

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020



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Foreword by Independent Chair

Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Annual Report 2019-2020

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.

I am delighted as the Independent Chair of the SBNI to present our seventh annual report. The SBNI provides a platform for collective leadership and direction to the child protection/safeguarding system across Northern Ireland and once again during 2019-2020 has proved to be a very productive and effective medium for interagency collaborative working.

Within the SBNI strategic plan 2018-2022 we committed 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 Northern Ireland
- Respond in a timely manner to new and emerging concerns
- Drive improvements in the current child protection system
- Continue to build 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. During this reporting period the SBNI continued to deliver a professional training and development programme 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. The first phase of this project has now been completed and received a positive independent evaluation.

Alongside, and in conjunction with the ACEs project, the SBNI continues to focus on the key Adverse Childhood Experiences prioritised in our strategic plan.

These are:

- Domestic violence
- Child and parental mental health
- Neglect.

This seventh 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 2019-2020 business plan (see Annex 1 for details)

This report will also focus on the achievements of each of our statutory committees, particularly highlighting the work of the five SBNI Safeguarding Panels who are working locally to ensure a consistent approach to safeguarding across all of Northern Ireland.

The work of the Case Management Review Panel will also be highlighted with a particular emphasis on the progress made during the reporting period to ensure that high quality reports are shared with the child protection system in a timely way.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the SBNI – particularly the 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



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 sectors.

They 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 2019-2020 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 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 (there are two for covering the five Panels) has been appointed on the basis of their previous operational management experience within the child protection and safeguarding system and are members of the Board. The role of the Safeguarding Panels is to take forward collaborative work locally around to deliver the key strategic priorities set by the SBNI. The Panels also identify new and emerging issues from the ground, thereby ensuring that the SBNI is 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 or are cases where things have not gone well and lessons need to be learned.

The chair of this committee is a member of the Board and reports directly to the SBNI. The learning from each case management review is disseminated to relevant agencies via the local Safeguarding Panels.

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 technological/online 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.

Child Protection Sub-Group

The SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group was established in response to the Jay review of the SBNI in 2014.² The priorities of the Child Protection Sub-Group for 2019-2020 were 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 Western Health and Social Care Trust and meets five times per year.

Neglect Sub-Group

The SBNI Neglect Sub-Group was first established in 2016 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 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 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 a victim in his/her own right in a situation where Domestic Violence is a feature.

² Alexis Jay, Independent Review of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI), 2016. Available at: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/independent-review-safeguarding-board-northern-ireland-sbni>

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 facilitates co-operation between various faith groups and the SBNI. Membership of the group is derived from the Catholic Church Diocese of Down and Connor, Presbyterian Church, Church of Ireland, and Methodist Church. 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

A 'Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)' is to be established as a committee of the SBNI under Article 7 (1) of the SBNI Act. However, the relevant articles of the legislation have not been commenced at this time. Consequently a CDOP has not yet been established.

The Department of Health has engaged with the Public Health Agency and the SBNI on potential arrangements to establish a Child Death Overview Panel for Northern Ireland. Further work is necessary to ensure that a CDOP is established and operates in a way that maximises the learning from children's deaths in Northern Ireland and builds on the strength of existing child death review processes.

Reporting on Progress

Each of these groups meets regularly and reports directly to the SBNI on progress against agreed terms of reference.

Communication and Engagement

During this reporting period the Central Support Team has developed a procurement specification for the updating of the SBNI website. This will assist in the dissemination of learning, resources and training events and will be put out to the market in the next financial year for implementation at the beginning of 2021.

In addition, a procurement specification for an Engagement Strategy with children and young people, their families and carers has also been completed. It will go out to tender and the strategy will be published in the 2020-2021 business year.

The work of each of the groups mentioned above 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.

The Governance Committee met quarterly throughout the 2019-2020 reporting period and continued to be chaired by one of the SBNI's non-executive members. 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 a 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 Governance Committee continued to deliver on its purpose which 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, minimising the exposure to risk.

The Committee has achieved this through application of an Assurance Framework which assures 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, with risks managed appropriately, and is regularly reviewed by the SBNI.

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 keeps 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 provides assistance and support to the Independent Chair in the preparation of the SBNI's annual Declaration of Assurance, and has regard to the Memorandum of Understanding between the SBNI, the PHA and the Department of Health whilst recognising that each member body of the SBNI is also required to operate within its own governance arrangements.

