

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19



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Foreword by Independent Chair

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland has 27 members whose common purpose is to help safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland and protect them from all forms of neglect and abuse.



Each agency on the SBNI is represented by a senior member of staff who provides collective leadership and direction to the child protection safeguarding system across Northern Ireland.

The year 2018-2019 has been very active and positive for the SBNI with lots of exciting developments, involving all our member agencies. This is the first reporting period relating to the implementation of the SBNI's Strategic Plan 2018-2022.

Within the Strategic Plan the SBNI have resolved to:

- work in partnership with other agencies, service users and communities to ensure children and young people are living in safety and with stability
- provide leadership and set direction for the safeguarding system across NI
- respond in a timely manner to new and emerging concerns
- drive improvements in the current child protection system
- continue to build the capacity of the Safeguarding Board to enhance the knowledge and skills of the entire membership to ensure the Board is providing effective, evidence based responses to the safeguarding challenges now and in the years ahead.

In addition to these high level objectives the SBNI has agreed to adopt a trauma-informed approach to safeguarding in the search for better outcomes for children, using the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) model.

Research¹ into ACEs found that many adult diseases and developmental disorders begin early in life and that these could be reduced by the alleviation of toxic stress in childhood. The research indicates that severe and/or chronic adversity in childhood has a significant, negative impact on the child's development, well-being, life chances and future outcomes. Four or more adverse experiences correlated with a higher probability of poor outcomes for children throughout their lives, including a greater likelihood of suicide attempts, mental health problems, criminality and addictions. The research identified that people with six or more ACEs died nearly 20 years earlier on average than those without ACEs.

During this reporting period the Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP) commissioned the SBNI to deliver a professional training and development programme which aims to deliver training to a range of professionals from member agencies to enable them to understand the impact of ACEs on children and become more trauma-informed in their work.

Running alongside this training programme the SBNI has also identified three Adverse Childhood Experiences for children in Northern Ireland, which they have agreed to focus their collaborative efforts on over the next four years.

These are:

- domestic violence
- child and parental mental health
- neglect

This sixth annual report will concentrate on how we have approached these issues as well as reporting on progress made against each of our strategic objectives and commitments laid out in our 2018-2019 business plan (see Annex 1 for details).

Central to the SBNI way of working is a strict adherence to equality legislation, culture and values. In order to fulfil the SBNI's duties and obligations for equality and disability, action plans were submitted to the Equality Commission NI in August 2017. We continue to work with the Business Services Equality Unit to support our adherence and compliance with equality and disability legislation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the SBNI – particularly the office staff, the members, the independent panel chairs and other key stakeholders involved in trying to make Northern Ireland a better place for children to grow up in.

I look forward to your continued support and co-operation in the year ahead.

Bernie McNally OBE
Independent Chair

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html>

The Role of the Safeguarding Board

The member organisations that make up the multi-agency partnership that is the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland come from both the statutory and voluntary sector.

Member Organisations are led by an Independent Chair appointed on the basis of experience, expertise and knowledge of the child protection system as well as extensive experience of corporate governance and executive level decision making.

The Safeguarding Board members collectively agree the strategic priorities for safeguarding and child protection in Northern Ireland and commit to work collaboratively to achieve progress against each of these priorities. The Business Plan 2018-2019 noted at Annex 1 lists these priorities and their progress is detailed within this annual report.

While working collaboratively across organisations and sectors is not a new concept in child protection work and happens regularly on a day to day basis, the formation of the SBNI in 2012 brought a formality and structure to that collaboration in the form of a number of statutory committees and short-term working groups.

Safeguarding Panels

The key statutory committees which effectively drive forward child protection collaboration at local level are the five local Safeguarding Panels. These local panels are coterminous with each of the five Health and Social Care Trusts and are independently chaired by people from outside the member organisations. Each Independent Chair has been appointed on the basis of their previous operational management experience within the child protection and safeguarding system. The role of the safeguarding panels is to take forward collaborative work locally around the key strategic priorities set by the SBNI. The panels have also a key role to play in identifying new and emerging issues from the ground ensuring that the SBNI are fully informed of any concerns emerging from local communities, parents, children and other key stakeholders.

Case Management Review Panel

The next important statutory committee which is crucial to the effective functioning of the SBNI is the Case Management Review (CMR) Panel. The CMR Panel is also independently chaired and has the specific remit of reviewing cases where the SBNI has agreed that there may be significant learning to be gained across the region. These are cases where it is considered that there have been exceptional outcomes for the children and young people concerned or are cases where things have not gone well and lessons need to be learned.

The learning from each Case Management Review is disseminated throughout the system via the local safeguarding panels. The chair of this committee is a member of the Board and reports directly to the SBNI.

Policy and Procedures Committee

One of the functions of the SBNI is to ensure that staff have policy and procedures in place to assist them in protecting children and young people. This role is undertaken by the Policy and Procedures Committee - to provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children and young people. Following the launch of the revised Core Policy and Procedures and their implementation in January 2018 the Committee has worked with member agencies to be assured that they have been disseminated and embedded the Core Policy and Procedures. The Committee has sought clarification regarding the impact of the Signs of Safety approach on Policy and Procedures. The Committee also undertook to review the need for any safeguarding practice guidance that may be needed for staff. This work is ongoing.



Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group

The SBNI Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Sub-Group was set up to take forward some of the child protection agenda recommended in child law specialist Professor Kathleen Marshall's independent report into CSE in Northern Ireland and Professor John Pinkerton of Queen's University Belfast's thematic review relating to CSE and missing children (Getting Focused and Staying Focused).

e-Safety Forum

The SBNI e-Safety Forum was set up to help keep children and young people and their families safe in the online world. This forum aims to provide parents, children and families with advice and guidance on how to deal with the threats posed by an ever-changing technical/internet world. It also aims to provide professionals from the various agencies with a range of tools and knowledge which they can use while working with young people, trying to help keep them safe.

Female Genital Mutilation Sub-Group

The SBNI Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Sub-Group was established to address the emerging issue of FGM in Northern Ireland. The aim of the Sub-Group is to safeguard those at risk or affected by FGM and promote their welfare through effective multi-agency practice. Membership includes a number of multi-agency partners, the Department of Health, voluntary and community groups, UK Border Force and members from affected communities who have experienced FGM. Links have been established with the FGM National Centre. The work involves raising awareness about the risks of FGM and the need to protect children, developing practice guidance and pathways, training and resources to assist staff, and data collection and analysis to record incidents of FGM within Northern Ireland.

Child Protection Sub-Group

The SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group was established in response to the Jay review of the SBNI in 2014. The priorities of the Child Protection Sub-Group for 2018-2019 was to work on measuring outcomes for children in the child protection system, to reform the child protection arrangements by the introduction of the 'Signs of Safety' approach and to address intergenerational abuse by introducing an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) informed approach across statutory partners. The Sub-Group is chaired by the Director of Children's Services and Executive Director of Social Work in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and meets five times per year.

Neglect Sub-Group

The SBNI Neglect Sub-Group was first established in 2016 as a vehicle for the SBNI to tackle the issue of neglect in Northern Ireland. The purpose of the Sub-Group is to provide strategic leadership to ensure safeguarding practice in relation to neglect and particularly vulnerable children is effective. Sub-Group members include representation from multi-agency statutory and voluntary partner organisations and a parent representative.

Domestic Violence and Abuse Sub-Group

The SBNI Domestic Violence Sub-Group was established in 2018. The group is chaired by an Assistant Director of Children's Social Services from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. Membership comprises of SBNI member and partner agencies. The SBNI Sub-Group facilitates connectivity with local and regional initiatives. The overall focus of the Sub-Group is to ensure the Child is recognised as victim in his/her own right in a situation where Domestic Violence is a feature.

Interfaith Sub-Group

Faith groups in Northern Ireland are represented on the SBNI and work in collaboration with other SBNI committees to encourage effective communication and engagement in key safeguarding initiatives. The SBNI Interfaith Sub-Group seeks to facilitate co-operation between various faith groups and the SBNI. Membership of the group is derived from the Catholic Church, Presbyterian Church, Church of Ireland, Methodist Church and Evangelical Alliance. The group is attended by representatives from the NSPCC, the PSNI, and the HSCB and supported by a Professional Officer from SBNI.

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

Work is on-going in connection with child death review. This is being led by the Department of Health.

Reporting on Progress

Each of these short-term groups meet regularly under the chairmanship of a board member and report directly to the SBNI on progress against agreed terms of reference. The work of each of these is outlined in the pages that follow in this annual report.

Governance Committee

Strategic Priority 1: To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children and young people.

1.6 Outcome: The SBNI operates under a governance framework that is fit for purpose and supports and enables the achievement of its strategic priorities.

The Governance Committee was reconstituted in January 2019 and is chaired by one of the SBNI's non-executive members Gerard Guckian. In addition to the chair, the Committee is made up of:

- Four SBNI members including a member with Case Management Review (CMR) experience
- One member of SBNI Central Support Unit with Governance Remit;
- One Safeguarding Panel Chair
- The Committee may also invite to attend as required any other members who can provide relevant information and assistance.

The purpose of the Governance Committee is to:

Review the establishment and maintenance of an effective system for governance across the whole of the SBNI's activities and to support the achievement of the SBNI's objectives, minimizing the exposure to risk.

The Committee through the adoption of an appropriate framework provides assurance that the SBNI operates in accordance with its statutory objectives, duties and functions. This Assurance Framework further identifies the principal risks to the attainment and fulfilment of those objectives, duties and functions together with measures and controls to manage these principle risks. The SBNI Risk Register has been updated and will be regularly reviewed by the SBNI. The revised Register is compliant with the HSC Risk Matrix (August 2018).

The work of the Governance Committee supports the learning culture across the SBNI in response to lessons learned and furthers the SBNI's objective to coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The Governance Committee will keep under review the effectiveness of the SBNI's structures and working arrangements, including the inter-relationship and accountabilities of the various committees and groups that undertake the work of the SBNI to ensure that at all times the SBNI operates to the highest standards of Public Sector governance. The Committee will provide assistance and support to the Independent Chair in the preparation of the SBNI's annual Declaration of Assurance, and have regard at all times to the Memorandum of Understanding between the SBNI, the PHA and the Department of Health whilst recognising that each member body of the SBNI will operate within its own proper governance arrangements.

Safeguarding Snapshot

Statistics Snapshot 2018 - 2019

1,871,800

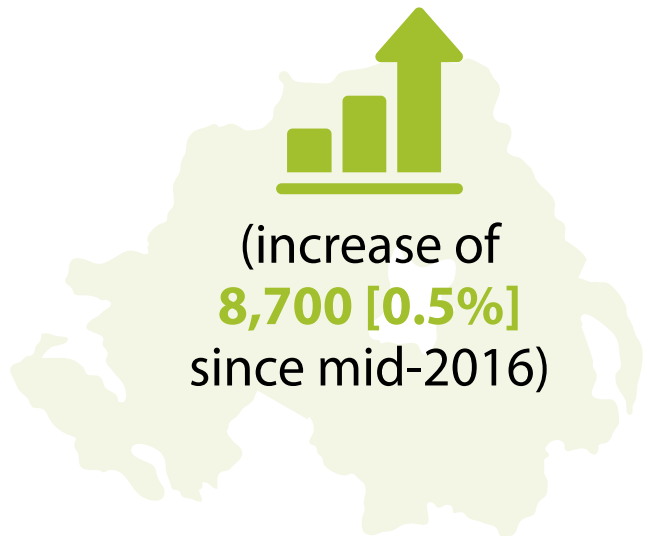
PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND¹



950,000
(50.8%) female¹



920,000
(49.2%) male¹



436,403

CHILDREN UNDER 18¹

23.3%
of total population¹

(slight increase of **836** since 2017-2018)



60,979

CHILDREN UNDER 18 WHO WILL HAVE EXPERIENCED FOUR OR MORE ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)⁶

14%
of all children under 18

COMPARED WITH PEOPLE WITH NO ACES THOSE WITH 4 OR MORE ACES ARE⁷

2 times more likely to be have a chronic disease



6 times more likely to smoke tobacco or E-cigs



3 times more likely to have respiratory disease



11 times more likely to have smoked cannabis



3 times more likely to develop coronary heart disease



16 times more likely to have used crack cocaine or heroin



4 times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes



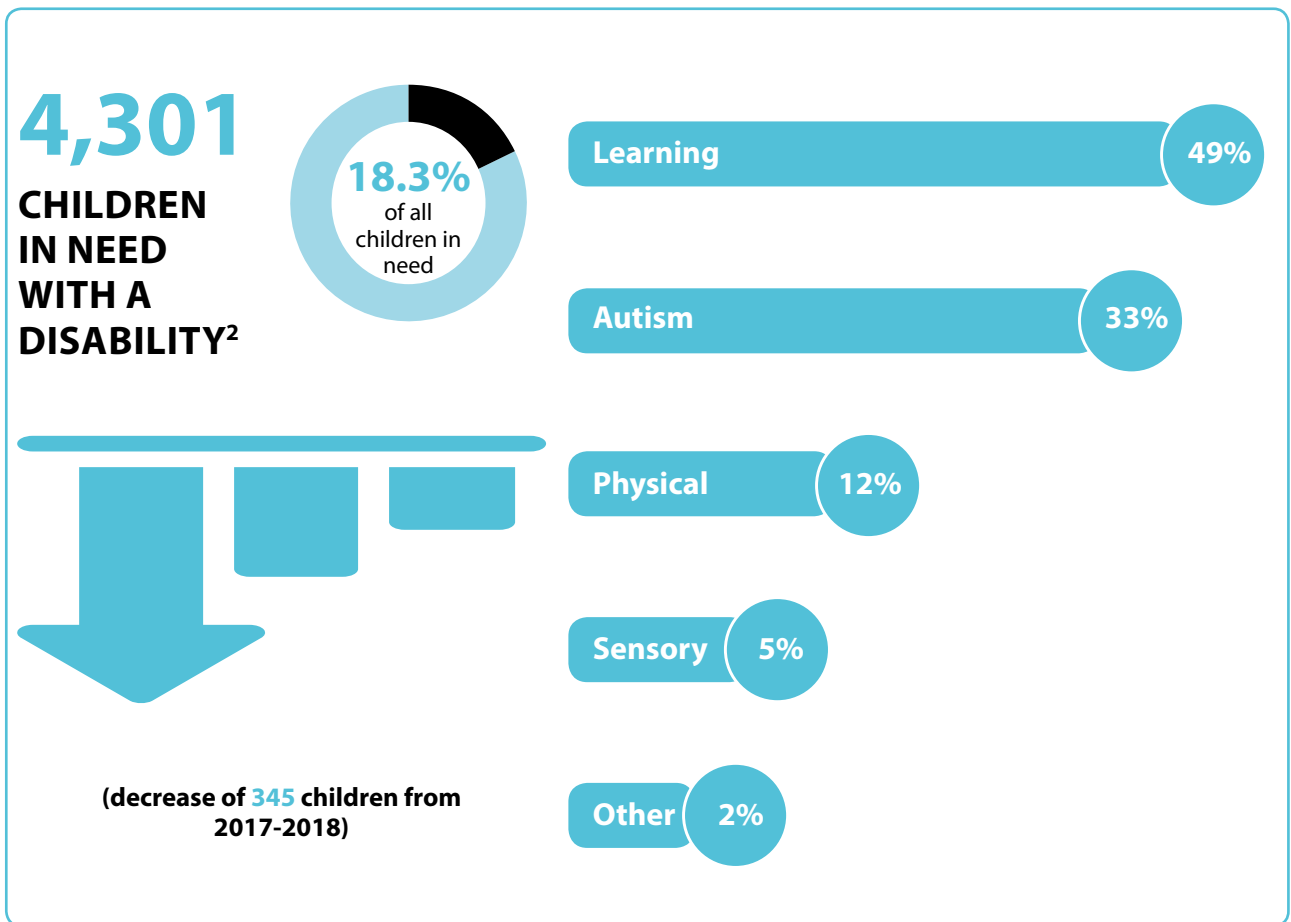
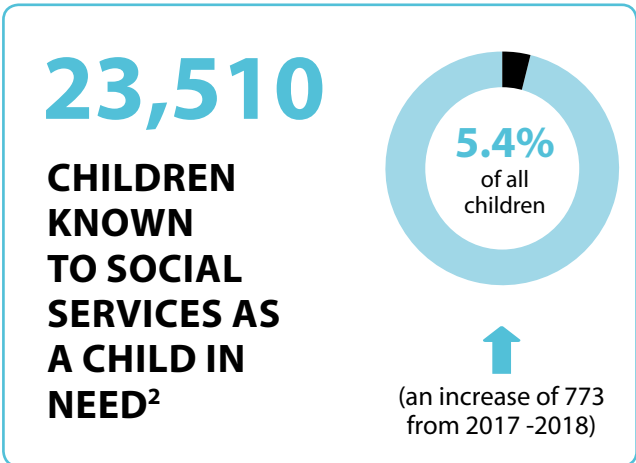
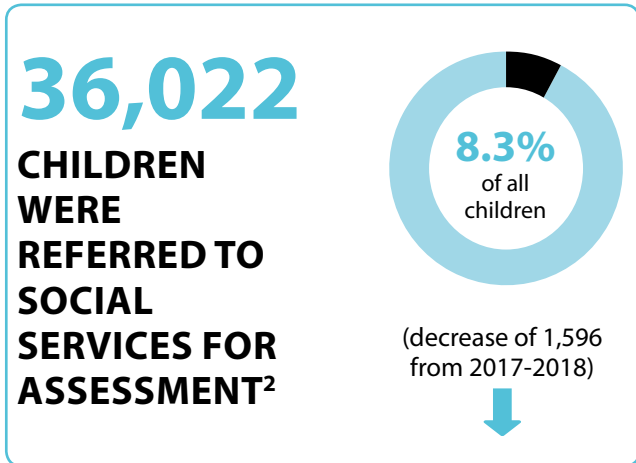
20 times more likely to have been incarcerated in their life



