interventions to improve her emotional well being were not provided
- Professional and parental anxieties were real but the understanding of the issues of CSE and e-safety were not well understood
- Action to protect YP K could have been and probably was experienced by her as punitive rather than constructive or helpful and the transition back out of secure accommodation may have compounded her distress and sense of worthlessness

### **Recommendations from Serious Case Review**

1. The Board must satisfy itself that all children and young people currently known to Children's Social Care to be at risk of Missing Sexually Exploited Trafficked are having their needs effectively assessed and that measures to safeguard them are adequate. This may be achieved by regular and independent sample auditing with multi-agency involvement
2. The considerable new developments on missing and sexually exploited children must be regularly reviewed by the Board for compliance and effectiveness
- 3a. The Board should ensure that all professionals are afforded the opportunity to acquaint themselves with awareness of the use of the internet and all forms of social media.
- 3b. The Board should be made aware of the initiatives and provision offered to young people, parents and carers to use the internet and all forms of social media safely.
4. The Board should ensure itself that Section 11 audits confirm that there are robust arrangements in place regarding e-safety
5. The issues identified in this review relating to capacity, staffing, skills and expertise within Children's Social Care are being addressed by the Children's Services Improvement Plan. The Board must receive regular reports on progress and impact of this Improvement Plan
6. The Board should have oversight of all risk assessment tools and ensure that they can be accessed by staff from one central point (a pack of risk assessment tools, some being used for specific circumstances)
7. The Board will want to satisfy itself that early intervention regarding children living with domestic violence is robust
8. The Board must satisfy itself that Children's Social Care and partner agencies implement an exit strategy from Secure Accommodation from the time the young person goes into the placement. Transition planning must be timed sensitively with plenty of opportunity for introductory visits to new staff and the new setting; and an opportunity to risk assess how the young person is responding to the transition
9. The Board must satisfy itself as to the safety and wellbeing of Young Person K's sibling
10. The Board will make representation on regional and national level around the significant shortfall in placements for children and young people with complex needs who require placements that can keep them safe and manage their vulnerabilities without needing to deprive them of their liberty

Learning and Improvement Workshops are being held on learning from SCR's and information can be accessed at [SSCB Training](#)

The Overview Report was published on 13 September 2016 alongside one other SCR re: serious harm to a teenager and a thematic report which pulls together the learning from these two SCRs. The report and accompanying documents can be accessed at [SSCB SCRs and Documents](#)