Safeguarding Snapshot

Statistics Snapshot 2019 - 2020

1,893,700

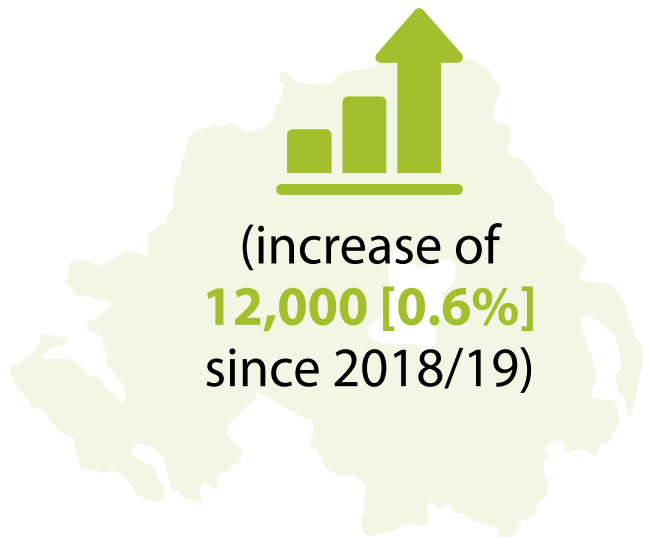
PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND¹



961,000
(50.7%) female¹



932,700
(49.3%) male¹



395,900

CHILDREN UNDER 15¹

20.9%
of total population¹



438,384

CHILDREN UNDER 18¹

23%
of total population¹



60,979

CHILDREN UNDER 18 WHO WILL HAVE EXPERIENCED FOUR OR MORE ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)⁵

14%
of all children under 18

COMPARED WITH PEOPLE WITH NO ACES THOSE WITH 4 OR MORE ACES ARE⁶

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



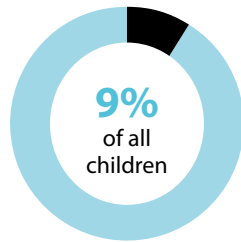
4 times more likely to be a high risk drinker



Statistics Snapshot 2019-2020

34,578

**CHILDREN
WERE
REFERRED TO
SOCIAL
SERVICES FOR
ASSESSMENT²**



(decrease of **1,444**
from 2018-2019)



24,289

**CHILDREN
KNOWN
TO SOCIAL
SERVICES AS
A CHILD IN
NEED²**



(an increase of **779**
from 2018 -2019)

4,426

**CHILDREN
IN NEED
WITH A
DISABILITY²**



Learning

1938

Autism

1750

Physical

414

Sensory

249

Chronic Illness

26

Other

58

Statistics Snapshot 2019-2020

2,298

CHILDREN ON THE CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER²



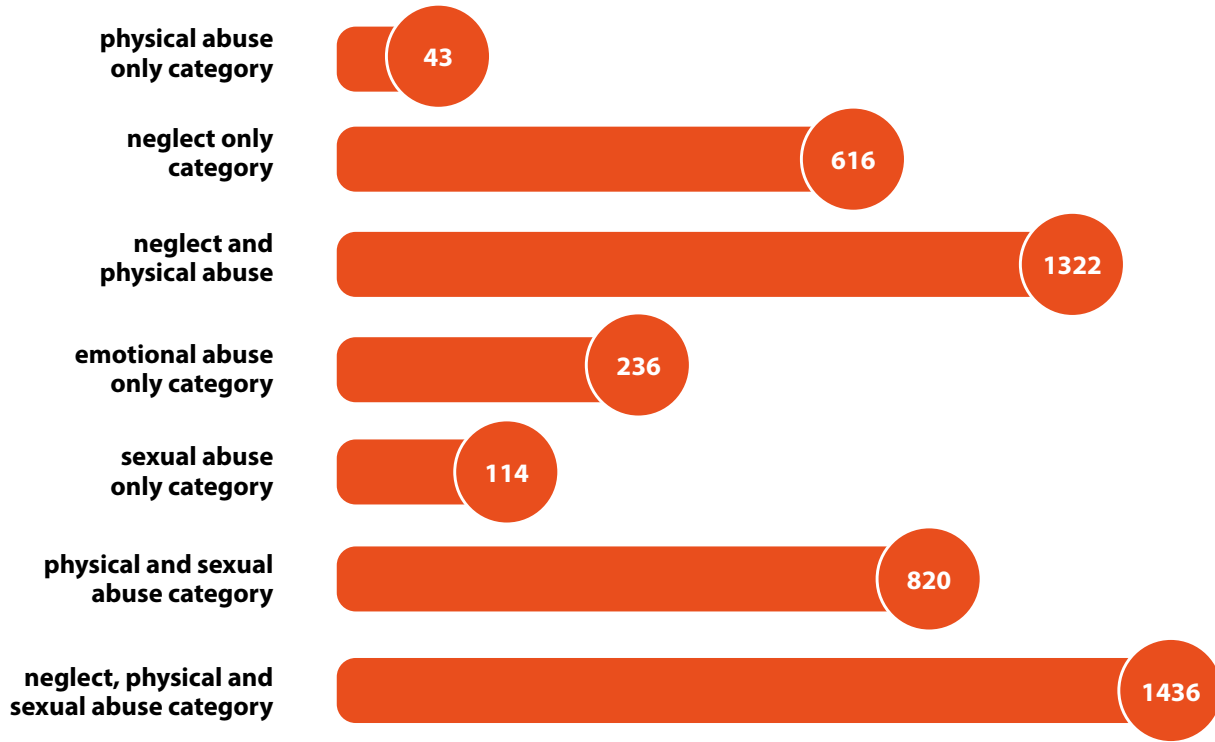
**1220
males**



**1078
females**



(increase of **216** children since March 2018)