4 times more likely to be a high risk drinker



Statistics Snapshot 2018 - 2019



Statistics Snapshot 2018 - 2019

2,082

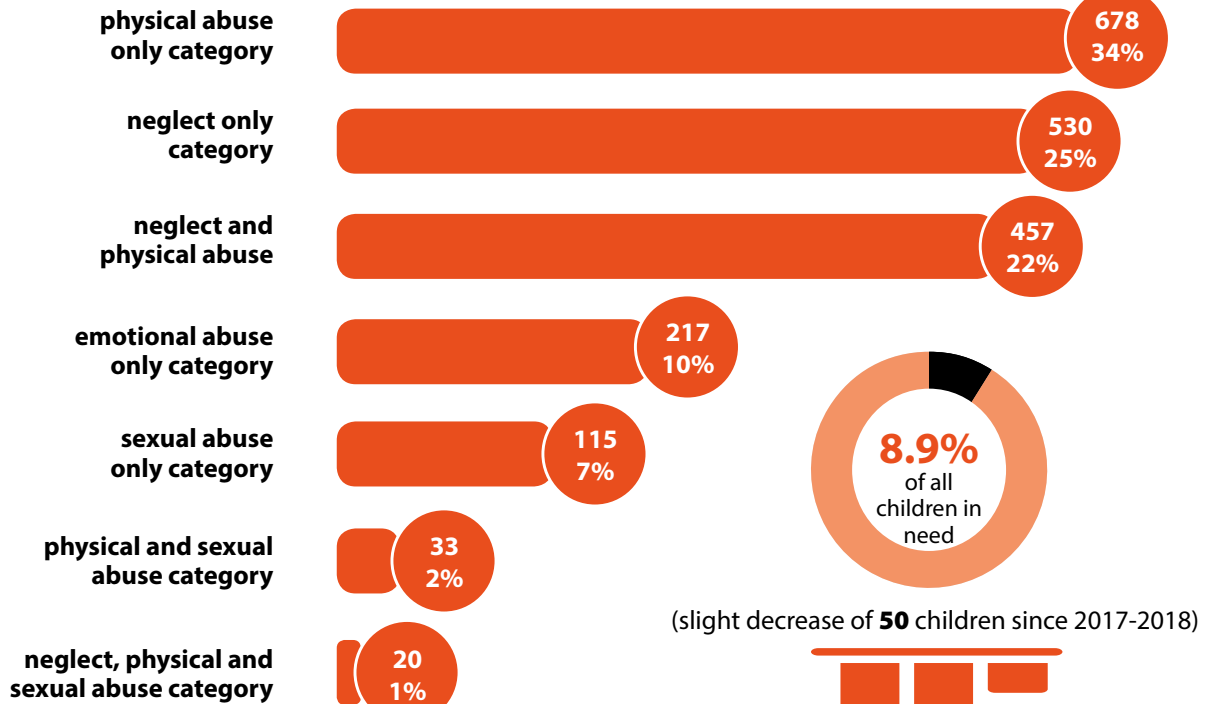
CHILDREN ON THE CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER²



50% males



50% females



9,722

FAMILY SUPPORT REFERRALS RECEIVED AND REQUIRING A UNOCINI²



(an increase of **489** on the previous year)

7,249

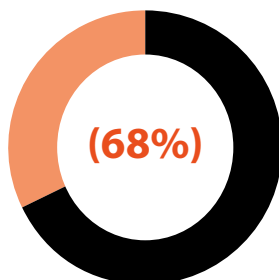
FAMILY SUPPORT ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED AT GATEWAY²



(very slight increase of **15** on previous year)

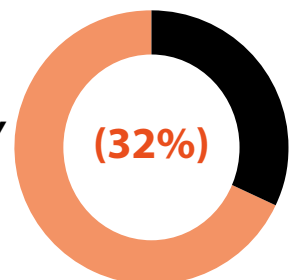
4,896

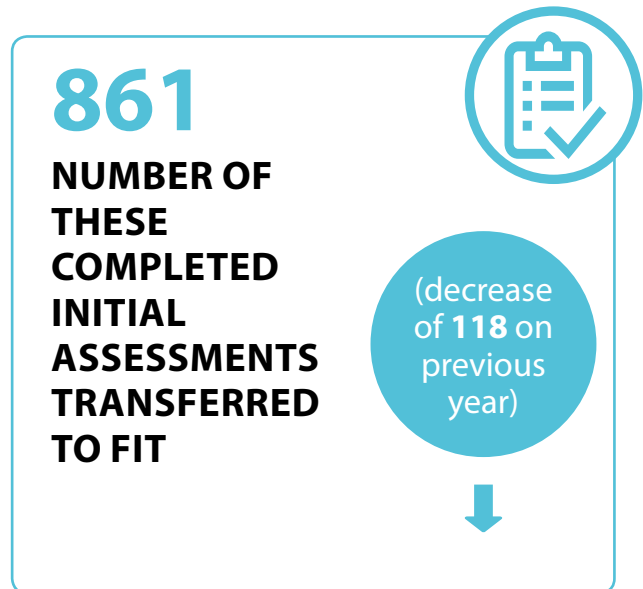
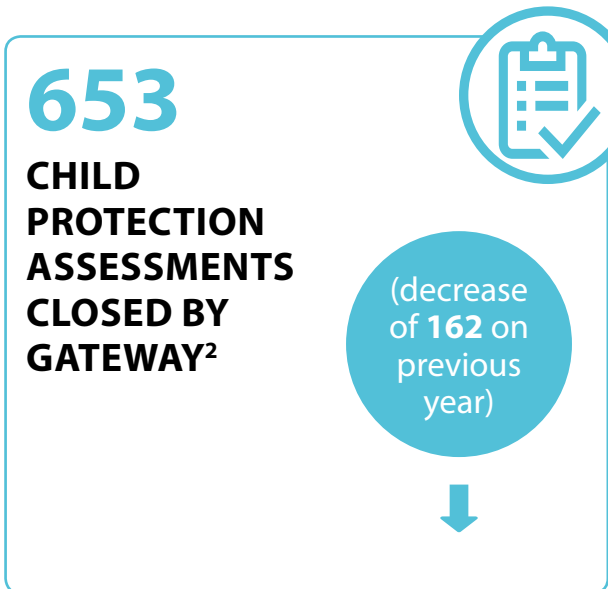
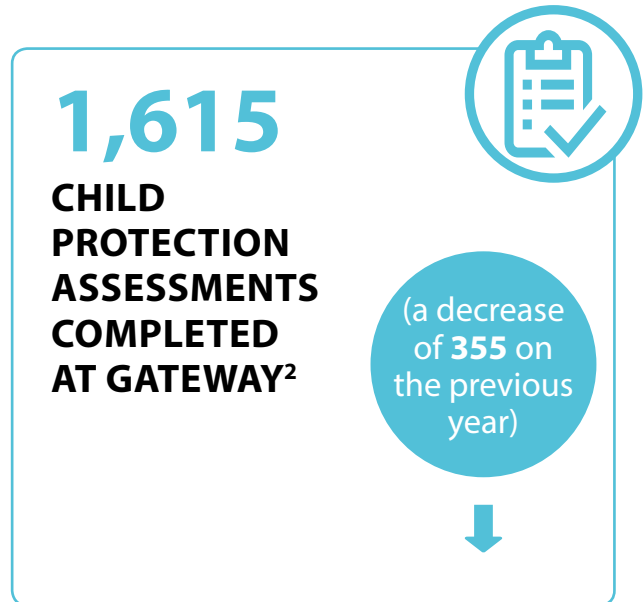
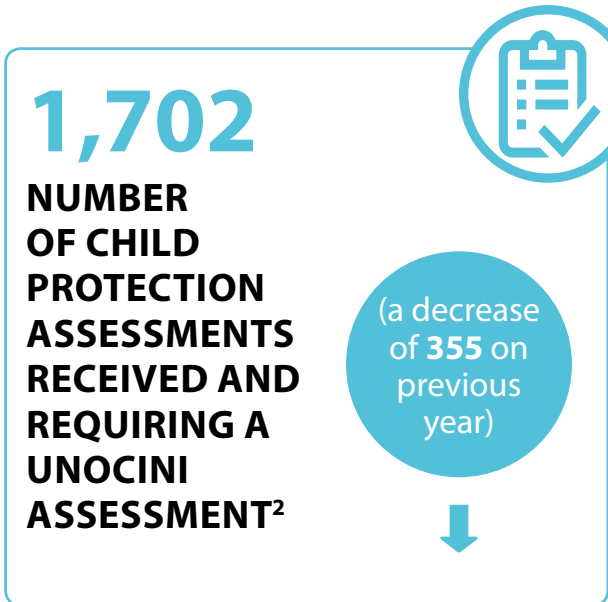
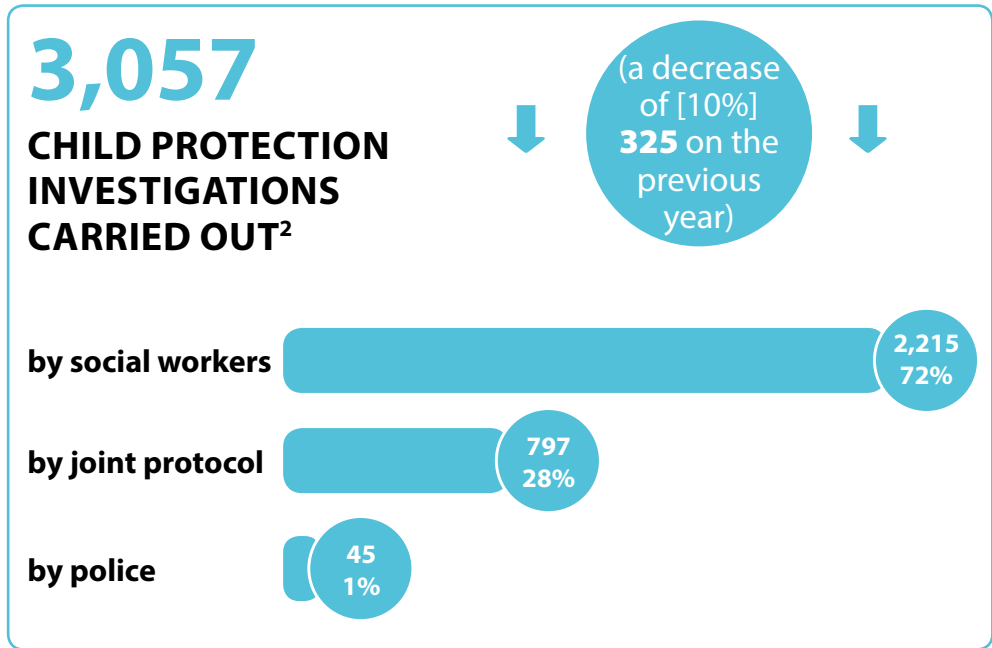
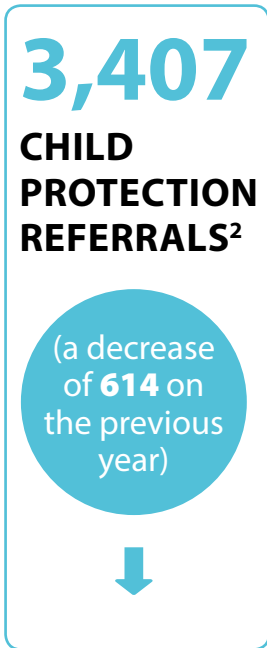
NUMBER OF THE ABOVE ASSESSMENTS CLOSED AT GATEWAY²



2,353

NUMBER OF COMPLETED FAMILY SUPPORT INITIAL ASSESSMENTS TRANSFERRED TO FIT²





Statistics Snapshot 2018 - 2019

3,109

CHILDREN IN CARE OF HSC TRUSTS (LAC)

(increase of **126** on previous year and the highest number recorded since the introduction of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995)



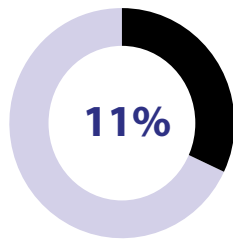
54%
males



46%
females

347

CHILDREN IN CARE RECORDED AS HAVING A DISABILITY



848

CHILDREN ADMITTED TO CARE DURING THE YEAR



79%

IN FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS



44%

OF THESE FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS ARE WITH KINSHIP FOSTER CARERS²



12%

CHILDREN PLACED AT HOME WITH PARENTS²



5%

CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL CARE²



4%

OTHER PLACEMENTS²



732

CHILDREN DISCHARGED FROM CARE DURING THE YEAR²



Statistics Snapshot 2018 - 2019

35

**ADMISSIONS TO
SECURE CARE
(2016-2017)**



(an increase
of **1** on the
previous
year)

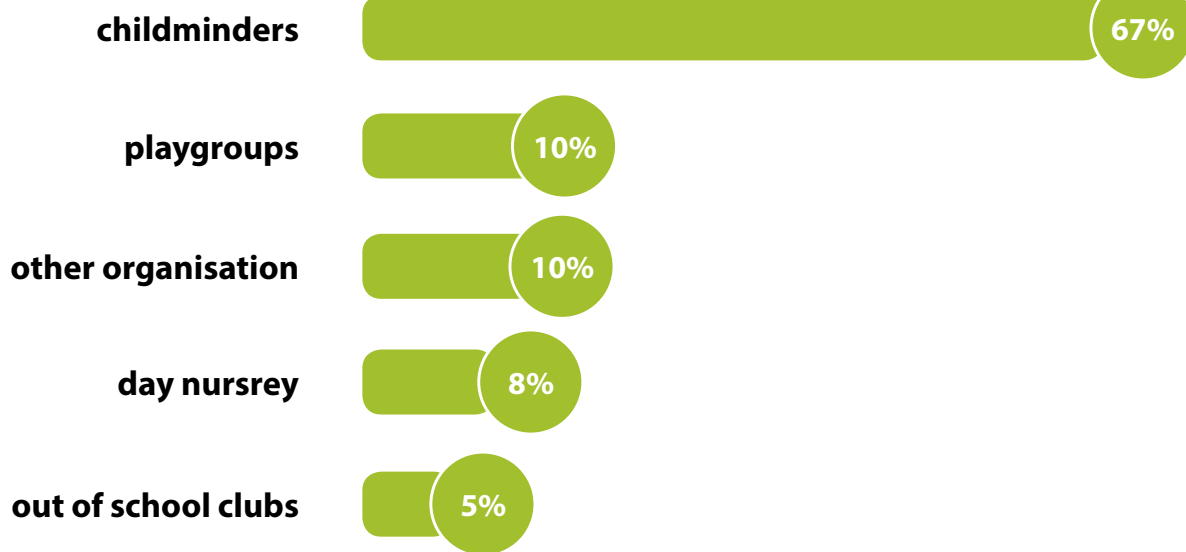
16

**OF THESE
WERE REPEAT
ADMISSIONS²**

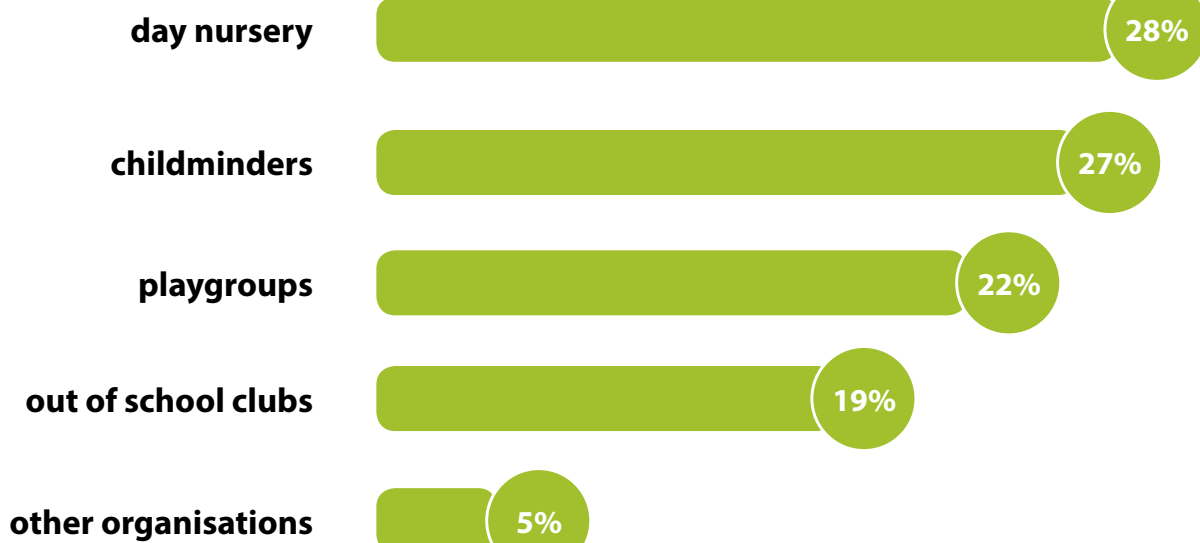


(an increase
of **3** on the
previous
year)

4,277 PEOPLE OR FACILITIES REGISTERED FOR THE
PROVISION OF DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN
UNDER THE AGE OF 12



62,638 PLACES PROVIDED



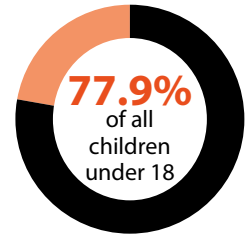
Statistics Snapshot 2018 - 2019

340,335

PUPILS IN SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND



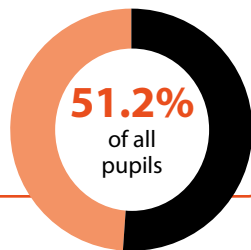
(slight increase of 2,546 since 2017-2018)



174,522

(increase of 778 pupils since 2017-2018)

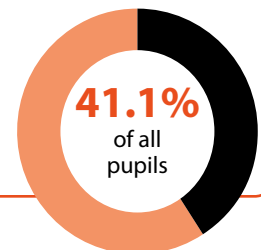
PUPILS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS³



142,237

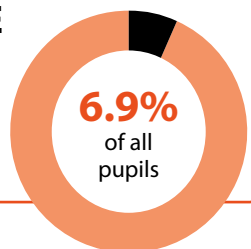
(increase of 1692 since 2017-2018)

PUPILS IN POST PRIMARY SCHOOL³



23,576

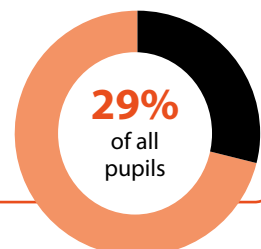
PUPILS IN FUNDED PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION³ (SMALL INCREASE OF 76 PUPILS SINCE 2017-2018)



