



Neglect Champions' Newsletter

Welcome to our Autumn 2020 Neglect Champions' Newsletter.

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Chair of the Neglect Strategy Implementation Group. My name is Sarah Jones and I am the Director of Commissioning, Partnerships and Resources for Norfolk Children's Services. As you will be aware Neglect continues to be a priority for Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership and it was decided that a review of the existing Neglect Strategy was needed (you will hear more about this below) as a result of which the Neglect Strategy Implementation Group (NSIG) was created. This group will ensure strategic oversight of the working groups which will be addressing the three strands of the Neglect Strategy. The NSIG will be supported by the existing operation group in ensuring that the strategic aims are achieved.

The last six months have been challenging for many children, young people and families in Norfolk. Many of our most vulnerable children and young people have faced additional adversity at the same time as many of the safety nets have not always been available in the same way. This has presented additional challenges for practitioners working with children and young people and everyday I hear about teams going above and beyond to safeguard our children. We would like to thank you for the work that you have undertaken in assisting your teams to work effectively when supporting families where neglect is a concern.

We hope you find the newsletter interesting and informative. If there is something you would like to see included within the newsletter then please email: sharon.moore@norfolk.gov.uk

Neglect Strategy Developments

As reported in the last newsletter, the decision was taken earlier in the year to keep Neglect as one of Norfolk's priorities. Following on from this, it was felt that a review of the Neglect Strategy was necessary along with the strong, clear direction from strategic leaders through the Neglect Strategy Implementation Group to help keep Neglect a focus at a strategic level. The NSIG Chair, Sarah Jones, will be putting in place relevant sub-groups to support the operational delivery necessary to address Neglect in Norfolk.

The Neglect Strategy has been redrafted and will be published when signed off by Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership. The Strategy has three strategic statements:

- We will engage communities and harness their resources to tackle neglect and build resilience in local areas.
- We will establish a better understanding of factors which contribute to the risk of neglect so that we can address the needs of parents, children, families and communities.
- Staff and families will have space to reflect on the emotional impact of neglect on themselves and develop resilience, perspective and a shared language to manage that impact.



Neglect Champions' Best Practice Session

Planning is underway to deliver an event for Neglect Champions in early 2021. All NSCP learning events are currently being delivered virtually. Further information will be circulated to Champions when confirmed.

Practice Examples

It is always great to hear about events and positive practice stories. If you have some practice you'd like to share for the Neglect Newsletter please email us - sharon.moore@norfolk.gov.uk

NSPCC - How safe are our children? 2020

The NSPCC has published its annual How safe are our children? report which this year focuses on adolescents and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown on how safe they are. The report covers many different risk to adolescents including neglect. The report can be read here: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2287/how-safe-are-our-children-2020.pdf>

Serious Case Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Review

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership have published several Serious Case Reviews and a Child Safeguarding Practice Review in 2020. The two most recently published AG and AI were both cases where the families were being worked with under the category of Neglect. Child AG was a child who experienced malnourishment and Child AI sustained a significant burn injury.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to read these reviews then please do so. It is vitally important that the learning from these reviews is shared with practitioners working in Norfolk.

These can be accessed here: <https://www.norfolkscb.org/people-working-with-children/serious-case-reviews/>

The recommendations from these reviews are being incorporated into the revised Neglect Strategy.



Multi-Agency Response to Adolescent Neglect in Norfolk

In July 2020 Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership undertook independent scrutiny of the multi-agency response to adolescent neglect in Norfolk. The process involved a literature review, looking at statistical indicators in Norfolk and feedback from managers, practitioners and strategic leads in structured focus groups.

The scrutiny report highlighted the need for a date set to enable strategic leads to monitor the impact of work around neglect in Norfolk. The professional focus groups focused on two key areas: (1) Understanding of neglect in young people and (2) Responding to young people's needs. A number of concerns were raised that adolescent neglect is not spoken of enough or fully recognised in practice. The focus groups highlighted various challenges when working with neglect including:

- Physical neglect easier to see than some of aspects emotional neglect and absence of parental care, which may be more of an issue for older children.
- Children's need to protect their parents from criticism and greater ability to manage the narrative. Too often it's the children who become 'the voice of reason'.
- Adolescents' view of neglect being different to professionals' – can be normalised.
- A tendency to see the problematic behaviour, and not always examine what is behind the behaviour.
- Emotional cues may be seen simply as typical teenage reactions/moods and not recognised as something more significant.
- It can be hard to distinguish between resilience and coping strategies.
- Concern that there is inadequate understanding of adolescent brain development and how this effects behaviour and responses, e.g. regarding risk taking, alcohol/substance misuse – are we confident about what is 'normal'?
- Problem of 'hidden neglect' and how to identify these children. Do the quiet ones get overlooked?
- Risk of viewing adolescents as more able to cope with neglect than younger children.

Key issues that came out of the discussions around responding to young people's needs included:

- establishing positive relations both with the young person and their parents /carers
- the availability of resources across Norfolk

The scrutiny report also considered the role of the strategic partners in strategic planning and implementation and how actively involved the wider partnership group is in implementing the strategic vision.

The report makes a number of recommendations for the Safeguarding Children Partnership to work on which will be shared across the Neglect Strategy Implementation Group and the NSCP's Vulnerable Adolescent Group

The full document is for internal use only but a summary of the recommendations can be provided on request.



Graded Care Profile Review

Prior to the Covid-19 lockdown, the process had begun to review use of the Graded Care Profile in Norfolk. Work was being undertaken to consider how the tool might be reimagined to make it more user friendly and hopefully increase use in Norfolk. This work has been delayed by the pandemic however it will continue once the new strategic and operational neglect groups are established.

NSCP Website

Don't forget to visit Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership's Website for valuable information around neglect <https://www.norfolkscb.org/people-working-with-children/information-on-neglect/>

As well as resources and information on neglect, you will also find pdf and Word version of the Graded Care Profile tool, the NSCP Neglect Policy and a downloadable version of the Neglect Identification Tool.

Neglect Strategy Implementation Group

This is a multi-agency group who are tasked with facilitating the roll out of the Neglect Strategy and ensuring that its policies are implemented.

The NSIG is made up of representatives from across the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership.

If you want to know more about the work of the NSIG or find out who the representative is from your agency please contact Sharon Moore at the email address below.

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