3,058

FAMILY SUPPORT REFERRALS RECEIVED AND REQUIRING A UNOCINI²



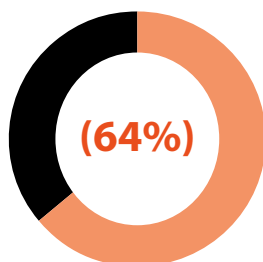
4,713

FAMILY SUPPORT ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED AT GATEWAY²

*1.4.19 - 31.12.19
(9 months data)

3,034

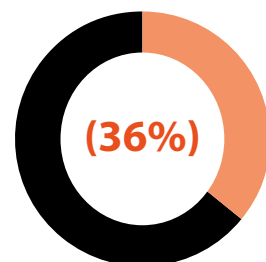
NUMBER OF THE ABOVE ASSESSMENTS CLOSED AT GATEWAY²



*1.4.19 - 31.12.19
(9 months data)

1,698

NUMBER OF COMPLETED FAMILY SUPPORT INITIAL ASSESSMENTS TRANSFERRED TO FIT²



*1.4.19 - 31.12.19
(9 months data)

3,058

CHILD PROTECTION REFERRALS²

(a decrease of 349 on the previous year)



3,102

CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATIONS CARRIED OUT²



(a decrease of 349 on the previous year)



by social workers



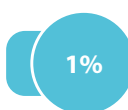
2,167

by joint protocol



867

by police



1%

6,625

NUMBER OF CHILD PROTECTION ASSESSMENTS RECEIVED AND REQUIRING A UNOCINI ASSESSMENT²

*1.4.19 - 31.12.19
(9 months data)



645 (62%)

NUMBER OF THESE COMPLETED INITIAL ASSESSMENTS TRANSFERRED TO FIT

*1.4.19 - 31.12.19
(9 months data)



1,035

CHILD PROTECTION ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED AT GATEWAY²

*1.4.19 - 31.12.19
(9 months data)



321 (31%)

CHILD PROTECTION ASSESSMENTS CLOSED BY GATEWAY²

*1.4.19 - 31.12.19
(9 months data)



Statistics Snapshot 2019-2020

3,281

CHILDREN IN CARE OF HSC TRUSTS (LAC)

(increase of **172** on previous year and the highest number recorded since the introduction of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995)



53%
males



47%
females

422

CHILDREN IN CARE RECORDED AS HAVING A DISABILITY



884

CHILDREN ADMITTED TO CARE DURING THE YEAR



79%

IN FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS



48%

OF THESE FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS ARE WITH KINSHIP FOSTER CARERS²



11%

CHILDREN PLACED AT HOME WITH PARENTS²



6%

CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL CARE²



4%

OTHER PLACEMENTS²



677

CHILDREN DISCHARGED FROM CARE DURING THE YEAR²



Statistics Snapshot 2019-2020

48

**ADMISSIONS TO
SECURE CARE
(2018-2019)**



(an increase
of **10** on the
previous
year)