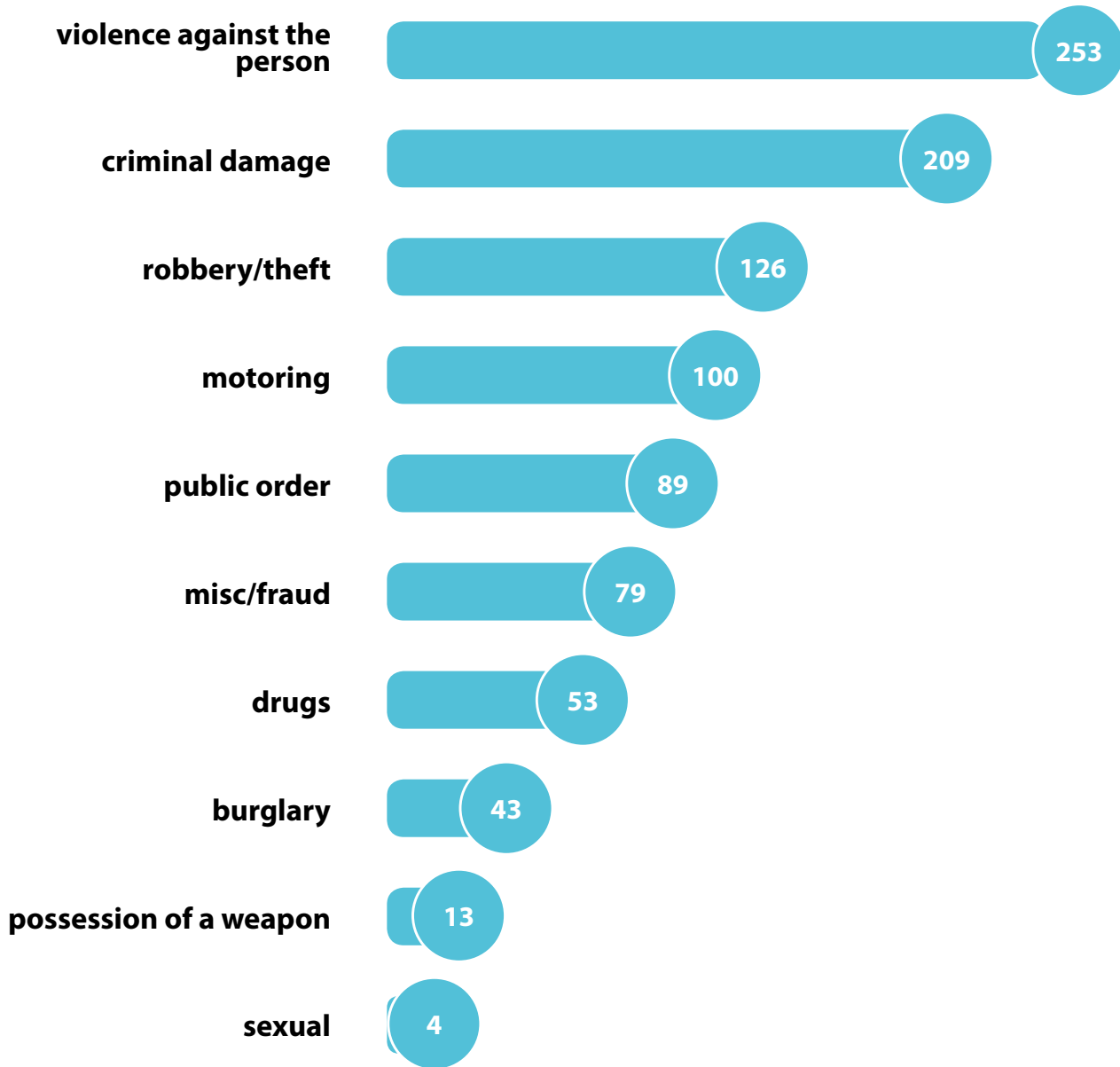
Over 100,000

ARE ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS³ (REPRESENTING ABOUT THREE IN TEN OF ALL PUPILS)

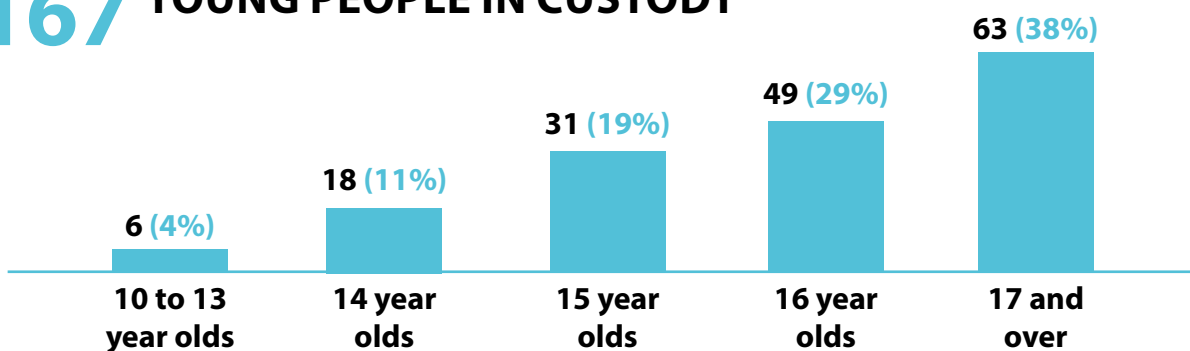
(slight decrease of 1.0% since 2017-2018)



969 CONVICTIONS AT COURT WHERE THE DEFENDANT WAS UNDER 18 (10 TO 17) AT THE TIME OF INITIAL DISPOSAL⁴



167 YOUNG PEOPLE IN CUSTODY⁵

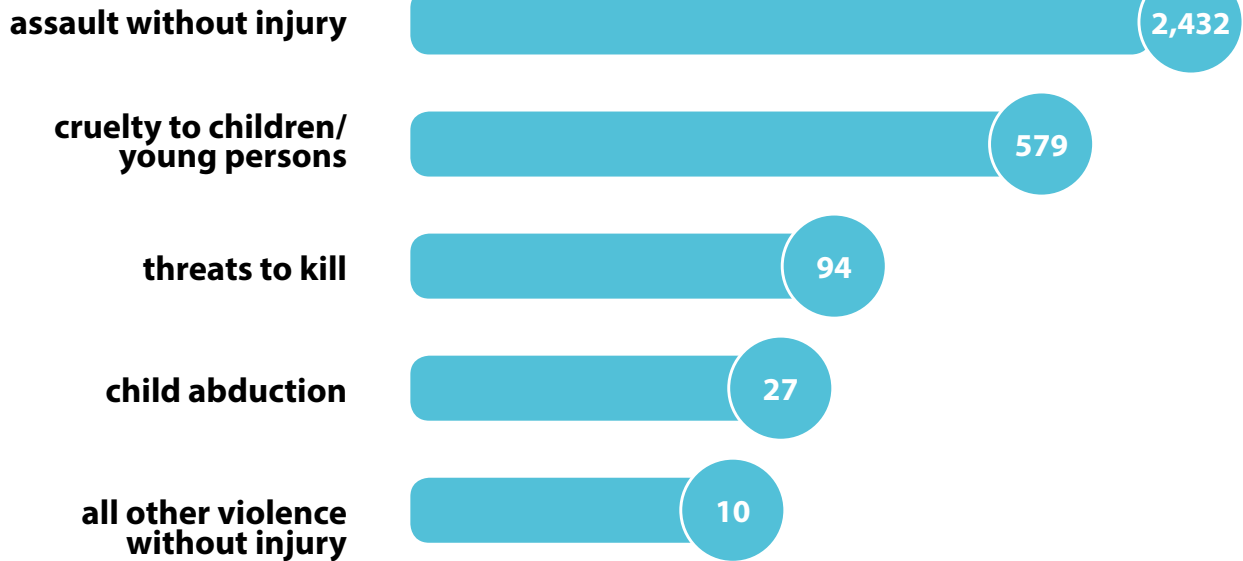


Statistics Snapshot 2018 - 2019

5,353

**VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON
OFFENCES WHERE THE VICTIM WAS
UNDER 18 AT THE TIME THE OFFENCE
WAS COMMITTED⁴**

3,142 (58.7%) VIOLENCE WITHOUT INJURY⁴



1,942 (36.3%) VIOLENCE WITH INJURY⁴



259

4.8%

HARASSMENT⁴

6

0.11%

**DEATH OR SERIOUS
INJURY CAUSED BY
UNLAWFUL DRIVING⁴**

4

0.07%

HOMICIDE⁴

Sources

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/population/mid-year-population-estimates> 22 June 2018 release for mid-2017¹

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/childrens-social-care-statistics-northern-ireland-201718>² published 11 October 2018

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/child-social-care-17-18.pdf>²

Children's Social Care Statistics for Northern Ireland 2017/18, published 11 October 2018

HSCB Directorate of Social Care and Children - Delegated Statutory Functions (Corporate Parenting): Statistical Report September 2019²

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/school-enrolments-201819-statistical-bulletins> published 10 December 2018³

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/research-and-statistics-bulletin-162018-court-prosecutions-convictions-and-out-court-disposals>⁴

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/292018-northern-ireland-youth-justice-agency-annual-workload-statistics-201718>⁵

Queen's University Belfast: Evidence Review – Developing Trauma informed Practice in Northern Ireland⁶

Bellis, M.A. et al (2015): Adverse childhood experiences and their impact on health-harming behaviours⁷

Meet the Board Members

Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland
Annual Report 2018-2019



Yvonne Adair
Safeguarding Panel
Chair, Belfast, Southern
and South Eastern areas



Paddy Kelly
Director, Children's
Law Centre



Veronica O'Callaghan
Director Women, Children and
Families Division, Executive
Director of Social Work, Northern
Health and Social Care Trust



Neil Anderson
National Head of Service
for N. Ireland, NSPCC



Cheryl Lamont
Chief Executive and
Accounting Officer,
Probation Board NI



Dawn Shaw
National Director,
Northern Ireland
Action for Children



Dr Martin Cunningham
GP Representative



Pauline Leeson
Chief Executive, CiNI



Andrew Thomson
Independent CMR
Panel Chair



Paula Hilman
Detective Chief
Superintendent, PSNI



Dr Clare Mangan
Director, Children
and Young People's
Services, EANI



Una Turbitt
Assistant Director, Public
Health Nursing for Children
and Young People PHA



Kieran Downey
Director of Women
& Children's Services,
Western Health &
Social Care Trust



Paddy Mooney
Director, Include Youth



Brendan Whittle
Director, Children's Services
& Executive Director of
Social Work, South Eastern
Health and Social Care Trust



Mary Rafferty
Safeguarding Panel
Chair-Northern, Belfast
and Western areas



Paul Morgan
Director, Children and
Young Peoples Services,
Southern Health and
Social Care Trust



Lynda Wilson
Director,
Barnardos NI



Liam Hannaway
Chief Executive of
Newry, Mourne and
Down District Council



Marie Roulston
Director, Social Care &
Children, HSCB



Carol Diffin
Director, Social Work/
Children's Community
Services Belfast Health &
Social Care Trust



Dr Carolyn Harper
Medical Director/Director,
Public Health Agency
(PHA)



Barbara McDermott
Director, Safeguarding,
Down and Connor Diocese



Mary Hinds
Executive Director of
Nursing, Midwifery
and Allied Health
Professionals (PHA)



Declan McGeown
Chief Executive, Youth
Justice Agency

Focus on Finance 2018-2019

The Department of Health is the sponsor department of the SBNI and allocates an annual budget.

For 01 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, this was £659,490, a reduction of 5% on its 2017–2018 annual budget allocation.

Additional to this, the Public Health Authority supplemented this amount with an extra £70,742 to fund the SBNI for Case Management Reviews.

The total budget for the SBNI for April 2018–March 2019 was:

£730,232

This was to cover spend on both salaries and goods and services.

How our money was spent by 31 March 2019:



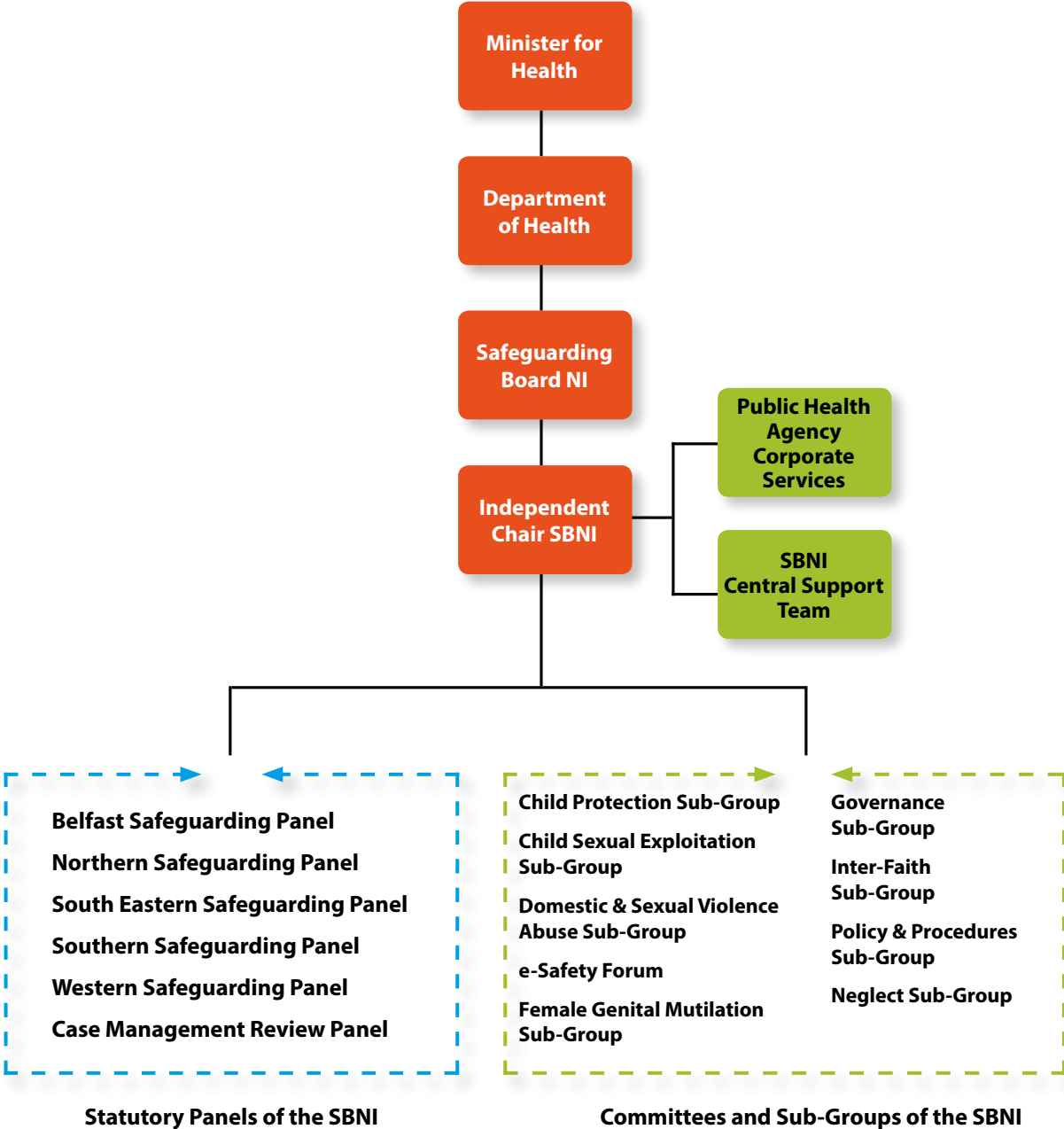
At 31 March 2019 there was an underspend of £4,408 (0.6%).

Major Significant Goods and Services Spend In Year:

- **SBNI Operational Running Costs: £101,000**
- **Chelsea's Story:** a CSE awareness-raising play seen by over 12,000 post- primary school pupils - **£24,000**
- **Interfaith:** development of an e-learning platform on best practice safeguarding practices for young adults who directly work with children and young people in faith settings - **£3,000**
- **Policies and Procedures:** e-Platform management of Regional Core Policy and Procedures - **£6,800**
- **Child Sexual Exploitation Audit:** an evaluation as to how SBNI member agencies evaluate and manage CSE within Northern Ireland - **£60,000**
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences:** commissioning of a theatrical production designed to highlight the impact of ACEs on the development of children and young people and support the development of resilience to counteract the effects of ACEs - **£23,000**
- **Case Management Reviews** – learning from practice: **£70,742**
- **Safeguarding Panels** – the SBNI at work locally: **£23,000**

How the SBNI is Structured

Organisational Structure 2018/19



Case Management Review

Learning from practice

SBNI Strategic Priority 1

‘To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people’

The 2017-2018 Business Plan Objectives were subsumed into the 2018-2019 Business Plan Objectives

Business Plan Objectives

- **Consider CMR notifications against criteria for CMRs**
 - **Aim to complete each CMR within agreed months of being commissioned**
 - **On-going training programme for those involved in the CMR process**
 - **Oversee the monitoring of CMR action plans and provide an update to Board**
 - **Ensure messages/learning from CMRs is widely disseminated within all agencies**
-



The Case Management Review (CMR) role is one of the statutory functions of the SBNI and is undertaken by a CMR Panel whose membership includes senior representatives of agencies who are represented on the Board. The CMR Panel is chaired by an Independent Chair Mr Andrew Thomson who is also a member of the Board. The task of the CMR Panel is to commission and oversee CMRs on cases notified where there has been positive outcomes for children and young people or where things have not gone well and there is significant learning. The main purpose of a CMR is to examine organisational systems and processes, so that the child protection system can be strengthened, thereby further protecting children and young people in Northern Ireland.

Consideration of CMR Notifications

During the reporting year 2018-2019 twenty CMR notifications were received by the SBNI and of these, two CMRs were commissioned as they met the criteria to undertake a CMR.

A total of three CMR reports were presented to and approved by the SBNI during the reporting period. From these reports seventeen recommendations were identified for regional application. Some examples relate to the seeking of advice and clarity in relation to making referrals to Social Services; the need for Initial Assessments to be holistic; improving practice in relation to Looked After Children; and issues in particular regarding children placed in kinship care arrangements.

Improved Timescales for Completing CMRs

A Multi-Agency CMR Practice Guidance was developed and implemented during 2017 with the aim of improving timeliness, methodology and quality assurance of the CMR process. The out-workings of the new process are subject to on-going monitoring and review. During the reporting year 2018-2019 there has been significant positive progress made on the timeliness of CMRs. The three CMRs concluded during the reporting year were completed within an average timeframe of 9.5 months which is a significant improvement on the time taken to complete reviews prior to the introduction of the Multi-agency CMR Practice when reviews took a number of years to complete. This means that the learning from CMRs is fed back into the system in a timelier manner and is therefore more effective and relevant.

On-going Training Programme

Training for all those involved in the various aspects of the CMR process took place during the year. This included Independent CMR Team Chairs, Individual Agency Review Authors, CMR Team Members, Independent Safeguarding Panel Chairs and CMR Panel Members. Training provided the CMR Team Authors the opportunity to be updated and informed about Regional Initiatives taking place in Northern Ireland. Inputs to the training included Signs of Safety, Early Intervention Transformation Project, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Project, and Building Better Futures.

Some comments from events held were:

- "Very informative workshop"
- "Excellent input today"
- "Overall excellent mix of presentations, enthusiastic presenters"

CMR Action Plans

The Board has reviewed and agreed the processes for managing action plans arising out of CMRs. It has been agreed that the responsibility and accountability for completing and implementing actions arising from CMR recommendations lies with individual agencies within their own governance process. When CMR reports are approved by the Board, each Agency identified within a recommendation is sent an Action Plan to complete as to how their Agency intends to undertake/implement the recommendation; the timeline for implementation; relevant milestones and estimated completion date.

Dissemination of Key Messages/Learning from CMRs

A regional event and several local events covering all Safeguarding Panel areas were held throughout the year to disseminate the learning arising from CMRs completed by the SBNI. These events were well attended by all multi-agency partners in Northern Ireland. Summary points from the learning are available on the SBNI website.





