

Communication and Engagement Strategy 2015-17

Introduction

Everyone in Southampton has a responsibility to keep children and adults at risk safe from harm. Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) and Local Safeguarding Adults' boards (LSAB) are core statutory mechanisms in coordinating agencies' and organisations' to work together to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people and Adults at risk of harm. Safeguarding Boards are required and encouraged to take a local approach to the prevention of abuse and neglect and to the protection of adults and children in their area. Communities, voluntary agencies, and primary, secondary and tertiary health and social care agencies are all partners in safeguarding.

A vital aspect of this is ensuring effective communication, means of engagement and information provision. In this way it is aimed that an ever increasing proportion of the population of Southampton is able to recognise signs of concern about children and adults' at risks wellbeing, be confident in what they should do when they have concerns and be better informed about how they can ensure children and young people and adults at risk remain safe.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013) and the Care Act (2014) give the Local Authority a duty to ensure that information and advice is shared with individuals in its area, but do not set out any specific guidance for how LSCBs & LSABs should communicate and engage with the broader population.

This 2015 – 2017 overarching strategy outlines the communication, engagement and awareness priorities over the next two years, this document is complimented by an action plan which outlines how these objectives will be achieved.

Southampton LSCB and LSAB communication will focus on 9 Priority areas;

1. Enable the voices of children, young people and their families to be at the centre of the work of the LSCB.
2. Enable the voices of adults at risk of harm to be at the centre of the work of the LSAB
3. Ensuring that communities know what to do if an adult or child is experiencing abuse or neglect.
4. Ensuring that Children and young people, adults at risk, their families and carers and members of the public have an improved understanding of the aims and role of the LSCB and LSAB and perceive them as the main route from which to source information about keeping children and adults at risk safe, improving their health and wellbeing and maximising their life chances.

5. Targeting our communication, awareness raising and engagement work where it is needed and ensuring it is appropriate to effectively engage the diversity of Southampton's population.
6. Recognising that the format and accessibility of our communication approaches is key to effective engagement, especially to those communities we have not yet been successful in engaging
7. Reinforcing the message that Safeguarding is everybody's business by providing the wider population and workforce with the tools to act confidently and consistently
8. Raising awareness of key child safety issues such as road accidents and accidents in the home
9. Communicating lessons learnt from local and national Serious Case Reviews, Safeguarding Adults Reviews to ensure these contribute to ongoing practice.

Communication responsibilities of the LSCB and LSAB

We want to ensure that the views of children and young people, their parents and carers and adults at risk themselves and the wider community are heard and their feedback used to improve safeguarding of Southampton's children and adults at risk.

Our aim is to ensure those we communicate with understand how to keep children, young people and adults at risk safe and are able to recognise and know what to do where they suspect individuals or groups may be at risk of harm.

In order to achieve this the LSCB and LSAB will aim to provide information that is accessible, of a high quality and meets the needs of the public, service users, potential service users and staff working in partner agencies. This approach is based on the following principles:

- Effective community engagement is key to continuous improvement
- Effective information provision needs to be carefully and specifically planned and appropriately resourced
- Consistent consideration is needed to make services and information accessible to everyone
- Using simple language (e.g. avoiding jargon and explaining acronyms) or
 - giving clear explanations where this is not possible
- Promoting equality and valuing diversity is central to the provision of
 - Information
- Information that is out of date and or inaccurate is frustrating for the service user at best, potentially dangerous at worst
- Understanding information may need to be delivered in the spoken word to be effective
- Producing effective information requires careful planning and requires the informer, as a minimum to;
 - establish success criteria at the start
 - know who their audience is and what they want to see
 - Identify key messages
 - assess the method of production
 - identify where the information is going to be distributed or how if it will be given direct to people

- understand how it will be used
- confirm what outcome is wanted
- assess when materials will need to be removed and information reviewed
- actively facilitate the possibilities for involving service users and staff
- ensure any service being publicised, or signposted to, is aware of the publicity so they can prepare to meet increased demand

Audience

The principal targets of LSCB and LSAB communication and engagement activity are:

- children and young people
- adults at risk, including those who are socially isolated, have a physical disability that is mobility-limiting, have a learning disability or mental health problem.
- parents and carers
- staff and managers in all partner organisations and any other agencies with statutory responsibilities or regulated activities
- voluntary, community and faith organisations
- the workforce within private industry
- the general public
- our local media partners

It is also essential we communicate effectively with;

- our staff
- our councillors and governing bodies
- trade unions
- other LSCBs & LSABs
- Relevant government departments
- Relevant national organisations, for example Ofsted
- Other strategic partners

Information Gathering

A core requirement of effective engagement is seizing opportunities to improve our understanding of local safeguarding issues. Developing the relationship with communities is key in ensuring an ongoing dialogue about emerging issues of concern. This will be from our partners and broader community in Southampton. It will also be beneficial to take every opportunity to learn from our partners and community members about how we can improve our communication and engagement approaches with those groups we do not yet effectively engage with.