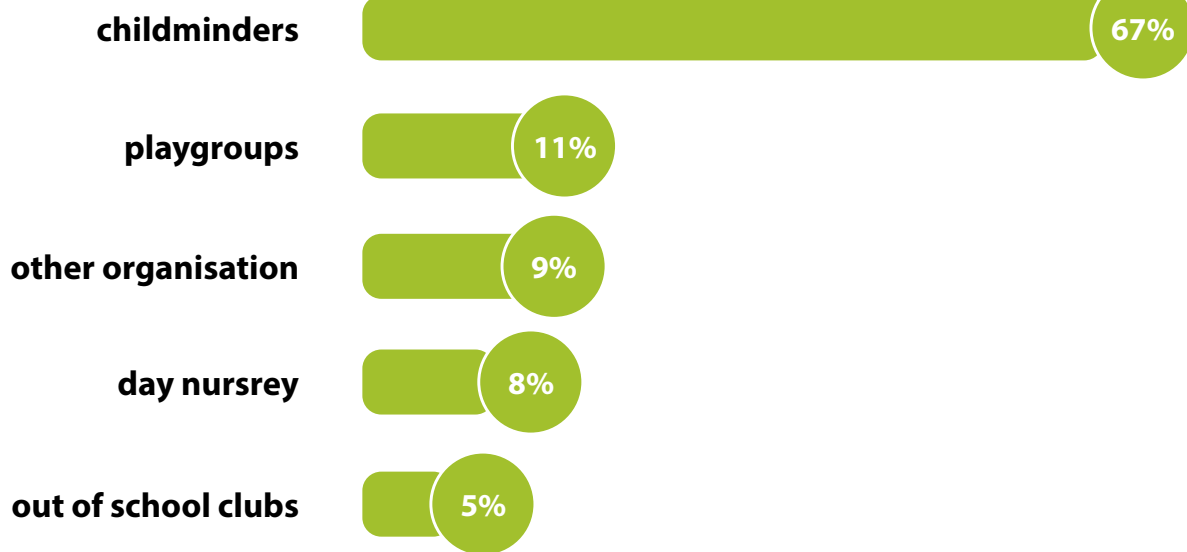
31

**OF THESE
WERE REPEAT
SUBMISSIONS²**

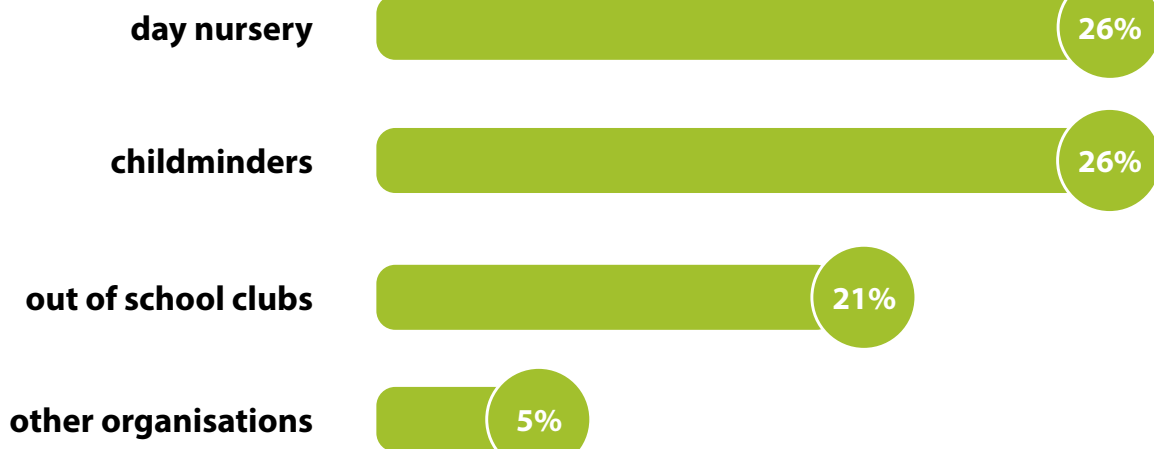


(an increase
of **14** on the
previous
year)

4,079 PEOPLE OR FACILITIES REGISTERED FOR THE
PROVISION OF DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN
UNDER THE AGE OF 12



60,501 PLACES PROVIDED



Statistics Snapshot 2019-2020

342,700

PUPILS IN SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND



(slight increase of **2,365** since 2018-2019)



173,856

PUPILS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS³

(decrease of **666** pupils since 2018-2019)



145,085

PUPILS IN POST PRIMARY SCHOOL³

(increase of **2848** since 2018-2019)



23,759

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

(small increase of **183** pupils since 2018-2019)