The following learning has been identified from the CMRs completed during the reporting period:

Addison

- This CMR identified the issue of thresholds for referrals relating to child protection and neglect within the Education Authority. This has led to a better understanding of thresholds within schools. This CMR also led to an increased awareness in schools of the role of the Child Protection Support Service.
- Addison also highlighted the issue of the effectiveness of current timescales to initial responses to referrals and the need for Initial Assessments to be holistic and include all family members.
- It was also recommended that in cases where a child has died and the death is unexplained, liaison should take place between the PSNI Senior Investigation Officer and the PSNI Public Protection Branch, around child protection, safeguarding and information sharing with other partner agencies involved in the protection of children.

Piper

- The issue of young people who display harmful sexual behaviours was raised in this review which identified the need for a consistent and co-ordinated multi-agency approach in Northern Ireland.
- The standard of expert reports in this case was also highlighted with a recommendation that all such reports should be subject to agreed increased scrutiny, agreed terms of reference, and governance processes.
- The need to strengthen inter-agency arrangements for information sharing was also a feature of this review and how to ensure unresolved concerns are dealt with by an agreed procedure to cover the escalation of such concerns to the appropriate senior staff in member organisations.
- This review also identified gaps in arrangements in the management of adults where there is a suspicion of child abuse that have not been through a court process with a recommendation for a consistent and co-ordinated inter-agency policy to be developed.
- The review highlighted the importance of ensuring adherence to the Protocol for the Joint Investigation by Social Workers and Police Officers of Alleged and Suspected Cases of Child Abuse NI (Joint Protocol procedures) and for more robust enquiries to be made in situations where children, especially those who are known to be vulnerable, do not want to make a complaint or complete an ABE interview.

Jackson

- The issue of children on Care Orders in one Trust residing in a different Trust area was highlighted with a recommendation that consideration be given to legislative changes to ensure children don't fall between two systems.
- Jackson also highlighted the issue of children on Care Orders living at home for indefinite periods, which can lead to drift, ineffectual care planning and poor delivery of service. It recommended the development of guidance and a regional data base to enhance the knowledge base and better inform future service provision.
- Jackson also recommended a regional review of the system of care planning for Looked After Children in order to raise standards and improve consistency of professional practice to ensure compliance with statutory duties/guidance.
- This review also recommended that guidance be developed on Safety Plans for children known to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service relating to young people exiting the service.
- Jackson also highlighted gaps in the Joint Protocol Procedures and recommended an amendment to include the provision that an investigation must not be closed without the authorisation of a PPU Supervisor and a Social Services Manager who will ensure it meets required practice standards and that all recording is duly completed.

How has the learning from CMRs made children and young people safer in Northern Ireland?

The main reason for conducting a CMR is to ensure the system can learn lessons when things go wrong. There are a number of examples of changes in practice throughout Northern Ireland as a direct result of a CMR being conducted. Examples include:

- Health Visitors are now routinely notified when children are admitted and discharged from hospital, and are informed of the reason for admission (Cary CMR)
- GP Training has been enhanced to raise awareness of the 'Think Family' Initiative, especially as this relates to supporting fathers of infants, who are experiencing stress and/or using illicit drugs. A number of CMRs have highlighted the absence of GPs from the child protection process (particularly in relation to attendance at case child protection conferences and information sharing). To assist GPs become more engaged in this process concise guidance has been developed and issued to all GP practices (Cary CMR)
- A Protocol for dealing with Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy is currently being developed. As a direct result of a CMR the definition of a Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy will include babies who are determined as deceased on first presentation, when the birth was not overseen by a relevant health professional (Jana CMR)
- The Donovan CMR highlighted the need for professionals to be more proactive in cases of chronic neglect and to be more aware of possible underlying criminal offences associated with this. This has been reinforced to professional staff from all agencies during dissemination of learning events in each of the panel areas
- Guidance for staff in agencies working with children under paramilitary threat is now being developed on how professionals and agencies, working with children who are looked after or on the Child Protection Register, should manage threats against a child especially from paramilitaries (Corey CMR)
- An 'Escalation and Resolution' Policy guidance to support the escalation of concerns has been developed and is being piloted in one of the Trust areas (Piper CMR)
- The Donovan CMR highlighted "competency" versus "best interests" during legal proceedings in relation to older children. Seminars are now held by the Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency and children and young people's Legal Representatives on the issue of determining older children and young people's competency versus their best interests in the context of neglect and the implications of this on advocating on behalf of children and young people who have experienced neglect.

Local Safeguarding Panel Activities



The main focus of the five Safeguarding Panels is to deliver locally the SBNI's strategic priority areas.

Each of the Safeguarding Panels has an independent chair and is interagency and multi-disciplinary in nature.

Each panel has representatives from local voluntary and community groups, education, youth justice, police, probation, councils and health and social care.

The five panels met regularly throughout 2018-2019 and continued to increase and enhance their alignment and engagement with the SBNI Board, central support team, committees and sub-groups. The attendance of the Professional Officers, the Business Support Manager and the EITP Project Manager at specific panel meetings has consequently continued to strengthen the focus and content of the panels' work locally, to the priorities and aims of the SBNI.

This year saw a change of Independent Chair in the Belfast, Northern and Western Trust area panels, with Yvonne Adair assuming responsibility for the Belfast area panel and Mary Rafferty taking on the Northern and Western area panels.

Co-ordinate the Implementation of SBNI’s strategic plan

Neglect is one of the SBNI’s four strategic priorities and after the ground breaking work within the Western Trust area last year, a further regional conference was hosted in the Northern Trust area in September. This served to officially launch the SBNI Neglect Strategy. Following this launch a number of, neglect awareness seminars took place in each panel area. These seminars, using a programme developed by the Neglect Sub-Group, were facilitated by the NSPCC and have proved extremely successful, with very positive feedback. They attracted a wide range of attendees, across all sectors which encouraged discussion and networking. Comments included the following “Very informative – looking at the impact of neglect and how care can reverse things” (designated teacher for Child Protection); “so informative – found the attachment/brain development information so useful” (Head of Nursery Unit); “such an informative morning, should be brought to all staff in schools” (Pastoral Manager); “was very interesting and informative to hear views of people from different working backgrounds” (Prison Officer).

Child Sexual Abuse workshops, specifically in relation to boys and young men were delivered within the South Eastern and Southern panel areas. The South Eastern event, held in May attracted 45 attendees from across the Trust area and achieved very positive feedback. The event in the Southern Trust area, held in October had 90 attendees, again from a range of organisations. It followed a similar format, with presentations from Barnardo’s, Cara-friend, Youth Justice, the Trust CSE leads and Women’s Aid. This workshop also received excellent and encouraging feedback. In the Northern Panel area, training was provided in post primary schools on the development of Social Guardians, with a multi-agency rolling programme of awareness training being delivered.





The RESPECT training, partly funded by the South Eastern panel was delivered over five days in July. The aim of this was to provide professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to work safely and effectively with teenage perpetrators of peer on peer violence and adolescent to parent violence. Fifteen individuals from Residential, Community and Justice Sectors completed the course and have taken this training and acquired knowledge and skills to their respective workplaces.

The South Eastern panel had an interesting and valuable presentation from The Army Welfare Service on their 'Safe & Together' programme, which works with those living with and impacted by domestic abuse.

The Rowan Conference, 'Understanding Sexually Harmful Behaviour - Keeping the Victim Perspective', jointly hosted by the Rowan Centre and the Northern panel in February, was very well attended with delegates from a wide range of organisations.

Two conferences were hosted to raise awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)/ trauma informed practice within the Western Panel area.

Monitor the Implementation of SBNI's Policies and Procedures

All five panels aim to ensure that its members remain vigilant to the importance of core policies and procedures with respect to safeguarding our children. As such, it is integral to business and all developments are noted and discussed, to ensure consistence, compliance and best practice.



Promote an Awareness of the need to Safeguard Children

Encouraging members and partners to keep abreast of good practice in safeguarding is on-going and the Belfast area panel has benefitted from valuable presentations this year on – Think Family, Signs of Safety and Keeping Safe.

The South Eastern area panel has similarly benefitted from input on safety planning. Furthermore, it has supported a very successful workshop on GP attendance at case conferences and has facilitated a useful meeting with the councils and the general register's office (which registers births, deaths and marriages) on the issue of safeguarding.

An audit of GP attendance at case conference, completed by the Northern area panel, identified a need for multidisciplinary mental health training for staff. In addition an innovative pilot within a post primary school was initiated in September, with an aim to improve communication with vulnerable young people while focusing on the health needs of Looked After Children. This is a collaborative approach between education and health and the outcomes will be presented to the panel upon completion of the pilot.

Implement Arrangements for Sharing the Findings of CMRs

Each panel is responsible for ensuring that the key learning from CMRs is disseminated and events have been held across all Trust areas. Attendance and participation has been extremely encouraging, with feedback such as 'learning points from each CMR was useful for application'; CMR presentations informative and thought provoking especially for professionals outside HSCTs'. Whilst Neglect had already been on panels' agenda, the wealth of learning from the Donovan CMR has been given specific significance within the area panel where it originated.

Similarly, following key learning from the Piper CMR the Panel that was involved, has commenced implementation of the Multi-agency Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework, with support from the NSPCC.

Promote Communication between the Panels and Children and Young People

The Southern area panel supported 'The Pressure Project', which aims to address key points of pressure that young people are facing in their local community. It took place in Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre and brought together 61 young people from local secondary schools who participated in four workshops over a full day event. The workshops explored relationship pressure, on line pressure, coping with stress and building resilience. "I learned that pressure is ok, it's how we deal with it that's important" (participant)

The South Eastern area panel as part of its delivery of the Neglect awareness raising seminars benefitted from having three young survivors of childhood neglect share their lived experience. This has given the young people the opportunity to express their emotions and to move forward. It has also given those attending the opportunity to learn from the experience of the victims. A couple of attendees commented "many thanks to the three young people...so important for us to hear their story and make improvements for the future", "young people sharing their stories really brought the topic to life and the importance of our role in identifying neglect"

The Western area panel embarked on a project to promote and articulate the views of young people involved in the Child Protection system using a series of video productions. In addition feedback has been sought from young people in relation to their experience with the Gateway service and an audit of the outcomes will inform service improvements.

The SBNI through the work of the Safeguarding Panels, Committees and Sub-Groups has undertaken significant communication and engagement activities with children and young people, parents, carers and professionals which are detailed throughout this report. The delivery of a Communication Strategy and Engagement and Participation Strategy is still in development and this work will be carried into the next reporting period.



Child Protection

Strategic Priority 1: To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children and young people.

Business Priorities;

The priorities of the Child Protection Sub-Group for 2018-2019 are to:

- Work on measuring outcomes for children in the child protection system
- Reform the child protection arrangements by the introduction of the 'Signs of Safety' approach
- Address intergenerational abuse by introducing an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) informed approach across statutory partners.



The Child Protection Sub-Group was established to provide a vehicle for the statutory partners within SBNI to focus on their statutory responsibilities concerning improved protection of children.

The SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group meet regularly to consider the range of child protection information available and to use this to agree priorities moving forward which can be actioned through an Outcomes Based Accountability framework. The Sub-Group meets at least five times per year.

The Sub-Group is chaired by Mr Brendan Whittle Director of Children's Services in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and membership comprises of the following agencies: Public Health Agency, Education Authority, Youth Justice Agency, Health and Social Care Board, Police Service Northern Ireland, Belfast Health Social Care Trust, Western Health Social Care Trust, Northern Health Social Care Trust, Southern Health Social Care Trust, National Society Prevention Cruelty to Children, and Probation Board NI. The Child Protection Sub-Group has focussed work plans on the following areas:

EITP

Early Intervention Transformation Programme Work stream 4 Trauma Informed Practice Project

The Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP) is a Delivering Social Change (DSC)/Atlantic Philanthropies Signature Programme which is funded jointly by five government Departments (DoH, DE, DoJ, DfC and DfE) DSC and Atlantic Philanthropies. Implementation commenced in April 2014 and it will end in March 2020.

EITP aims to transform ways of working through embedding early intervention knowledge and evidence based approaches to commissioning and delivering services for children, young people and families in order to achieve better outcomes.

There are four work streams within the EITP and in April 2018 the SBNI commenced delivery on work stream four, the 'Trauma Informed Practice- Professional Development Project. The project will run for two years and conclude in March 2020.

The aim of the project is that all of the SBNI organisations will:

- Have an awareness of the adverse childhood experiences which cause trauma in a child's life
- Be aware of the impact of these adversities on the development of a child
- Be able to identify what creates resilience to cope with adversity; and
- Be able to develop policies and practice to embed trauma informed practice in their work.

In order to achieve these aims the SBNI appointed a Project Lead in April 2018 and four Implementation Managers, a Project Manager and an Administrative Support Assistant in November 2018. The project team, all from different professional disciplines, was seconded into the SBNI from member agencies, with each of the Implementation Managers leading on delivering significant transformation across one of five, sector specific areas of the Trauma Informed Practice Project, namely:

- Community and Voluntary
- Education
- Health
- Justice
- Social Care.





During the first phase of the project, from April to December 2018 the project commissioned Queens University Belfast to conduct an evidence review on, 'Developing trauma informed practice in Northern Ireland'. This review highlighted key implementation domains necessary for developing a trauma informed system and which formed the basis of the project:

- **Organisational Change**
Leadership buy-in & strategic planning; intra and inter-agency collaboration; service user involvement & peer support; physical environment
- **Workforce Development**
- Training; staff support & wellbeing
- **Trauma Focused Services**
- Screening & assessment; access to trauma-specific services & evidence-based treatments/interventions.

The commissioning of QUB was part of a suite of procurement that saw the project engage a number of local companies to support the delivery of the project.

'Delivering Together' the NICON Conference in April 18 saw the project team collaborate with the Northern Ireland Regional ACE Reference Group (NIRARG) to raise awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences and the importance of delivering services in a trauma informed way. The project lead alongside representatives from the Public Health Agency and the Western Health and Social Care Trust, supported by Women's Aid Chief Executive Jan Melia, helped bring



the ACE agenda to the attention of Health and Social Care leaders during a workshop session at the conference.

This collaboration with the NIRARG continued during the summer of 2018 with a series of political and senior leader engagement sessions. All MLAs, MPs and local councillors across Northern Ireland (NI) were invited to a series of local awareness raising events hosted by; Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, Belfast City Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council. They were well supported with attendance from across the political spectrum.



In addition to these events the Project Lead was invited to speak, along with a representative from the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) to the All Party Group on Children and Young People, at Stormont, to raise cross party awareness of ACEs and the multi-agency training aspect of the project.



Also during this first phase of the project the Project Lead was invited by the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) to take part in the South Eastern Outcomes Group conference, who, with partners, brought together over 90 delegates to understand the wealth of partnerships contributing to improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in the South Eastern Outcomes Area and to raise awareness of ACEs and Trauma Informed Practice at a local level.



In addition to the strategic engagement sessions significant operational collaboration across the 5 sectors of the project was undertaken which enabled the project team to co design Levels 1 and 2 ACE Awareness and Trauma Informed Practice Training. This resulted in organisations such as the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSC) St. Cecelia’s College Derry, Youth Justice Agency (YJA) and the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) coming together to take part in a training pilot in the North West region.

A multi-agency stakeholder event was held in February 2019 with all of the agencies taking part and was followed up with 350 police officers in Derry City and Strabane District and 70 teachers in Derry city receiving Level 1 and Level 2 training. Further training for the other sectors will take place from April 2019 and will be reported on in the next Annual report.

During the final quarter of the year a number of elements of the project were finalised including: the award of our training contract for the community and voluntary sector to ASCERT, our Evaluation contract to the National Children’s Bureau, an agreed Northern Ireland ‘branding’ of the ACE agenda entitled, ‘Be the Change’ and a suite of training materials to be used in cross sectoral training.



**Adverse
Childhood
Experiences**
Be the Change

A key element of the training resources has been the production of a Northern Ireland Ace Animation. Designed in conjunction with the Educational Shakespeare Company (ESC) the animation specifically places the ACE issue in a Northern Ireland context utilising the skills of local actors and the key information contained in the QUB Evidence Review.

The culmination of the combined efforts of the project team for year 1 were showcased at the end of the year at a project 'launch' held in the Titanic Centre, Belfast with the Northern Ireland ACE Animation being shown for the first time.

The launch event was attended by over 160 representatives from; Health, Justice, Social Care, Education and the Community and Voluntary sectors. It provided an excellent opportunity for Sean Holland, the Chief Social Work Officer / Deputy Secretary Social Services Policy Group, Department of Health, to highlight the importance of the EIT Programme with the emphasis on early intervention approaches, supporting the transformation of services for children and families emanating from evidence based design and with outcomes focused improvements for families, all underpinned by a sustainable delivery model.



The SBNI was also honoured to have the Children's Commissioner for Jersey, Deborah McMillan speak at the event. The Commissioner's role is to promote and protect children's rights, as underpinned by the UNCRC and her involvement in the day served to highlight the importance of placing this agenda at the centre of everything that is done in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as encapsulated in the ACE training and articulated in the NI ACE Animation.



Whilst the aim of the event was to promote the ACE training products and the availability of the NI ACE Animation, a highlight of the day was the showing of the 'Life Changers' video. The project had commissioned Barnardo's NI and asked them to engage with their existing services and capture real life examples of how children and young people, across a variety of age ranges and from different backgrounds had experienced and coped with adversity. The young people were asked;

Who or what has a positive difference in your life?

How did that make you feel?

The resultant answers were collated into a very engaging video with young people saying what had made the difference to them.