Means of Communication

The Local Safeguarding Children’s and Adults’ Boards are a collection of partners with individual and collective responsibility for the well-being of children and young people and Adults at risk respectively. Each partner has its own unique communication routes, which provides a potentially enormous audience for consistent and well planned communication. This strategy recognises and welcomes the breadth of communication channels available within and around the LSCB, and seeks to clarify how as a group of partners we can make best use of these channels of communication

The standard methods of communication used by the LSCB & LSAB are:

Engagement	Direct communication and information provision
Face to face dialogue	The LSCB website & LSAB website
Briefings, meetings, seminars, conferences and workshops	Through 4LSCB & 4LSAB
Specific and targeted engagement activity	Involvement at targeted community events
Social Media	Leaflets
Community events	Posters
Community and interest group dialogue	Planned advertising campaigns
Consultation activity	Emails and email briefings
Public meetings	Southampton LSCB & LSAB newsletter (electronic and hard-copy)
Focus groups	Training events
Questionnaires	Media campaigns
Peoples Panel & Stay Connected	Key points of contact e.g. Libraries, police stations, schools

Our Key Messages

Our aim is to empower organisations and individuals to consistently carry out their safeguarding responsibilities in an informed and confident manner. Our key message remains;

“Safeguarding is everybody’s business”

We want to ensure that communication focuses on ensuring that Southampton’s safeguarding approach is continually improving and that people know where to go and what to do to keep our children, young people and adults at risk safe. Our key messages are;

For everyone

- What Safeguarding is, focussing on keeping children and adults at risk safe, maintaining and improving their well-being and life chances
- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility
- Who are the organisations involved in safeguarding work, what their roles are and how to get help from them
- Our learning from serious case reviews and how this will lead to improvements
- Sharing our successes

Children and young people

- How to keep safe
- How to tell us if something makes children and young people feel unsafe
- What to do if someone (including themselves) is being harmed, harming themselves or being put at risk of being harmed
- A meaningful understanding of the Child protection system and how it tries to help children and young people

Parents and carers

- The role of the LSCB and the agencies involved in keeping children safe
- How to parent safely
- Where to get parenting help and advice
- How to protect your children
- What to do if you suspect a child or young person may be harmed

Adults at risk & carers

- The promotion of individual’s wellbeing¹
- How to keep safe
- How to tell us if something makes an adult at risk feel unsafe
- What to do if someone (including themselves) is being harmed, harming themselves or being put at risk of being harmed.
- A meaningful understanding of what is meant by safeguarding adults at risk

¹ The Care Act 2014 defines an individual’s wellbeing. Please refer to the Care & Support Statutory Guidance 2014

- Providing clear messages around issues such as financial abuse, emotional abuse and neglect
- An understanding that our approach is client centred in line with 'Making Safeguarding Personal'
- How to access support and rights to advocacy

The wider workforce

- The role of agencies involved in safeguarding and how to get their help
- Training and CPD opportunities available
- Communicating and applying inter-agency safeguarding protocols to individual agencies/partners
- Learning from Serious Case Reviews , Safeguarding Adults Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews and learning through audits

Themes for communication and awareness raising during 2015-17 (listed A-Z):

- Adults at Risk
- Anti Bullying
- Child Protection
- Child Safety and accident prevention
- Domestic Violence and abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Financial Exploitation of adults at risk
- Tackling Hate Crime
- Implementing the Care Act 2014
- Mental Health awareness
- Missing, Exploited (including sexual exploitation) and Trafficked children and young people and adults
- Modern Slavery
- Neglect children and adults
- Prevent Agenda and work to support counter terrorism and prevent the radicalisation of children, young people and adults at risk of harm
- Promoting the role of the LSAB & LSCB
- Self-neglect in adults
- So called 'Honour' based violence and forced marriage
- Targeted work with all including focussed activities with diverse communities

Putting the strategy into action

The Safeguarding Boards Community Engagement and Awareness Sub Group will develop an action plan to coordinate work to implement this strategy focussed on the themes listed above. This will be reviewed annually and will include a calendar of events and engagement activities to direct the work of the group. Themes will be also progressed through the relevant Board members and Sub Groups.