Over 97,000

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



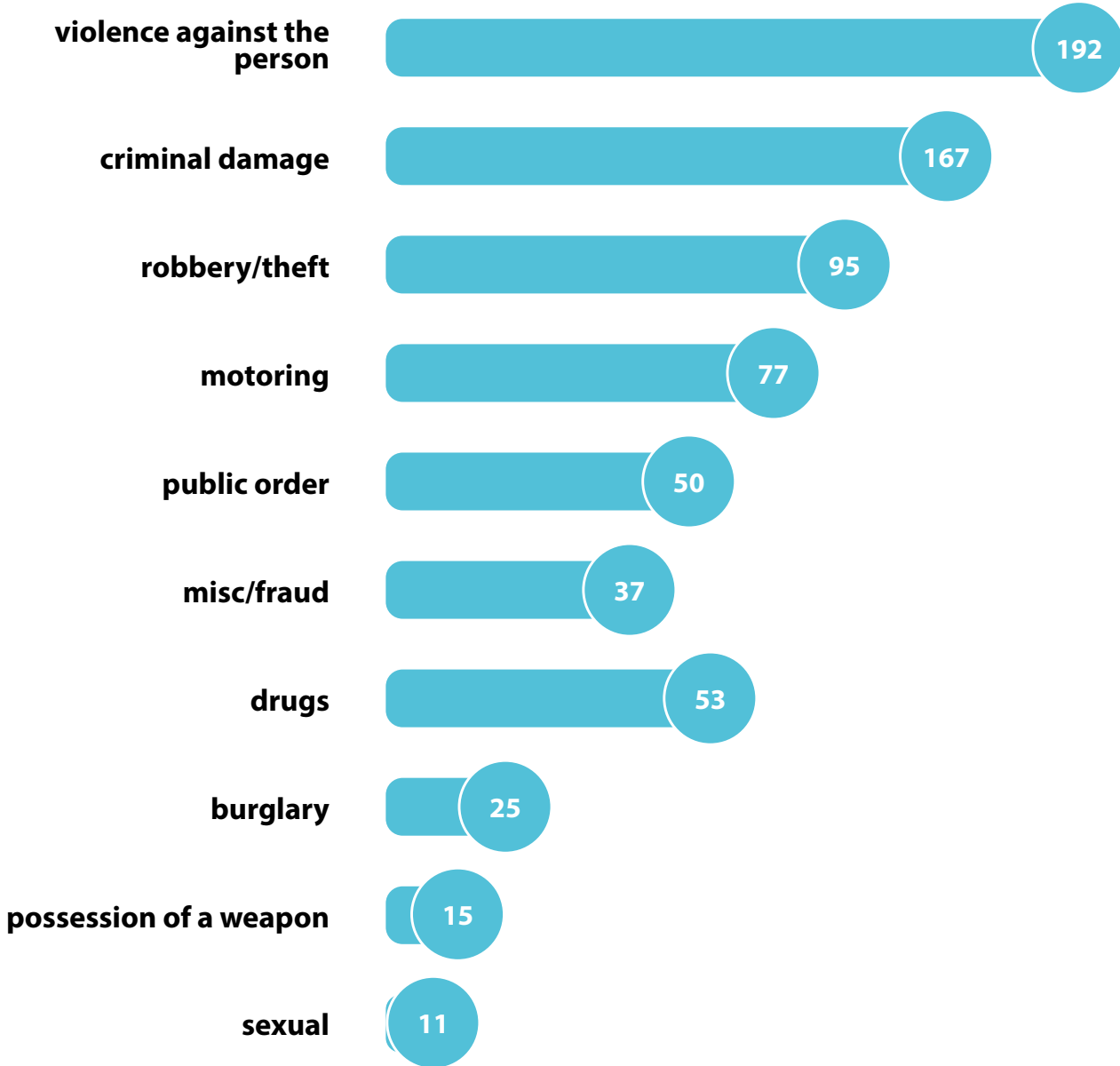
504

NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING EXCEPTIONAL TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS:

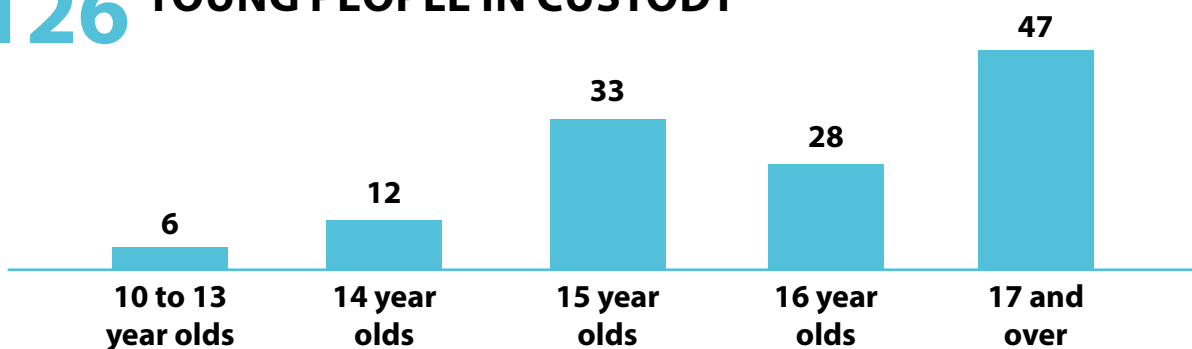
456 in Primary and Post Primary EOTAS

585 receiving ETA in December 2018

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



126 YOUNG PEOPLE IN CUSTODY⁴



Statistics Snapshot 2019-2020

5,952

OFFENCES WHERE THE VICTIM WAS UNDER 18 AT THE TIME THE OFFENCE WAS COMMITTED⁴

3,248 VIOLENCE WITHOUT INJURY

assault without injury

2,490

cruelty to children/
young persons

605

threats to kill

96

child abduction

40

all other violence
without injury³

17

1,839 VIOLENCE WITH INJURY⁴

assault with injury

1,741

assault with intent to
cause serious harm

89

all other violence
with injury

9

HARASSMENT

844

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

17

HOMICIDE⁵

4

**CHILDREN INVOLVED IN INCIDENCES OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS REPORTED THROUGH
MARAC. APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2020**

1,580

- 1** NISRA 2019 Mid-year Population Estimates for Northern Ireland 11 June 2020 release for mid-2019
<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/MYE19-Bulletin.pdf>
- 2** Department of Health Children's Social Care Statistics for Northern Ireland 2018/2019
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/child-social-care-18-19.pdf>
- 3** Department of Education School enrolments – 2019/20 statistical bulletins
<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/school-enrolments-201920-statistical-bulletins>
- 4** Police Service of Northern Ireland
<https://www.psnipolice.uk/inside-psnipolice/Statistics/police-recorded-crime-statistics/>
- 5** Queen's University Belfast: Evidence Review – Developing Trauma informed Practice in Northern Ireland
<https://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/ACEs%20Report%20A4%20Feb%202019%20Developing%20a%20Trauma%20Informed%20Approach%20-%20Full%20Evidence%20Review.pdf>
- 6** Bellis, M.A. et al (2015): Adverse childhood experiences and their impact on health-harming behaviours
[http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PRIDDocs.nsf/7c21215d6d0c613e80256f490030c05a/d488a3852491bc1d80257f370038919e/\\$FILE/ACE%20Report%20FINAL%20\(E\).pdf](http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PRIDDocs.nsf/7c21215d6d0c613e80256f490030c05a/d488a3852491bc1d80257f370038919e/$FILE/ACE%20Report%20FINAL%20(E).pdf)