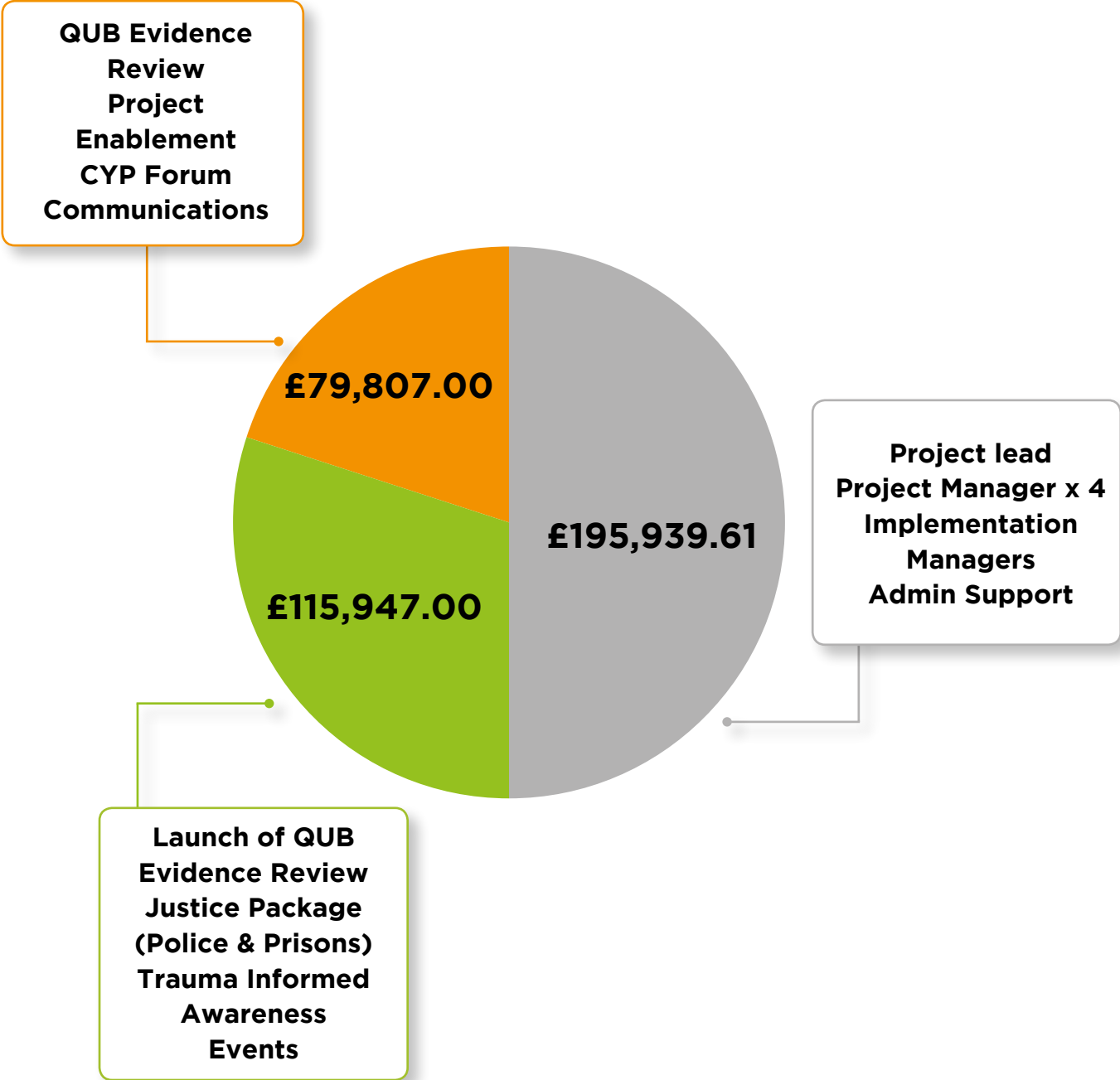


Following on from the event at the Titanic Exhibition Centre, the SBNI, as part of the Northern Ireland Regional ACE Reference Group (NIRARG) held a leadership conference entitled; 'A Trauma Informed Conversation: Accelerating Progress for the Programme for Government Outcomes.

The conference brought together senior leaders to set out the roadmap of building a trauma informed culture of practice across all organisations, in order to realise the ambition of creating a trauma informed Northern Ireland. A conference report and associated media detailing the activity and outcomes of the conference will be available in June 2019 and will be reported on in the 2019-2020 Annual Report.



**Year 1 Financial Breakdown of Spend
2018/2019**



To reform the child protection arrangements by the introduction of the ‘Signs of Safety’ approach

The regional launch of the Signs of Safety Implementation was held in the Stormont Hotel in June 2018; approximately 300 staff from across NI attended this event. Since that date 1727 Social Work staff have been trained in the “basic” two-day training and a further 145 staff in the “advanced practice” – 5 days. The staff who have completed the five day “advanced practice” training are also undertaking further training to become ‘practice leaders’ across NI. These ‘practice leaders’ will drive forward the implementation across their service area. Work remains on-going with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council to develop a Professional In Practice (PIP) accreditation for those staff who have completed the full seven day training including their practice leaders training and reflections.



‘Signs of Safety’ partner agency awareness training remains on-going across Northern Ireland. Regular events are held locally across the region by the Trust based Implementation Officers. Work has been completed on how the various models of Intervention i.e. Signs of Safety, Building Better Futures, ACEs & The Family Model for professionals complement each other; this is currently awaiting the HSCB Children Service Improvement Board approval.

Work considering how the implementation of the Signs of Safety Model can be accommodated within the UNOCINI documentation is underway. This is taking into account how best to include the Signs of Safety model into the assessment framework. An interim solution has been agreed in all five Health and Social Care Trusts and a pilot is operational, concluding in May 2019 which will provide feedback to the wider UNOCINI review which is being undertaken by the Department of Health.

Work on measuring outcomes for children in the child protection system

To endeavour to measure outcomes for children within the child protection system the Sub-Group established a task and finish group in 2018 to develop outcomes based

indicators. The task and finish group identified the “Outcomes Family Star Plus” system as the most suitable process, with which to quantify the movement families and children make towards better outcomes and measure the following three key areas:

- The child’s perspective – How safe they were prior to being included in Child Protection Register (CPR) and also following registration
- Parent’s perspective on how safe their child was both prior to and after registration
- The child’s and parent’s views on the experiences of the child protection system.

In preparation for implementing the ‘Outcomes Family Star Plus’ and in advance of any planned pilot of the system in each of the five Trust areas, the SBNI undertook a stakeholder workshop in conjunction with the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP).



Following on from the workshop the Child Protection Sub Group, in consultation with the ‘Outcomes Family Star Plus’ provider, agreed that it could be viewed as a framework of practice and a model of intervention which if rolled out at the same time as ‘Signs of Safety’, had the potential to cause duplication of effort and confusion of process for staff. As such it was agreed to put on hold the piloting of the new Outcomes Star while further work is undertaken to ensure a ‘fit’ between both models.

This work is on-going and an update will be provided in the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

ACEs Play

SBNI has commissioned the scripting and composition of an Artistic Theatrical Performance to consider three of the four strategic priorities adopted in the SBNI Strategic Plan 2018–2022. The performance will portray how the three ACEs of Neglect, Domestic Violence and Abuse and Mental Health impact upon children and young people. The performance play will be delivered to the SBNI in the next Business year with performances being delivered over a six week period to at least 50 schools across Northern Ireland (10,000 children) as well as professional members of the SBNI.

Neglect

Strategic Priority 3: To improve outcomes for children and young people affected or potentially affected by neglect through promoting the early recognition and improvement of agency responses

2018 - 2019 Business Plan Objectives

3.1 Promote early intervention with the aim of preventing children and young people experiencing neglect

3.2 Raise awareness of neglect with children/young people, parents/carers and staff

3.3 The Child Protection and Safeguarding system will be improved by hearing the views of Children and Young People, Parents, Carers and Staff through engagement with the SBNI Safeguarding Panels in relation to neglect

3.4 Work with partner agencies to provide training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing neglect



Neglect continues to affect a large number of children in Northern Ireland. During the year 2018-2019, 2082 children were on the Child Protection Register in Northern Ireland. The highest single category related to physical abuse at 34%, however neglect was the next highest category with 530 children (25%), Neglect and Physical Abuse was the highest combined category with 457 children (22%).

Tackling the issue of Neglect has been a focus for the SBNI since 2016 when a Neglect Sub-Group was first established. Neglect is now one of the SBNI Strategic Priorities. Sub-Group members include representation from multi-agency statutory and voluntary partner organisations. The Sub-Group has greatly benefitted by a parent, whose children were known to child protection agencies, becoming a member. This provides opportunities for real insight into family experiences of the child protection system.

Awareness Raising and Training

The work of the Sub-Group during the reporting year 2018 - 2019 has focused on raising awareness and implementation of the SBNI Neglect Strategy which was developed by the SBNI during the previous reporting year. The Neglect Strategy aims to help agencies in Northern Ireland who are involved with children, young people and parents to take actions to prevent, reduce and manage effects of neglect on children and families. The strategy assists with early recognition of neglect and the timely and effective response to neglect which are vital in providing families with the help they need. It addresses the SBNI Business Plan Objectives in relation to neglect. The SBNI partner agencies undertook to complete action plans as to how they would implement and embed the strategy within their organisation. The work of the Sub-Group is helping to take forward the Early Intervention Transformation Programme ACEs agenda in terms of neglect being recognised as one of the Adverse Childhood Experiences through:

- raising awareness of neglect with staff

- working with partner agencies to identify appropriate tools for assessment
- providing the training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing neglect.

The Strategy was launched at the Northern Area Safeguarding Panel Conference on Neglect held on 12 September 2018.

The main speakers were:

- Professor Jan Horwath - Emeritus Professor of Child Welfare in the Department of Sociological Studies at the University of Sheffield, who presented on 'Working with neglectful families to achieve positive outcomes'
- Dr Jenny Molloy - Author, Adviser and Trainer. Jenny spent many years 'in care' and now acts as a consultant to many local authorities and others interested in improving the looked after children system. Jenny presented on her publication 'the reality of being invisible: a childhood neglected'
- Ms Lynne Peyton - Independent Case Management Review Team Chair who presented the learning from a recent Case Management Review
- A parent gave a very powerful and emotional reflection from a parent's perspective.

At the Conference a number of workshops were held on the following:

- Neglect and the Legal Perspective
- Mouth Matters - management of dental neglect in childhood: the role of dentists and doctors
- Multi-disciplinary assessment of neglect- The role of the Graded Care Assessment Profile and community paediatricians
- The Power of Positive Educators: a service user, social work and teacher perspective.

During the reporting year the Sub-Group provided financial and direct support to training/ awareness raising events on neglect in the local five Safeguarding Panel areas. These events provided training for multi-agency staff at Level 1 and Level 2 of the SBNI Learning and Development Strategy. Feedback from these events has been extremely positive.

The SBNI has been working with partner agencies to progress the use of an assessment tool for neglect which has been identified as the Graded Care Profile.


A training task and finish group has been established to specifically address the issue of training for multi-agency staff in accordance with Levels 1–4 of the SBNI Learning and Development Strategy and Framework. This followed on from a gap analysis with member agencies in regard to training undertaken on neglect. It is hoped that this work will be completed by September 2019.


In order to further raise awareness and inform others about the work on neglect, the Sub-Group issued a third Neglect Newsletter. The newsletter is made public on the SBNI website at <https://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/Neglect%20Newsletter%20January%202019.pdf>

The Development of Infographics to support the message

To support the work of the Neglect Strategy, infographics about the profile of neglect in Northern Ireland was developed during the year. This will be circulated and be made public on the SBNI Website. This is depicted below:

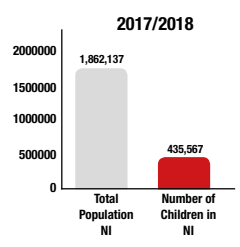
Profile of Neglect in Northern Ireland





NORTHERN IRELAND
has the **HIGHEST** proportion of **CHILDREN** in its population of all four UK countries

2017/2018



Total Population NI: 1,862,137
Number of Children in NI: 435,567

NEGLECT

is the **FAILURE** to provide a child's **BASIC** needs (e.g. adequate food, clothing, supervision, emotional, social, medical and educational needs) and can be a **CRIMINAL OFFENCE**


Neglect may affect 10% of children in the UK, in NI that equates to **4500 children**

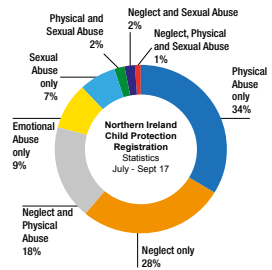
NEGLECT

is the most **prevalent** type of **maltreatment** in the family for all **age groups** in NI

80%

of children are on the Child Protection Register in NI due to **PHYSICAL ABUSE** or **NEGLECT** or **BOTH**

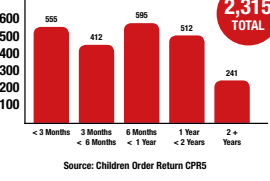




Northern Ireland Child Protection Registration Statistics July - Sept 17

Physical Abuse only	34%
Neglect only	28%
Neglect and Physical Abuse	18%
Emotional Abuse only	9%
Sexual Abuse only	7%
Physical and Sexual Abuse	2%
Neglect and Sexual Abuse	1%
Neglect, Physical and Sexual Abuse	1%

Children on the Child Protection Register by Duration at 31 December 2018




Source: Children Order Return CPRS

Duration	Number of Children
< 3 Months	585
3 Months - < 6 Months	412
6 Months - < 1 Year	595
1 Year - < 2 Years	512
2+ Years	241
TOTAL	2,315

73%

of children in the UK know another child who is **SUFFERING**



Neglect is an **Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)** that can have long term effects on a child

For more information visit www.safeguardingboardni.org/neglect
August 2019

Views of Children/Young people, Parents/carers and Practitioners

The importance of engaging and ascertaining the views of children and young people, parents/carers, and practitioners is recognised in the Neglect Strategy to inform the work of the Sub-Group. The parent representative on the Sub-Group has been instrumental in ensuring that the views of parents are captured. It is acknowledged that further work needs to be undertaken in relation to engagement with children and young people. It is planned during the next reporting period 2019-2020 to seek the support of existing multi-agency forums that engage with children and young people to ascertain the views of children and young people.

Member Agency's response to the Neglect Strategy

A specific requirement within the SBNI Strategy was that ***“There will be an expectation that all SBNI member agencies will translate this Strategy into an individual action plan that will be reviewed by SBNI.”*** The SBNI Neglect Sub-Group agreed to review action plans submitted from organisations in relation to the Neglect Strategy with a small Task and Finish group taking this forward.

Most SBNI Member Agencies have provided clear action plans that are quite focused and specific to their own organisation and have indicated that they have put measures in place to disseminate the strategy, disseminate learning, raise awareness and include neglect within existing training. They also have systems in place to use existing multi-agency forums/networks to address issues of neglect.

Agencies that have a key role in assessment and monitoring of neglect, indicated they would now utilise an agreed common regional assessment tool which is the Graded Care Assessment Tool and measure outcomes.

Any identified gaps and ongoing review of action plans will be addressed by the Sub-Group. The Safeguarding Panels will also support taking forward action plans on a multi-agency basis at the local level.

Extension of Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) Project

An innovative way to raise professional awareness of neglect and develop best practice is being progressed through the use of the ECHO project. ECHO is an international programme which was developed in the School of Medicine at the University of New Mexico. In Northern Ireland ECHO is managed by the Northern Ireland Hospice Service. ECHO uses a hub and spoke model to raise awareness of issues relating to health and social care. The hub is normally a multi-disciplinary team who sit together at the same location along with an IT and admin support and IT equipment. Those involved in the Spokes generally join the ECHO sessions remotely.

The Neglect ECHO Project is being co-ordinated by an SBNI Professional Officer. All participants in the Neglect ECHO project came together at the outset and agreed curriculum topics, dates, times and case presenters. Each session takes place from 12.30-2.00pm on a monthly basis. There has been great commitment and enthusiasm shown to the development of the ECHO Project by multi-agency partners.

The Neglect ECHO project works to build expertise at the front line, to safely and effectively manage and work with the complex area of neglect. It is an ongoing multi-agency, multi-directional learning network in Northern Ireland. Sessions that have taken place have focused on the impact of Neglect on children and the risk factors relating to Neglect in Child Death. Future sessions will focus on Ethnic Minority Groups, Thresholds, Transgenerational - ACES, Regional approach, Early & Late Interventions, Young Carer and Ante-Natal Neglect.

Staff can register to participate in the Neglect ECHO by using the following link
<https://tinyurl.com/y8u2duug>.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

Strategic Priority 2: To provide a voice to children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse

SBNI Business Objectives 2018/19

2.1 SBNI will work with government departments and their agencies to prevent domestic violence and abuse (DVA) from occurring

2.2 SBNI will work with partners engaged in the DVA arena to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of DVA on children and young people

2.3 SBNI will work with partners engaged in the DVA arena to promote education for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to DVA



The SBNI has adopted a strength-based, trauma-informed approach to safeguarding children and young people, underpinned by research relating to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). As part of this, the SBNI in its Strategic Plan 2018–2022 has placed a specific focus on three of the most significant ACEs for children and young people living in Northern Ireland: Neglect, Mental Health and Domestic Violence.

The SBNI Domestic Violence Sub-Group was established in 2018. The group is chaired by David Douglas Assistant Director of Children’s Social Services from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. Membership comprises of the following agencies; representatives from the five Health and Social Care Trust’s, Police Service of Northern Ireland, Probation Board of Northern Ireland, Public Health Agency, Youth Justice Agency, Include Youth, Barnardo’s, Women’s Aid Federation NI, NSPCC, Education Authority Northern Ireland and NEXUS. The representatives from the five Health and Social Care Trusts also respectively chair the five local Domestic Violence Partnerships. Their presence on the SBNI Sub-Group therefore facilitates connectivity with local and regional initiatives.

The overall focus of the Sub-Group is to ensure the Child is recognised as victim in his/her own right in a situation where Domestic Violence is a feature. The Group endeavours to progress this via a number of work streams as follows.

SBNI will work with government departments and their agencies to prevent Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) from occurring

The SBNI participates in two Domestic Violence forums to promote the voice of the child as a victim of Domestic Abuse in his/her own right. These groups are as follows; The Stakeholders Assurance Group (SAG) co-chaired by Department of Health and Department of Justice and the PSNI Independent Advisory Group (IAG) chaired by a PSNI Chief Inspector with responsibility for Domestic Violence.

Stakeholders Assurance Group

The Cross Departmental Strategic Delivery Board (SDB) in respect of Domestic Abuse was established and is responsible for delivering the twenty priorities contained within the *'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy'* (March 2016). The SDB comprises of senior officials from the following Departments; Department of Health, Department of Justice, Department of Education, Department for Communities and Department of Finance. The Stakeholder Assurance Group was established with a remit to provide advice and quality assurance to the SDB as required.

SBNI members of the Domestic Violence Sub-Group participate in the regional Stakeholder Assurance Group (SAG) to ensure that the voice of children and young people is represented to policy makers and Influencers. The SAG is co-chaired by DoH and DoJ and comprises of key Domestic Violence stakeholders. The group meets quarterly and exchanges information on policy developments and planning. The Chair of the SBNI Domestic Violence Sub-Group has a primary role within this group which includes providing leadership to twice yearly workshops to consider specific areas of Domestic Violence. In this role, the SBNI developments in respect of children are communicated to this group.

Independent Advisory Group (IAG)

SBNI participate in the Domestic Violence Independent Advisory Group (IAG). This group was set up by and is chaired by Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI). The group acts as a 'Critical Friend' to the Police Service; its main aim is to increase trust and confidence in policing across the province in respect of their response to Domestic Abuse and to provide constructive advice to the PSNI in improving the quality of service delivery for victims of domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and honour based violence, across all communities.

Membership of the IAG comprises of a PSNI chair, representation from the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), PSNI Rape Crime Team, The Policing Board, Women's Aid Federation of Northern Ireland, Men's Advisory Project, Public Prosecution Service, Northern Ireland Court and Tribunal Services, Victim Support, Action on Elder Abuse and NSPCC. This is a dynamic forum which previously was 'adult-focused'; the presence however of SBNI representation on the group allows consideration of the child as a victim in his/her own right and promotes the child's voice in police management of Domestic Abuse.

SBNI will work with partners engaged in the DVA arena to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of DVA on children and young people.

NSPCC ‘Safe Lives’ data has indicated nearly 1 in 4 of 13 to 17 year olds accessing specialist young people’s domestic abuse services demonstrate harmful physical behaviour. This combined with local knowledge of referral patterns into statutory services informed the decision to pilot a training programme considering peer on peer violence.