Meet the Board Members

**Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland
Annual Report 2019-2020**



Andrew Thomson
Independent Chair
CMR
Safeguarding Board NI



Anthony McNally
Chief Superintendent,
PSNI



Carol Diffin
Director of Children's
Services and Social Work
Belfast Health and Social
Care Trust



Cheryl Lamont
Chief Executive and
Accounting Officer
Probation Board for
Northern Ireland



Yvonne Adair
Safeguarding Panel Chair
Belfast, Southern and
South Eastern Area's
Safeguarding Board NI



Simon Rogers
Independent Lay
Member



David Burns
Chief Executive
Officer of Lisburn and
Castlereagh Council
Solace Representative



Declan McGeown
Chief Executive
Youth Justice Agency



Emily Roberts
Safeguarding Nurse
Consultant
PHA



Gerry Guckian
Independent Lay
Member



Una Turbitt
Director
Education Authority



Rodney Morton
Director of Nursing
and Allied Health
Professional
PHA



Lorna Ballard
Director
Action for Children
Northern Ireland



Marie Roulston
Director
Social Care and Children
Health and Social Care
Board



**Dr Martin
Cunningham**
GP Representative
Queens University
Belfast



Mary Rafferty
Safeguarding Panel Chair
Northern, Belfast and
Western Areas
Safeguarding Board NI



Maura Dargan
Divisional Director of
Women, Children and
Families Division
Executive Director of Social
Work Northern Health and
Social Care Trust



Peter Reynolds
Chief Executive Officer
NIGALA



Michele Janes
Director
Barnardo's NI



Neil Anderson
National Head of
Service for Northern
Ireland
NSPCC



Paddy Kelly
Director
Children's Law Centre



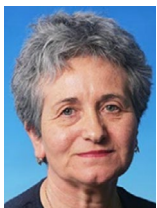
Paddy Mooney
Director
Include Youth



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



Dr Peter Hamill
Secretary to the Board
of Education NI
Church of Ireland



Pauline Leeson
Chief Executive
Children In Northern
Ireland



Barbara Campbell
Director Children's
Service's and
Executive Director of
Social Work
South Eastern Health
and Social Care Trust



Deirdre Mahon
Director of Children's
and Women's Services
and Social Work
Western Health and
Social Care Trust

Focus on Finance 2019-2020

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

For 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, this was £659,189. Additional to this, the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) provided an extra £75,630 (inclusive of a 2% non-pay uplift) to fund the SBNI for Case Management Reviews.

The total budget for the SBNI for April 2019–March 2020 was:

£734,819

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

How our money was spent by 31 March 2020:



At 31 March 2020 the SBNI had spent its entire allocated budget.

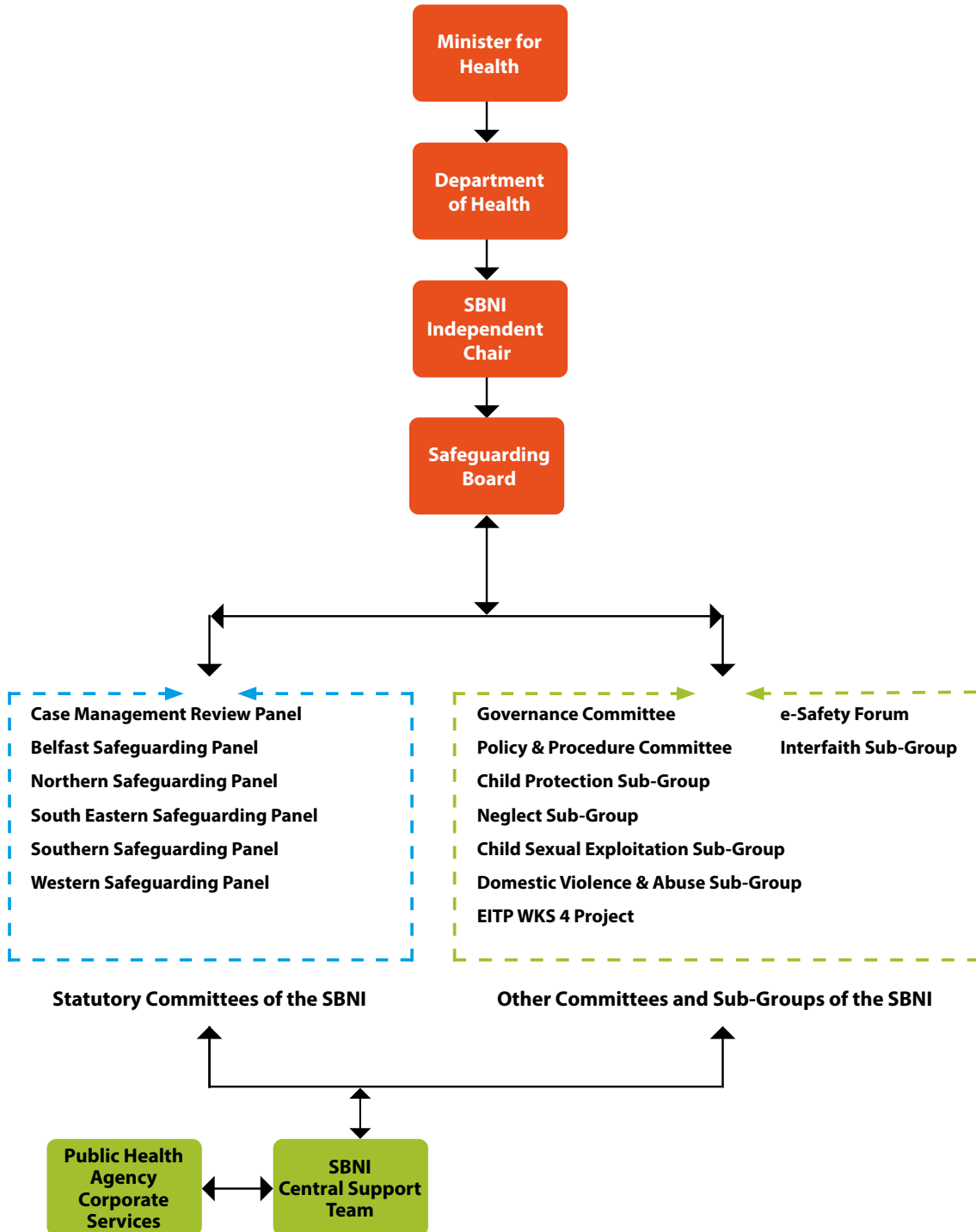
Major Significant Goods and Services Spend In Year:

- **SBNI Operational Running Costs:** £100,000
- **Interfaith:** development of an e-learning platform on best practice safeguarding practices for young adults who work directly with children and young people in faith settings - £5,200
- **Policies and Procedures:** e-Platform management of Regional Core Policy and Procedures and development of associated guidance - £8,600
- **Child Sexual Exploitation Audit:** an evaluation as to how SBNI member agencies evaluate and manage CSE within Northern Ireland - £28,000
- **Domestic Violence and Abuse** – training needs analysis of provision within the sector - £3,500
- **Case Management Reviews** – learning from practice: £75,630
- **Safeguarding Panels** – the SBNI at work locally: £12,000

In addition to the aforementioned spend we incurred costs in relation to the development of a procurement specification for the SBNI Website, resource development across all Sub-Groups and Committees and engagement activity with children and young people. Allocation of budget was re aligned as required and in light of the impact of COVID-19 in the final quarter of the quarter of the financial year.

How the SBNI is Structured

SBNI Organisational Structure April 2019



Case Management Review

Learning from practice

SBNI Business Objective 2019/20

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

- **Review and evaluate the revised Case Management Review process**
- **Undertake an analysis and review of the themes emanating from CMRs**

Case Management Reviews are a statutory function of the SBNI which are undertaken by the Case Management Review (CMR) Panel. The CMR Panel meets on a monthly basis, is independently chaired by Mr Andrew Thomson, Board Member and includes membership from senior representatives of agencies represented on the Board. The Panel's role is to consider notifications in respect of serious incidents involving children and young people to identify:

- where there have been positive outcomes for children and young people or
- where things have not gone well and there is significant learning,

The purpose of this is to enable the child protection system to be strengthened thereby further protecting children and young people in Northern Ireland. The CMR Panel interrogates the information provided to it by the notifying agency and makes a recommendation to the Board as to whether or not to commission a CMR. The recommendation is considered by the Board which makes a decision whether or not a CMR should be undertaken.

Consideration of CMR Notifications

During the reporting year 2019-2020, 25 CMR notifications were received by the SBNI in respect of 30 children and young people. Some children were subject to notifications by more than one Agency. Of these notifications in the business year, six Case Management Reviews were commissioned.

A total of two completed CMRs were presented to, and approved by, the SBNI during the reporting period. From these, nine recommendations were identified. The average time taken to undertake CMRs during the reporting period was 9.5 months which is the same duration as that recorded in the last business year. This continues the overall improvement in the timeliness of the completion of the CMR reports following the robust review undertaken previously. These more timely Reviews ensure that learning from CMRs is fed back into the Child Protection system sooner.