In 2018-2019 the SBNI supported the training of sixteen multi- agency professionals by the ‘Respect’ organisation. ‘Respect’ is the UK’s principle training organisation for frontline work with perpetrators of domestic violence and for young people using violence. Participants of this training included, Children’s Services Social Workers from local Health and Social Care Trusts, a Youth Justice Community Social Worker, a Youth Conference Co-ordinator from Youth Justice Agency, a Women’s Aid Children’s Support Officer, an Adolescent Youth Worker from the Juvenile Justice Centre, a Barnardo’s ‘Safe Choices’ Worker, a manager from a residential unit in Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, a social work manager from an Intensive Community Adolescent Support Team in BHSC and a social worker from the Sexually Harmful Behaviour therapeutic service (Aim to Change) servicing children in both the South Eastern and Belfast Health and Social Care Trusts. The South Eastern Domestic Violence partnership undertook to co-ordinate this training.

The aim of the ‘Respect’ training was to provide professionals with the skills and knowledge they need to work safely and effectively with teenage perpetrators of peer on peer violence and adolescent to parent violence. The training course modules are evidenced based and have been created and tested by specialist practitioners with reference to contemporary research and policy. The programme has been regularly reviewed and revised to ensure that it remains relevant to frontline workers.

The sixteen professionals who availed of this training and who now have access to the ‘Respect Licensed Toolkit’ are currently being supported to implement this knowledge and skill base on an individual and group basis both within their own agencies and across agencies in co-working arrangements.



The SBNI further recognised the need for parents to be supported by professionals to develop confidence and skills to manage their teenage children presenting in an aggressive and threatening manner. The SBNI supported the delivery of 'Non Violence Resistance Training' to multi-agency professionals who work with Children and Young People. South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust on behalf of SBNI, co-ordinated the delivery of this innovative training.

The aim of the two-day training was to share learning from an action research project and practitioners in this form of violence and abuse in family systems. Course participants were introduced to the 'Non Violence Resistance' (NVR) programme. The programme is evidence based, innovative and a short-term intervention that can be used within existing family and children's services. This training was delivered in the latter part of business year (2018-2019) and an evaluation shall be undertaken in the new business year to further inform future delivery across the region.

SBNI will work with partners engaged in the DVA arena to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of DVA on children and young people

and

SBNI will work with partners engaged in the DVA arena to promote education for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to DVA.

In 2018-2019 SBNI undertook to scope the current service provision for children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse. The exercise also examined the extent of awareness of the impact of domestic violence and abuse upon children. The scoping also aimed to determine the nature and location of services available to children and families who had experience of this form of abuse. The scoping exercise involved all member agencies of the SBNI Domestic Violence Sub-Group. Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland on behalf of the SBNI is presently undertaking an analysis of this exercise, the results of which will be reported upon in the SBNI 2019-2020 Annual Report.

During 2018-2019 SBNI Domestic Violence Sub-Group also undertook to scope the training provided to professionals of all member agencies working with children who are victims of Domestic Abuse. This scoping was designed to produce a 'needs analysis' to inform a training plan to support agencies working with children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse. The scoping exercise involved all member agencies of the Domestic Violence Sub-Group. The Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland is presently undertaking an analysis of this and the results of this will be reported upon in the SBNI Annual Report 2019-2020.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is an initiative currently operating in England and Wales which involves the reportage by police to schools - before the beginning of the new school day, advising that a child or young person has been involved in or exposed to a domestic abuse incident the previous evening. The purpose of the information exchange is to ensure members of education staff are aware the child may require additional nurturing or support during the day. The cross Departmental 'Domestic Violence Strategic Delivery Board' (SDB) in April 2018, directed that a Task and Finish Group should be established to progress further exploration around the issue to determine if such an initiative should be delivered in Northern Ireland.

The Strategic Delivery Board (SDB) requested the SBNI would undertake to chair this Task and Finish group to:

- Consider how notification to schools of domestic violence and abuse incidents could be achieved through the use, or adaptation of, current processes and procedures
- To consider what material benefits would be secured through the introduction of Operation Encompass, over and above the use, or adaptation of, current processes; to prepare an initial findings paper to the Board, once the above have been undertaken
- To comment on whether the introduction of Operation Encompass be considered necessary, the required steps to be progressed around the development, governance and implementation of such a scheme.

An SBNI Professional Officer has chaired this Task and Finish Group which was established in November 2018 comprising of representatives from Department of Health, Department of Justice, Department of Education, Education Authority Northern Ireland, representatives from two Health and Social Care Trust's and Police Service of Northern Ireland. The group is fully engaged in the task and have processed mapped current systems of communication across Northern Ireland agencies and also scoped out the implementation of Operation Encompass across five Police Forces in England. Work in this business area shall continue into 2019-2020 and shall be reported upon in the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

Mental Health

Working on the area of mental health

SBNI Strategic Priority 4

‘To provide a voice for children and young people affected by mental health issues’

2018-2019 Business Plan Objectives

4.1 Work with partners to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of poor mental health on children and young people

4.2 Work with partners to promote awareness for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to mental health

4.3 Work with partners to promote training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing the impact of mental health issues

The SBNI Strategic Plan 2018-2022 has identified mental health as one of its key objectives. Within Northern Ireland it is estimated that between 20% and 30% of adults receiving treatment for mental ill-health are parents. 23% of children in Northern Ireland live in a home where a parent has a mental illness². It is estimated that between 60,000-75,000 children in Northern Ireland live with a parent who has a mental illness.

More than 20% of young people in Northern Ireland are reported to be suffering significant mental health problems by the time they reach 18³. A range of health data indicators indicate that the prevalence of mental health problems in children is increasing, both in terms of their scale and complexity, and mental ill health is presenting in increasingly younger children⁴.

The issue of mental health is recognised by the SBNI as a significant Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) affecting children, young people and families in Northern Ireland and is therefore included in the work being undertaken through the SBNI by the ACEs Early Intervention Transformation Project (EITP) Work-Stream 4 – Trauma Informed Practice – Professional Development Project.

During 2018-2019, the SBNI commissioned the development of a theatrical play for children and young people which deals with the issue of Adverse Childhood Experiences. The issue of mental health is one of the key adversities of this play. The production, release and circulation of this play will help children and young people become more aware of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences such as mental health and will provide opportunities for young people to talk openly about this issue.

The issue of parental mental health and children and young people's mental health has been highlighted through Case Management Reviews, for example in the "Cary" CMR it was emphasised that all professionals in contact with parents of young children should be familiar with the 'Think Family' concept which recognises how mental health issues can affect family life as well as the individual. The "Cary" CMR also recommended that fathers affected by mental health issues should be offered the same supports as mothers of young babies. It was highlighted that assessing the implications of mental health issues and/or the use of illicit drugs such as cannabis, for safe parenting should take place. The learning from Case Management Reviews has been disseminated at regional and local events.

² Grant, A., Lagdon, S., Devaney, J., Davidson, G., Duffy, J., Perra O., Galway, K., Leavey, G., Monds-Watson, A (2018). A Study of Health and Social Care Professionals' Family Focused Practice with Parents who have Mental Illness, their Children and Families in Northern Ireland. Summary Report. Belfast: Queen's University Belfast

³ The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) "Child and Adolescent Mental Health in NI" (April 2017 DHSSPS, 2010; Khan, 2016.

⁴ Sept 2018 NICCY "Still Waiting" Report

Children and Young People's Mental Health

The SBNI during the year 2018-2019 has been working to identify how member agencies can support awareness raising of the effect of parental and children's poor mental health. The work has been informed by the research undertaken by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People 'Still Waiting' (Sept. 2018) and the report by Queens University "A Study of Health and Social Care Professionals 'Family Focused Practice' with Parents who have Mental Illness, their Children and Families in Northern Ireland" (Feb. 2018).

A number of SBNI member agencies been active in attempting to address the issue of children and young people's mental health. District Councils through its Youth Forums have been ascertaining the views of children and young people about mental health. The Belfast Youth Forum, NI Youth Forum and Children's Law Centre undertook the Elephant in the Room (EITR) campaign which is a regional youth-led mental health campaign organised by young people. As part of the campaign the young people developed the "Elephant in the Room" report which involved young people carrying out surveys and focus groups with 1,200 young people across Northern Ireland to provide information which explores:

- Young people's opinions on mental health and their ability to speak about it
- Where young people go to receive mental health information and support
- What actions young people think our government should take to promote positive mental health and wellbeing and support young people on their mental health journeys.

The report is being used to lobby decision makers and influence policy in respect of mental health for young people. The campaign is being taken out to young people in communities to challenge the stereotypes and myths around mental health and get people talking about mental health.

The Health and Social Care Board and the Public Health Agency during this reporting period have focused on implementing and embedding the "Working Together: A Pathway for Children and Young People through CAMHS" which was launched in March 2018. This is a care pathway for children and young people coming to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Northern Ireland. A Guide for children and young people was also developed. These can be accessed by clicking the following links

<http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/wpfb-file/camhs-pathway/>

<http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/wpfb-file/camhs-welcome-guide/>

The Pathway advises service providers, children and young people using services and their parents/carers what should be expected at any point along the journey of care, from referral to the point where care from CAMHS is no longer required. It sets out the standards that are applied regardless of the level of service which is required in response to children and young people presenting with emotional and mental health difficulties.

A video explaining the pathway is available at <https://vimeo.com/262066353>

Training on the CAMHS Pathway is also being undertaken with General Practitioners across Northern Ireland.

Parental Mental Health

Parental mental illness can have an adverse effect on children and young people, while the stress of parenting can also impact adult mental health. The approach to addressing the issue of parental mental health is known as 'Family Focused Practice' (FFP). This approach acknowledges that individuals living with mental illness are members of family systems, and that recognition of parents, parenting, and children/young people is a vital part of clinical assessment, support, and recovery. The work in Northern Ireland is known as 'Think Family' which recognises how mental health issues can affect family life as well as the individual. 'Think Family NI' has been progressed through a Regional Think Family Sub-Group, whose aim is to improve outcomes for children who have a family member with Mental Health issues by improving the interface between Children, Mental Health and Adult services across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. During this reporting period the group continued to work on the issue of parental mental health to have a positive impact on the safeguarding and protection of children and supporting families. An e-Learning resource on Family Focused Practice in the area of mental health, in conjunction with Queen's University Belfast and international partners from Australia and Norway has been made available to develop HSC professionals and service users' awareness of the 'Think Family' Model and how it may be used in practice. The Champions Model has also been developed in all five Health and Social Care Trusts. The Champion Model is where a professional is identified as a 'Champion' who is responsible for sharing knowledge with their teams, ensuring joint working is taking place and that the 'Think Family' approach is embedded throughout services.

Training to raise awareness, support the roll out and embed the 'Think Family' Family Model approach within the voluntary and community sector is being undertaken by Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI). The aim is to help embed this approach with the goal of improving outcomes for children, young people and families where the parent has mental illness and/or substance use problems.

Female Genital Mutilation

SBNI Strategic Priority 1: “To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people”

Existing Business Objectives 2017-2018 (Annex 1)

- **Safeguard those at risk or affected by FGM and promote their welfare through effective multi-agency practice**
 - **Establish an understanding of the extent of Female Genital Mutilation within Northern Ireland**
 - **Work with communities in a culturally sensitive manner**
 - **Development of practice guidance and pathways**
 - **Development of regional resources and training**
-

Work by the FGM Sub-group during the 2018-2019 year has continued to take forward the Business Plan Objectives to:

- Safeguard those at risk or affected by FGM and promote their welfare through effective multi-agency practice
- Establish an understanding of the extent of Female Genital Mutilation within Northern Ireland
- Work with communities in a culturally sensitive manner
- Development of practice guidance and pathways
- Development of regional resources and training.

Training

Training to raise awareness of the issue of FGM to assist understanding of the issue has continued to take place involving multi-agency staff during the year. The training raises awareness and provides information on the different types of FGM, the signs/symptoms and impacts of FGM, the legislative and policy context in relation to FGM in Northern Ireland, the influence of culture and family systems on FGM and explores partnership working in dealing with FGM. This training is delivered by trainers in members agencies who have been trained in the delivery of the FGM training.

Overall the training was found to be very beneficial and relevant to each agency and to the roles and responsibilities of those in attendance. Many highlighted they felt more empowered to ask difficult questions regarding FGM due to increased knowledge. The interactive and participative nature of the training was found to be extremely positive and created opportunity for shared learning and discussion. A review of the training has been undertaken by the SBNI during the reporting year in partnership with the National FGM Centre. The training content is being updated in light of this review and will include reference to the new resources and risk assessment tools which have been developed.

Data Collection and Analysis of Prevalence of FGM

It has proved difficult to gather comprehensive data on the prevalence of FGM. To identify data collection arrangements in Northern Ireland, the sub-group undertook a short scoping study by way of a questionnaire pro-forma which was issued to all SBNI member agencies in November 2016. Responses were limited and there was duplication of referrals which interfered with the reliability of the data.

The best possible proxy measure of the extent of FGM (in survivors) is maternity information through the NI Maternity Service (NIMATS) booking information. Work is on-going by the PHA and the Department of Health to ensure consistency in how FGM is categorised to ensure the accuracy of data and that the data is collected.

Community Awareness

The FGM Sub-Group has worked with the survivors of FGM to raise awareness of FGM in affected communities. A community awareness programme for women affected by FGM and another community awareness programme for men from countries affected by FGM, under the Task and Finish group, were previously undertaken with community groups and affected communities.

The PHA, under Health & Social Wellbeing Improvement programme is now taking forward the work on raising awareness of FGM with affected communities, through existing community forums.

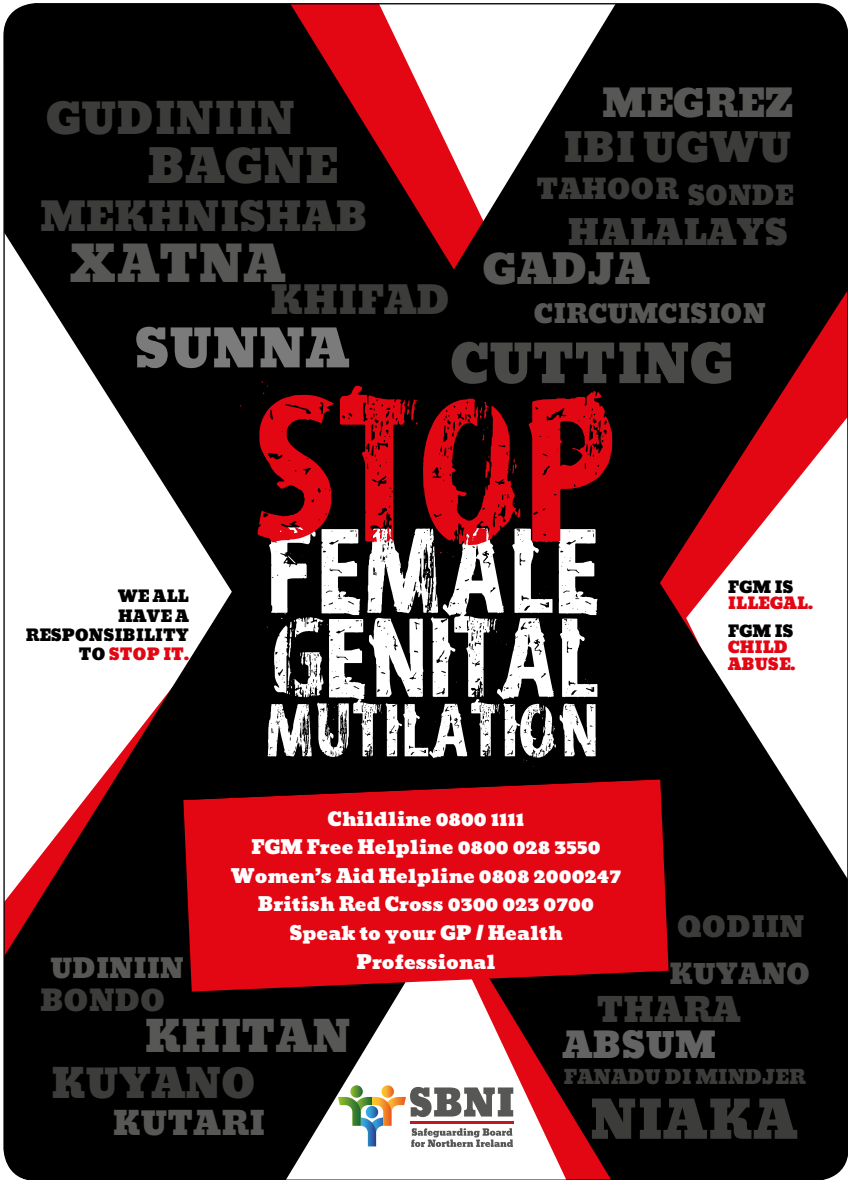
Professional Awareness

The FGM Sub-Group has continued its work to develop products to improve professional awareness of FGM. The following have now been developed:

- Poster with helpline numbers for public places. This was developed in conjunction with victim's groups and affected communities
- FGM professionals leaflet as an aide memoire and pointer to other sources of help. This was developed in conjunction with victim's groups and affected communities
- FGM risk matrix- this document has been customised from the original DoH, London document, and provides an easy to use risk assessment tool for professionals about the risks to a child or adult and for making decisions about referral to social services and the police. This works within the existing policies and procedures framework.

These were launched at a successful event on 16 October 2018 at the Malone House, Belfast. The event was opened by the Independent Chair of the SBNI Ms Bernie McNally, who set the context of SBNI's involvement with FGM. Inputs included Ms Eilis McDaniel, DoH, who spoke from the policy perspective of FGM, the legislative framework within Northern Ireland and the importance of dealing with FGM as a form of child abuse. Ms Clare Bailey, MLA Green Party and Ms Michaela Boyle, Sinn Fein spoke on behalf of the All Party Group on domestic violence that highlighted FGM as a form of domestic abuse. A survivor of FGM also gave a powerful speech about being a survivor of FGM and the work to raise awareness of FGM in affected communities. The event was attended by the statutory and voluntary sector. The resources launched are available to access at:

<http://www.safeguardingni.org/female-genital-mutilation-fgm>



A Pathway and Risk Assessment for Maternity and Gynaecology staff has also been developed to assist and guide staff on the care of women who have been affected by FGM. These guidelines have been produced to support the policy of asking all women at their maternity booking appointment whether they have experienced any form of surgery to their genitals including FGM. This is due to be disseminated.

The SBNI FGM Sub-Group was established as a short-life Task and Finish Group to address the issue of FGM from a safeguarding perspective. The Sub-Group has now been 'stood down' with the work on FGM being undertaken through existing inter-agency arrangements. Member Agencies will address any safeguarding issues through the SBNI child protection policy and procedures. The Public Health Agency (PHA) is now the lead agency and will be progressing community awareness of FGM, training on FGM and the recording of FGM in terms of prevalence in Northern Ireland.

Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group

SBNI Strategic Priority 1: “To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people”

Existing Business Objectives 2017-2018 (Annex 1)

- **Inclusion of service users in CSE in Northern Ireland**
 - **To develop an understanding of CSE in Northern Ireland as experienced by young people through a collaborative approach to raise awareness and further develop agency and community understanding of CSE in Northern Ireland**
 - **To raise awareness of CSE amongst post-primary school-aged young people**
 - **To assist the SBNI Policy and Procedures Committee by reviewing and agreeing the practice guidance for CSE**
 - **To manage the transition of the SBNI CSE Sub-Group into the SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group**
 - **To deliver the revised Night-Time Economy Programme 2018-2019**
 - **Effective collaboration of stakeholders to ensure recognition, assessment and treatment is afforded to Children and Young People subject to Sexual Exploitation**
-



Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Co-Operating to Protect Children and Young People, August 2017).

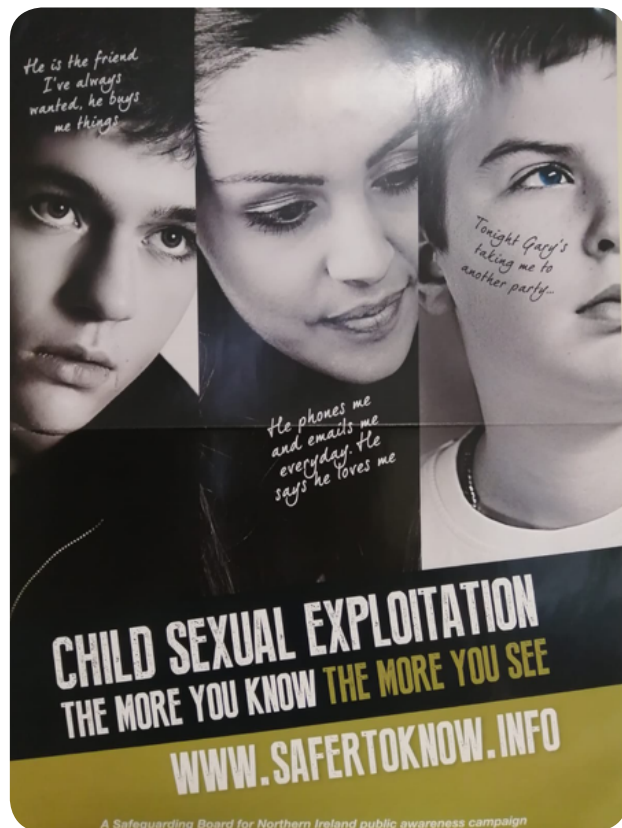
The SBNI has a key role to play in highlighting and managing the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland. This is undertaken through the SBNI Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group. The aim of the group is to facilitate SBNI members to work collaboratively to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children who are being sexually exploited or are at risk of being sexually exploited.

The CSE Sub-Group was established to:

- Develop an understanding of CSE in Northern Ireland as experienced by Young People through a collaborative approach to raise awareness and further develop agency and community understanding of CSE in Northern Ireland
- Assist the SBNI Policy and Procedures Committee by identifying good practice and to highlight areas where practice required to be improved
- Report to the SBNI Board on the delivery of the recommendations by member agencies of the “Marshall Report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland – Inquiry by Professor Kathleen Marshall” Nov 2014 (The Marshall Report) and “Getting Focussed and Staying Focussed – a Thematic Review of Child Sexual Exploitation” Nov 2015 (Pinkerton).

The CSE Sub-Group is chaired by PSNI Chief Superintendent Paula Hilman and comprises senior management representation from local Health and Social Care Trusts, Education Authority (EA), NSPCC, The Youth Justice Agency and Barnardo's Safe Choices Project.

There is a natural cross-over between this group and other SBNI committees (including the e-Safety Forum, the Child Protection Sub-Group and the Policies and Procedures Committee).



Evaluating the Responsiveness of SBNI Member Agencies to the Prevention, Recognition, Treatment and Management of CSE.

The "Getting Focused, Staying Focused Thematic Review into CSE" 2015 led by Dr Pinkerton QUB, made a primary recommendation that the SBNI lead a Regional Benchmarking Thematic Audit into the effectiveness of responses to those children and young people being 'Looked After' on a specified date with a record of repeated Going Missing where there are concerns about CSE.

In 2016-2017 a number of SBNI member agencies undertook internal audits of their current practice and responsiveness to this critical area of work. In 2018, the SBNI commissioned an overarching review and evaluation of all members' agencies. This Multi-Agency Evaluation is examining, at a strategic and operational level, how the member agencies of the SBNI are effectively addressing CSE from prevention to intervention within Northern Ireland.

The evaluation is also taking account of the Marshall Inquiry recommendations. The evaluation is reviewing the effectiveness of the strategic response to CSE regionally and locally by SBNI member agencies both individually and collectively.

It is anticipated the evaluation will identify good practice across the region as well as gaps and areas where improvements can be made to the strategic and operational responses to CSE regionally and locally by SBNI member agencies. The SBNI have requested that the evaluation:

- identifies a baseline against which future progress can be measured, expressed in terms of outcomes for children, young people and families
- considers whether a regional inter-departmental, inter-agency strategic framework, supported by a regional action plan is required to address the gaps/areas for improvement identified.

The evaluation is currently being undertaken and will be reported upon in the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

To Raise Awareness of CSE Amongst Post-primary School aged Young People



During the reporting period the CSE Sub-Group commissioned a very successful six week performance tour of 'Chelsea's Story'.

Chelsea's Story is a live performance play delivered twice daily to 50 Post primary schools across Northern Ireland. Each performance is delivered to at least 200 school children tackling the area of CSE. The performance addresses areas such as healthy relationships, unhealthy relationships, Safe Internet Use/Sexting, Consent, the Grooming Process, avoidance of "Victim Blaming", methodologies used by perpetrators and where to go for help and advice.

For professional - adult audiences - the performance also raises awareness of the warning signs of exploitation and awareness of the journey that young people may have been on that has resulted in them being exploited – a journey that can all too easily make it seem as though they have ‘made their own choices’ and can leave them not seeing themselves as victims and fighting against any intervention.

The performance was delivered to children from a range of backgrounds including those from the Black and Ethnic Minority Communities. The dissemination of the performance was also delivered to Children with Moderate Learning Disability as well as members of the Travelling Community.

The performance was delivered in the spring of 2019 during a five week period to 50 post primary schools across Northern Ireland. The play was exceptionally well received by more than 10,000 young people. An SBNI Professional Officer undertook a focus group with children and teachers following one of the performances whose experience of the play was illustrated in the following commentaries:

- “The story is relevant in Belfast”
- “Just because you don’t see it doesn’t mean it is not happening”
- “Please bring the play back to school for others to see”.

Teacher’s experiences are exemplified by the following comments:

- “It was a wonderful production”
- “It was very powerful and got the students talking about relevant issues”
- “It gave lots to think about. Very insightful”
- “Thank you for the opportunity to see ‘Chelsea’s Story”
- “It was a superb performance. Our pupils were very attentive and enjoyed the performance and understood the key messages”
- “Really professional production - students were engaged throughout”.
- “Powerful and informative message that hit the right tone”.

The play was also delivered to the following professional audiences across five additional performances during a sixth week of tour:

- Student Teachers from Stranmillis and St Mary’s teacher training colleges
- Social Work students from University of Ulster and Queens University Belfast
- Regional Education Authority staff
- Police Student Officers in Garnerville
- SBNI Board members and members of the five local Safeguarding Panels.



The CSE Sub-Group to Support its Transition into the CP Sub-Group

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of Child Sexual Abuse. The CSE Sub-Group has considered the appropriateness of transitioning membership into the SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group. In 2018-2019 Sub-Group members determined that it was appropriate to retain the Sub-Group in its current format to ensure a focused and timely response to be facilitated to any recommendations made in the Evaluation currently being undertaken. There is cross membership of the CSE Sub-Group and Child Protection Sub-Group and the latter is briefed on an on-going basis of any developments or initiatives from the CSE Sub-Group.

Night Time economy Project to concentrate on working with Hospitality Ulster to publicise the role of Hotel, Pubs and Clubs in combating CSE

The CSE Sub-Group has continued to work with 'Hospitality Ulster' to raise awareness of this complex area of abuse. The PSNI and NSPCC have led in this area.

There has been liaison with Colin Neill, Chief Executive of 'Hospitality Ulster' who has disseminated information and materials to his members. The PSNI have selected short videos to further disseminate to members of the Hospitality Ulster organisation to raise awareness of CSE. One of these videos is "Night Watch" which was created by Barnardo's and which highlights the links in CSE in the night time economy.

Training has also been rolled out to "Door Staff" of local pubs and clubs and has had a good uptake for CSE Awareness. Taxi drivers have also been trained and there will be a move to make this a compulsory Continuous Professional Development (CPD) module for all taxi drivers to have to complete. At this moment, any taxi companies wishing to apply for a contract with a Health and Social Care Trusts are required to demonstrate their employee drivers have undertaken a CSE awareness raising module.

Safeguarding Panel's Workshops on CSE

The South Eastern and Southern Area Panel's each delivered very successful workshops this year, focusing specifically on CSE with boys and young men.

The South Eastern event, held on 11 May 2018, attracted 45 individuals from across various agencies including prison staff (pastoral and staff from the pre - sentencing development unit), Health and Social Care Trust staff – Social Work and Health and members of the Youth Justice Agency. Speakers at this event included Ms Jacqui Montgomery Devlin presenting her PHD Research work on CSE, Jo McParland from Cara Friend, Staff from Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre, Mr Steven McNeill – CSE lead in SEHSCT, Mr Stevie Mann, and Governor from Hydebank with responsibility for the Personal Development and Pre-Sentencing Unit.

An event organised by the Southern Panel was held 09 October 2018 and was attended by 90 participants. This was a joint venture with the local Policing Community Safety Partnership, convened in Craigavon Civic Centre. Presenters at this event again included Ms Jacqui Montgomery – Devlin, Ms Jo McParland (Cara Friend), Staff from Woodlands, a joint presentation from the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Trust CSE Lead, Women's Aid and Councillor Joe Nelson (SDLP) from the local Policing and Community Safety Partnership CPSP.

Both events were very well received by the participants and achieved excellent feedback.

Safer in a Digital World

SBNI Strategic Priority 1: “To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people”

Existing Business Objectives 2017-2018 (Annex 1)

- **Plan and implement a coordinated approach to e-Safety in Northern Ireland**
 - **Inform and influence policy and practice development on e-Safety in Northern Ireland**
 - **Raise awareness of new and emerging threats in the online world**
 - **Promote the voice of children and young people as valued participants in the e-Safety Forum work**
 - **Ensure that the views of children and young people are integral to the work of the e-Safety Forum**
-



The e-Safety Forum

The use of the internet and mobile technologies opens up a world of exciting opportunities for children and young people and gives them access to almost unlimited information worldwide. However, it also places them at potential risk of being bullied online, encountering sexual images and/or inappropriate content, online grooming and misuse of their personal data. Most children and young people today are very proficient in using technology, but immaturity and a lack of knowledge of the risks involved, can put them in danger.

The SBNI e-Safety Forum operates as a non-statutory committee of the Safeguarding Board in order to:

- Plan and implement a coordinated approach to e-safety in Northern Ireland
- To promote the voices of children and young people as valued participants in the e-Safety Forum work
- Collate key educational e-safety messages for children, parents and practitioners from existing resources into one location and provide a quality assurance function
- Ensure that the views of children, young people are integral to the work of the e-Safety Forum
- Inform and influence policy and practice development on e-safety in Northern Ireland
- Be aware of new and emerging threats in the 'on-line' world.

Membership

The e-Safety Forum provides space for the sharing of new initiatives, trends and risks in respect on-line safety with SBNI member agencies and partner agencies. The group is chaired by a Detective Chief Inspector from Police Service of Northern Ireland, Public Protection Branch – Zoe McKee. The forum’s membership comprises of representatives from the following agencies – Police Service Northern Ireland, the five local Health and Social Care Trusts, Child Exploitation Online Protection command (CEOP – overseen by the National Crime Agency), Education Authority Northern Ireland, C2K (Communications Network support for Education Authority), NSPCC, the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), Include Youth, Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF), National Children’s Bureau NI, Nexus NI, Parenting NI, Children in Northern Ireland and an SBNI Professional Officer.

The Development of the e-Safety Strategy

The forum launched a consultation on the revised e-Safety Strategy and Three Year Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2019–2022 in March 2019. This had been delayed previously due to the Northern Ireland Executive suspension.

The e-Safety Strategy proposes a new vision with core principles and commitments to underpin e-safety for children and young people in Northern Ireland. It focuses on three key pillars for action to achieve the vision of keeping all children and young people in Northern Ireland safe online.

They are:

- Creating a sustainable e-safety infrastructure for Northern Ireland
- Educating our children and young people, their parents and those who work with them
- Developing evidence-informed quality standards for e-safety.

The overall objectives of the strategy are to support the development of a comprehensive cross-government action plan that will improve e-safety by:

- Reflecting existing evidence of good practice in e-safety approaches
- Engaging with existing e-safety mechanisms in the UK, seeking to add value and not duplicate
- Educating and supporting children and young people, and those responsible for their care and safety, to develop skills and knowledge to stay safe online
- Facilitating the responsible use of digital and internet technology
- Providing information on how to handle online abuse if it occurs and facilitating access to age-appropriate support services including recovery services.



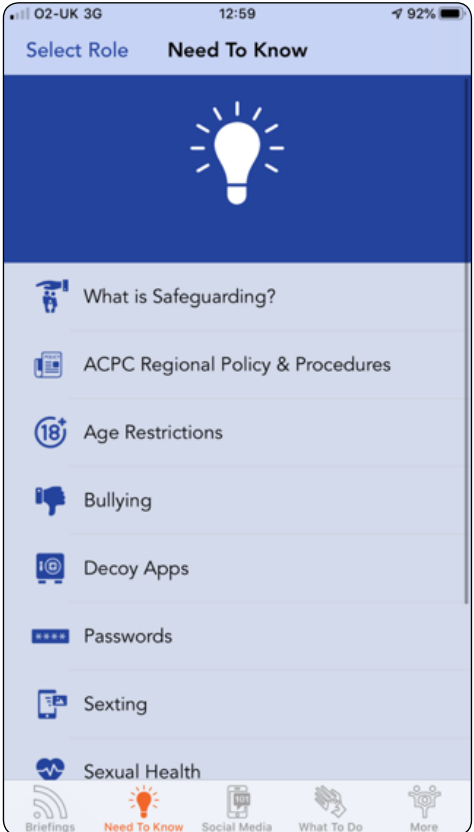
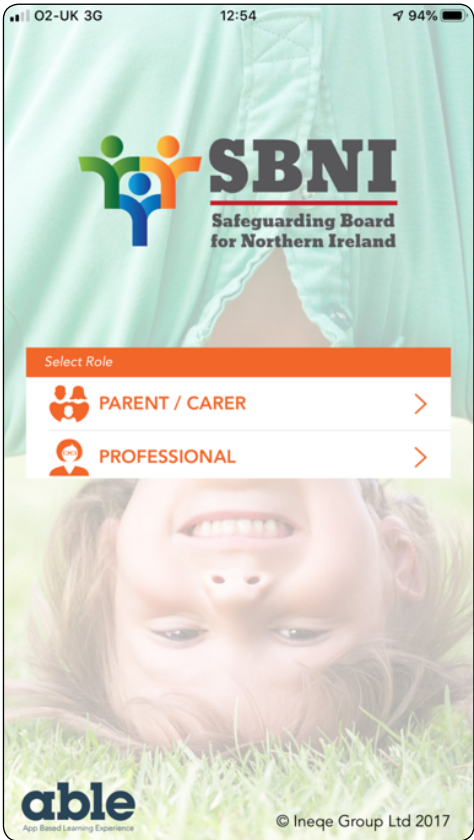
The National Children's Bureau, on behalf of SBNI, met with young people to co-design the Young Persons Consultation Document in February 2019. Consultation focus groups included Children with a Disability who are especially vulnerable.

The Consultation was launched on 04 March 2019 and closed on 29 April 2019. Analysis of the Consultation shall be undertaken by NCB to inform Cross Departmental consideration of the Introduction of the Strategy to Northern Ireland. This work will continue into the next business year and will be reported on in the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

Revision of the SBNI Safeguarding App

The SBNI continued to support an SBNI Safeguarding APP during 2018-2019. The APP provides current and relevant information in respect of all aspects of safeguarding and child protection issues for professionals and parents/carers.

During the reporting period the SBNI has undertaken an intensive overall review of the content of the APP to ensure all information, contact details, addresses etc. are correct. 'Ineqe' an independent e-platform support organisation, supports the SBNI with regular push button updating of relevant and topical social media alerts and advice for children, parents and professionals on gaming and new electronic On – Line Gaming and devices such as, 'Kik', 'Fortnite', the use of 'Alexa' etc. The SBNI will re-launch the APP in the next business year.



Anti-Bullying Week and Safer Internet Day



SBNI e-Safety Forum supported both Anti Bullying Week 2018 and Safer Internet Day 2019.

Anti-Bullying Week 2018 (ABW18) was the fourteenth annual Anti-Bullying Week campaign to be held in Northern Ireland. The chosen theme was 'RESPECT', encouraging children and young people to consider:

- What is RESPECT?
- How do we show RESPECT?
- How does it feel to be RESPECTED?
- How does being RESPECTFUL help build an anti-bullying culture?

As part of the campaign, Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum ran several competitions, an art and movie competition and a report writing competition. Winners of the Art competition were presented with their prizes at the ABW launch in November. The report writing competition for young people was also supported by the SBNI e-Safety Forum. The competition invited children and young people to write a newspaper report on the theme 'RESPECT' in the Cyber World'. A number of the best entries were selected by SBNI as prize-winners. Their prizes were presented by the Chair of the e-Safety Forum, Detective Chief Inspector Zoe McKee who addressed this vibrant young people's prize giving event.



Development of Guidance for Teachers on 'Sexting'

The e-Safety Forum recognises the growing area of 'sexting' in schools whereby children and young people electronically send explicit text and pictures of themselves to peers. The forum recognised the absence of guidance specifically in Northern Ireland for teachers managing this difficult issue on a day to day basis. The forum therefore established a Task and Finish Group to develop Guidance for teachers in Northern Ireland – in collaboration with the Child Exploitation Online Protection command (CEOP). The Task and Finish group has produced an excellent draft guidance document which is presently subject to Equality Screening and informal consultation. It is hoped this Guidance will be launched in the next Business year and will be reported upon in the 2019-2020 Annual report.

Virtual Reality

Delivery of the SBNI "Virtual Reality" e-safety package has continued with great success. This is comprised of a series of presentations aimed at addressing the key messages of internet safety. The presentations are age appropriate with one aimed at primary school aged children, the second for post primary school age and the last aimed at parents/guardians/adults working with children.

Amongst a number of other training sessions delivered across Northern Ireland, PSNI has additionally supported the delivery of the 'Virtual Reality' presentation to a cohort of parents from the Sudanese community in Belfast, in March 2019. The presentation was translated into their language with the support of an interpreter. The sessions were positive and welcomed, further sessions have been delivered to their children and further similar events are being arranged.

Safeguarding in the Faith Communities

The aim of the Inter-Faith Sub-Group is to enhance the safety and welfare of children and young people within the range of faith group provisions across Northern Ireland

SBNI Strategic Priority 1: “To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people”

Existing Business Objectives 2017-2018 (Annex 1)

- **Effective collaboration of stakeholders in ensuring children involved in the Faith sector are protected and safeguarded**
 - **To develop and share good practice arrangements and safeguarding resources for use within the sector and encourage use across any Faith groups**
 - **To support the promotion within Faith groups of appropriate safeguarding messages at an operational level**
 - **To identify key localised issues and develop safeguarding initiatives within Faith groups and share the same with the wider SBNI membership**
 - **To review the wider SBNI Policies and Procedures for their applicability across the Faith sector in conjunction with the SBNI Policy and Procedures Committee to seek to ensure the dissemination and encourage adoption of same**
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Background

In Northern Ireland it is recognised that at least 68% of all youth groups are based within the Faith Sector.

Northern Ireland Faith groups recognise their obligation to protect children and young people with whom they come in contact through the creation and promotion of a safe environment which protects them from harm. Faith organisations have a capacity to be a positive influence on children, providing the supporting structures and environment that places welfare first.

Faith groups in Northern Ireland are represented on the SBNI Board. The Interfaith Sub-Group is a partnership and works in collaboration with other SBNI committees to encourage effective communication and engagement in the development of key safeguarding initiatives. The Sub-Group continues to promote the importance of sharing of safeguarding resources, skills and knowledge.

The Interfaith Sub-Group seeks to facilitate co-operation between various faith groups and the SBNI. Membership of the group is derived from the Catholic Church, Presbyterian Church, Church of Ireland, Methodist Church and Evangelical Alliance. The group is attended by representatives from the NSPCC, the PSNI, and the HSCB and supported by a Professional Officer from SBNI.

The aim of the SBNI Interfaith Sub-Group is to enhance the safety and welfare of children and young people within the range of faith group provisions across NI.

The SBNI Interfaith Sub-Group aims is to harness a 'bottom up approach' to safeguarding and to work towards strengthening the interfaces between the voluntary, community and faith-based groups. This links to the SBNI ethos of ensuring that safeguarding practices are grounded at a local level and delivered by groups on the ground.

In particular, the Interfaith Sub-Group undertakes the following functions:

- Develops partnerships between the Faith Groups, SBNI and others concerned in safeguarding children in Northern Ireland
- Develops and shares good practice arrangements and safeguarding resources suitable for use within this sector and encourage use across any Faith Groups
- Reviews the wider SBNI policy and procedures for their applicability across the Faith Group sector in conjunction with the SBNI Policy and Procedures Committee. It seeks to ensure the dissemination and adoption of SBNI Policies and Procedures
- Identifies key localised issues and develops key safeguarding initiatives within Faith Groups, sharing same with the wider SBNI membership
- Supports the promotion within Faith Groups of appropriate safeguarding messages at an operational level.

Development of a 'Speak Out' leaflet disseminated across all faith sectors in the region

Following the success of the social media information leaflet for young faith leaders, the 'Speak Out' leaflet was designed to convey a standardized message across the faith sectors to remind parents, carers and volunteers about speaking out if they have a concern about a child's welfare. Knowing 'who' to contact and 'what' happens next are clear messages contained within the leaflet keeping children's safety and wellbeing foremost in all our minds.



The Delivery of Workshops considering the Management of Offenders returning to the Faith Community.

The Interfaith Sub-Group delivered two workshops on managing offenders returning to Faith, to Clergy, Ministers, Deacons, Prison Chaplains and designated officers with responsibility for managing risk in a Faith based setting. The workshops also included parish staff and volunteers whose role brings them into contact with children.



The aim of the workshops was to assist those within the faith sector to build knowledge and confidence in knowing how to:

- respond if they are concerned about a sexual or violent offender attending a parish based activity
- to enhance understanding of what to do if they are concerned someone is a victim of a sexual or violent crime
- to assist clergy/parish workers to appropriately share information and concerns with statutory partners
- explore how the faith sector can safely support offenders returning to faith in their community.

These workshops were delivered over lunchtimes in Omagh and Ballymena. They were exceptionally well received from attendees. Examples of feedback from participants indicated the following:

- “Really good seminar”
- “Very informative”
- “It gives confidence to us in congregations to know the right protocols”
- Thank you for organizing the conference and all the work you do to safeguard”
- The process of risk management at all levels was very helpful”
- “Excellent support from Presbyterian Church Ireland, Probation Office, and PSNI”.



The development of an e- Learning Platform for Young Leaders

The Interfaith Sub-Group brought together a group of young adults representing a range of Churches. This group was tasked at looking how the voice of young people could be better conveyed in safeguarding. They developed the idea of producing an e learning resource accessible for 15-17 year olds which would provide them with an overview of safeguarding and help them make more informed decisions at 17 years of age as to whether to pursue a leadership role. They have identified the areas to be covered and are currently working on the material required for the production of such a resource. The Interfaith Sub-Group have engaged with the Northern Regional College who specialize in the production of e learning resources. As well as being cost effective, it is a way of supporting local enterprise and benefiting young people attending the college who will be working on the project. It is hoped to have a finished product for launch early 2020.

Delivery of Virtual REALity Programme

The Interfaith Sub-Group supported the delivery of the SBNI/PSNI Virtual REALity programme to Students in Stranmillis Teacher Training College – following on from the successful delivery to students from St Mary’s Teacher Training College in the proceeding business year. The programme has now been delivered to 1,500 trainee teachers across the region. This has been a very exciting development and is equipping young teachers and leaders to assist children in staying safe on-line. A decision was taken by St Marys that the programme will be delivered to all first year students in the first semester as an integral part of their course. The Interfaith committee would be keen to continue to deliver this programme to faith based groups in the forthcoming business year.

The feedback informed the College that the students appreciated what might be described as a “no-nonsense” approach to delivery as well as an explicit articulation of the risks involved for children and young people.



Next Steps

Next Steps

This sixth annual report has outlined the challenges and changes the SBNI has faced over the year as well as the successes and improvements that have been achieved. Over the next 12 months the SBNI partnership intend to continue to build on this work as well as beginning to address any new priorities that the Board may set.

During this reporting period the SBNI partnership has begun to address each of the priorities agreed in the SBNI strategic plan (2018–2022). This plan was published in April 2018 and commits each of the member agencies to:

- work in partnership with other agencies, service users and communities to ensure children and young people are living in safety and with stability
- provide leadership and set direction for the safeguarding system across NI
- respond in a timely manner to new and emerging concerns
- drive improvements in the current child protection system
- continue to build the capacity of the Safeguarding Board to enhance the knowledge and skills of the entire membership to ensure the Board is providing effective, evidence based responses to the safeguarding challenges now and in the years ahead.

In addition to these high level objectives the SBNI had also agreed to adopt a trauma-informed/adverse childhood experiences approach to safeguarding in the search for better outcomes for children.

The SBNI Strategic Plan identified three Adverse Childhood Experiences for children in Northern Ireland which the member agencies have agreed to focus their collaborative efforts on over the next four years.

These are:

- domestic violence
- child and parental mental health
- neglect.

Over the next twelve months the SBNI will also:

- Respond to the consultation on the e-safety strategy and work collaboratively across all government departments to implement this strategy
- Complete the evaluation of member agencies response to the threat of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and work towards any recommendations for improvement identified
- Work across member agencies to implement the Signs of Safety approach to safeguarding children

- Consider a Public Health Campaign to further raise awareness of the issue of neglect and its detrimental impact on children
- Complete the EITP project creating a trauma-informed safeguarding workforce across all member agencies
- Co-design and deliver training on the “Sequential Intercept Model” to support sustainability of a trauma-informed system post March 2020.

The SBNI will continue to build on the vast amounts of important safeguarding work going on in all agencies, faith-based groups, sports clubs and communities across Northern Ireland in the fight against child abuse and neglect.

Glossary of terms

Access NI	a body within the Department of Justice that checks whether people applying to work with children have a criminal record
ACE/s	Adverse Childhood Experience/s
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
Child In Need	a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development without the provision of services
CiNI	Children in Northern Ireland
CMR/s	Case Management Review/s
CMRP	Case Management Review Panel
CPSS	Child Protection Support Service
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CYPSP	Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
DoH	Department of Health
DoJ	Department of Justice
DSC	Delivering Social Change
DVA	Domestic Violence and Abuse
EA	Education Authority
ECHO	Extension of Community Healthcare Outcomes
EITP	Early Intervention Transformation Programme
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
Gateway	the first point of contact for all new referrals to children's social work services
HSC	Health and Social Care
HSCB	Health and Social Care Board
HSCT/s	Health and Social Care Trust/s
IAG	Independent Advisory Group
LAC	Looked After Child
NCB	National Children's Bureau
NICON	Northern Ireland Confederation for Health and Social Care
NIRARG	Northern Ireland Regional ACE Reference Group
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PfG	Programme for Government
PHA	Public Health Agency
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
SAG	Stakeholders Assurance Group
SBNI	Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland
SDB	Strategic Delivery Board
VOYPIC	Voice Of Young People In Care

Annex 1

SBNI Business Objectives April 2018- March 2019

Introduction

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how relevant partners will co-operate and work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do. The key functions of the SBNI are to:

- To co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- To develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Promote an awareness of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- Keep under review the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body represented on the Board to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- To undertake Case Management Reviews, in order to learn lessons in cases where children have died or have been significantly harmed
- To review information in relation to the sudden and unexpected deaths of children
- To promote communication between the SBNI and children and young people
- Advise the Regional Health and Social Care Board and local commissioning groups in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Our Business Objectives

The Business Objectives of the SBNI for 2018 – 2019 are divided into 4 parts in accordance with the strategic priorities and aims set out in the SBNI Strategic Plan for the years 2018 – 2022:

1. To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children and young people
2. To provide a voice to children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse
3. To improve outcomes for children and young people affected or potentially affected by neglect through promoting the early recognition and improvement of agency responses
4. To provide a voice for children and young people affected by mental health issues.

Additionally, the SBNI has committed to progressing and completing the delivery of the following business objectives from 2017 – 2018, in addition to the on-going work of case management reviews and the five safeguarding panels:

- Female Genital Mutilation
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- E-Safety
- Interfaith
- Communications and Engagement.

Strategic Priority 1:
To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people

1.1 Outcome: To ensure greater consistency and standardisation of practice through the Provision of the 2017 Regional Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures

- Seek assurance that member agencies have disseminated and embedded the 2017 Regional Core Child Protection Policies and Procedures (P&P)
- Identify gaps in the dissemination and embedding by member agencies
- If appropriate, work with member agencies to ensure that member agencies have disseminated and embedded the 2017 Regional Core Child Protection P&P
- Consider whether the Signs of Safety approach complement the Core P&P

Strategic Priority 1:
To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people

1.2 Outcome: Greater consistency and standardisation of practice through the provision of relevant 2018 Practice Guidance on 2017 Regional Core Policy and Procedures

- **Develop and disseminate the relevant Regional Safeguarding Practice Guidance to support Regional Core Child Protection P&P in collaboration with the DoH and other agencies**

Strategic Priority 1:
To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people

1.3 Outcome: Children, Young People, Families and Communities are more aware of Child Protection and Safeguarding Issues and how to get help if concerned through and Engagement and Communication Strategy

- Review extant draft SBNI Communications Strategy 2013-2016
- Develop and agree a three-year SBNI Communications Strategy 2019-2022
- Develop and agree a two-year SBNI Engagement Strategy 2019-2021

Strategic Priority 1:
To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people

1.4 Outcome: The Child Protection and Safeguarding system will be improved by hearing the views of Children and Young People, Parents, Carers and Staff through engagement with the SBNI Safeguarding Panels.

The Safeguarding Panels will:

- Undertake a scoping of fora of:
 - Children/young people
 - Parents/carer

to be aware of groups that already exist to elicit their views and opinions

- Engage with children and young people, parents and staff to ensure their views are heard and responded to in relation to the child protection/safeguarding system

Strategic Priority 1:
To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people

1.5 Outcome: Statutory partners consider the range of child protection information available and use this to agree priorities moving forward which can be actioned through an Outcome Based Accountability framework.

- Review and evaluate the new revised Case Management Review process
- Develop a system for measuring outcomes for children and young people in the child protection system
- Support the reform of child protection arrangements by the introduction of the 'Signs of Safety' approach
- Facilitate the Child Protection Sub-Group
- Address intergenerational abuse by the introduction of an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) informed approach to practice and culture

Strategic Priority 1:
To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children/young people

1.6 Outcome: The SBNI Board and associated governance framework is fit for purpose.

- Re-constitute the Governance Committee
- Undertake an annual review of membership and terms of reference of Sub-Groups
- Develop and design an Annual Report
- Oversee the Business Objectives and their progress
- Scrutinise the 2018-2019 budget
- Review and submit annual Equality and Disability plans to the Equality Commission Northern Ireland
- Conduct biennial review of MoUs

Strategic Priority 2:
To provide a voice to children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse.

2.1 Outcome: Work with government departments and their agencies to prevent domestic violence and abuse (DVA) from occurring.

- Participate in the regional Stakeholder Assurance Group (SAG) to ensure that the voice of children and young people is represented.
- Identified the best approach, on the basis of hearing from children and young people to work collaboratively to make the best and most effective use of resources/ training/education

Strategic Priority 2:
To provide a voice to children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse.

2.2 Outcome: Work with partners engaged in the DVA arena to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of DVA on children and young people.

- Scope the current service provision for children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse.

Strategic Priority 2:
To provide a voice to children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse.

2.3 Outcome: Work with partners engaged in the DVA arena to promote education for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to DVA.

- Scope the training provided and produce a needs analysis to inform a training plan to support agencies working with children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse.

Strategic Priority 3:
To improve outcomes for children and young people affected or potentially affected by neglect through promoting the early recognition and improvement of agency responses.

3.1 Outcome: Promote early intervention with the aim of preventing children and young people experiencing neglect.

- Design and publish the Neglect Strategy
- Identify and agree a regional assessment tool in respect of the recognition and assessment of neglect
- Agree a regional implementation for the use of the assessment tool

Strategic Priority 3:
To improve outcomes for children and young people affected or potentially affected by neglect through promoting the early recognition and improvement of agency responses.

3.2 Outcome: Raise awareness of neglect with children/young people, parents/carers and staff.

- Produce and circulate awareness raising materials to improve public awareness, understanding and action on neglect for children and young people, families and carers
- Explore with relevant agencies ways to raise public health awareness regarding Neglect

Strategic Priority 3:

To improve outcomes for children and young people affected or potentially affected by neglect through promoting the early recognition and improvement of agency responses.

3.3 Outcome: The Child Protection and Safeguarding system will be improved by hearing the views of Children and Young People, Parents, Carers and Staff through engagement with the SBNI Safeguarding Panels in relation to neglect.

The Safeguarding Panels will:

- Engage with children and young people, parents and staff to ensure their views are heard and responded to in relation to neglect

Strategic Priority 3:
To improve outcomes for children and young people affected or potentially affected by neglect through promoting the early recognition and improvement of agency responses.

3.4 Outcome: Work with partner agencies to provide training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing neglect.

- Conduct a training needs analysis of current neglect training across SBNI member agencies.
- Develop neglect training and resources based on the Neglect Strategy in compliance with the SBNI Learning and Development Strategy and Framework
- Improve awareness and understanding of neglect for organisations outside of SBNI member agencies that work with children, families and others

Strategic Priority 4:
To provide a voice for children and young people affected by mental health issues

4.1 Outcome: Work with partners to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of poor mental health on children and young people.

- Work with member/partner agencies to identify how SBNI can support raising awareness of the effect of poor mental health.
- Support actions arising out of research in respect of mental health.
- Disseminate CMR learning regarding the impact of poor mental health.

Strategic Priority 4:
To provide a voice for children and young people affected by mental health issues

4.2 Outcome: Work with partners to promote awareness for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to mental health.

- Work with member and partner agencies to identify how SBNI can support raising awareness of the effect of poor mental health.
- Support the actions arising out of research undertaken in respect of mental health.
- Disseminate the learning from CMRs regarding the impact of poor mental health.

Strategic Priority 4: **To provide a voice for children and young people affected by mental health issues**

4.3 Outcome: Work with partners to promote training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing the impact of mental health issues.

- Work with member and partner agencies to identify how SBNI can support/meet with partner agencies to discuss how SBNI can support work on mental health.
- Support the actions arising out of research undertaken in respect of mental health.
- Work with member agencies to embed Think Family
- Support the roll out of Think Family through CiNI to the Voluntary/Community sector

Core Business/Completion of Existing Business Objectives from 2017 - 2018

Additionally, the SBNI committed to progressing and completing the delivery of the following business objectives from 2017 – 2018, in addition to the on-going work of case management reviews and the five safeguarding panels:

- Female Genital Mutilation
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- E-Safety
- Interfaith

Female Genital Mutilation:

- Safeguard those at risk or affected by FGM and promote their welfare through effective multi-agency practice
- Establish an understanding of the extent of Female Genital Mutilation within Northern Ireland.
- Work with communities in a culturally sensitive manner
- Development of practice guidance and pathways
- Development of regional resources and training

Child Sexual Exploitation:

- Inclusion of service users in CSE in Northern Ireland
- To develop an understanding of CSE in Northern Ireland as experienced by young people through a collaborative approach to raise awareness and further develop agency and community understanding of CSE in Northern Ireland
- To raise awareness of CSE amongst post-primary school aged young people
- To assist the SBNI Policy and Procedures Committee by reviewing and agreeing the practice guidance for CSE
- To manage the transition of the SBNI CSE Sub-Group into the SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group
- To deliver the revised Night-Time Economy Programme 2018-2019
- Effective collaboration of stakeholders to ensure recognition, assessment and treatment is afforded to Children and Young People subject to Sexual Exploitation.

E-Safety

- Plan and implement a coordinated approach to e-Safety in Northern Ireland
- Inform and influence policy and practice development on e-Safety in Northern Ireland
- Raise awareness of new and emerging threats in the online world
- Promote the voice of children and young people as valued participants in the e-Safety Forum work
- Ensure that the views of children and young people are integral to the work of the e-Safety Forum

Interfaith

- Effective collaboration of stakeholders in ensuring children involved in the Faith sector are protected and safeguarded
- To develop and share good practice arrangements and safeguarding resources for use within the sector and encourage use across any Faith groups
- To support the promotion within Faith groups of appropriate safeguarding messages at an operational level
- To identify key localised issues and develop safeguarding initiatives within Faith groups and share the same with the wider SBNI membership
- To review the wider SBNI Policies and Procedures for their applicability across the Faith sector in conjunction with the SBNI Policy and Procedures Committee to seek to ensure the dissemination and encourage adoption of same.