Summary of learning arising from these Reviews

Detailed below is an overview of the learning elicited from the completed reviews in the 2019-2020 business year:

- The need to ensure adherence to legislation, policies and procedures and guidance relating to both Child Protection and Looked After Children was highlighted in a number of reviews. It was recommended that member agencies put quality assurance mechanisms in place to ensure compliance with these legislative and policy requirements. It was recommended that member agencies should also provide appropriate training to all staff to ensure they are clear on what is expected from them

- The assessment and decision making in relation to ‘threshold levels for professional intervention’ was a key feature of some reviews. These reviews identified the need for improved line management oversight, supervision and auditing of thresholding decisions made by staff
- A number of reviews related to emergency contact with the Regional Emergency Social Work Services (RESWS) with recommendations that information sharing mechanisms between the Health and Social Care Trusts and the RESWS should be reviewed to ensure that the team has access all relevant and necessary information outside office hours
- One review detailed the need for clarity in relation to the nature of police checks which are sought in respect of persons with whom a child is to be placed in an emergency situation. This information should inform the risk assessment and decision making
- The process for carrying out assessments for children presenting with symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorder should be undertaken expediently to ensure a timely response to their needs
- Mechanisms should be explored to identify children, particularly those with special educational needs, who experience frequent school moves, to ensure their educational needs are being adequately addressed
- Several Reviews highlighted the critical importance of adhering to Legislation, Policy and Procedure specifically in respect of the sharing of information with others particularly on a multi-agency basis.

Improvements made as a result of CMRs

The core purpose of CMRs is to help improve the child protection system in Northern Ireland. Below are some of the improvements which have been made as a result of the CMR process:

- One Review highlighted the General Practitioner’s (GP) role in the safeguarding process as critical. Work on enhancing the specific role for the GP within the Child Protection system continues to be addressed within the SBNI GP Sub-Group and with the Health and Social Care Board
- The SBNI’s Regional Protocol regarding Bruising /Marks (which could be due to injury) on Pre-Mobile Babies has been further revised and published in the SBNI’s Procedures Manual²
- The process to ensure information sharing takes place between agencies has been further reviewed and changes made. This revised process has now been circulated to agencies. Training and awareness raising sessions have taken place

² Regional Protocol regarding Bruising/Marks (which could be due to Injury) on Pre-Mobile Babies. Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Procedure’s Manual, 2020. Available at: https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/p_bruising_babies.html#

- The Protocol for Joint Investigation by Social Workers and Police Officers of Alleged and Suspected Cases of Child Abuse – NI has been revised³. Training/awareness raising was planned to take place in May 2020 but has been deferred to later in the year as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic
- The police data base has been updated to ensure that alerts in respect of children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan are available to Police Officers at all times
- New guidance on the transfer of cases between Health and Social Care Trusts is being developed
- Work is ongoing to streamline and enhance practice across the region in relation to children/young people who display harmful sexual behaviour
- Guidance to staff regarding children/young people who are subject to paramilitary threat has been developed and disseminated to all member agencies⁴.

Review of the CMR Process

The CMR process is subject to on-going review and monitoring to ensure each review is conducted in a timely manner and produces a high quality report which will lead to improvements in the child protection system in Northern Ireland. During the reporting period of 2019-2020 a number of changes were introduced as part of this ongoing review. Report templates were refined to ensure CMR reports focus on the relevant issues i.e. what happened, why it happened and where there is learning what can be done to reduce potential of recurrence. Work on developing Terms of Reference (TOR), which forms the foundation of a Review, was also undertaken to ensure that they address the pertinent facts and encourage the production of a report which provides analysis, learning and relevant recommendations. Early consultation with senior staff from the referral agency has been introduced to the process to assist in the drafting of Terms of Reference to identify and agree the relevant issues for examination and inclusion in the TOR, as well as endeavouring to create a relationship of joint enterprise.

On-going Training Programme

Training for all those involved in the various aspects of the CMR process continued to take place during the reporting year. This included Independent CMR Team Chairs, Individual Agency Review Authors, CMR Team Members, Independent Safeguarding Panel Chairs and CMR Panel Members.



CMR Peer Support training

3 Protocol for Joint Investigation by Social Workers and Police Officers of Alleged and Suspected Cases of Child Abuse - Northern Ireland. Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Procedure's Manual, 2020. Available at: https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/files/joint_invest_protocol.pdf

4 Practice Guidance on Actions to be Taken when a Child/ Young Person is a Subject to Threat to Life. Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Procedure's Manual, 2020. Available at: https://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/files/threats_to_life.pdf

Recruitment of Independent CMR Team Chairs

During the reporting year a successful recruitment process was undertaken to increase the number of Independent CMR Team Chairs who undertake reviews. This resulted in nine individuals being appointed to join our Panel of CMR Authors from various disciplines with a range of experience. Induction training for these new Chairs has also taken place.

Dissemination of Key Messages/Learning from CMRs

During the reporting period an annual regional event and five local events covering four Safeguarding Panel areas were held to disseminate the learning arising from CMRs. The session delivering the key messages to the Western Safeguarding Panel area had to be postponed into the new reporting year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the SBNI is considering alternative means of delivery of this event in the next reporting year.

There was positive multi-agency participation and engagement at all events. A total of 431 professionals, representing 37 disciplines, attended the local panel and regional events. All member agencies on the SBNI were represented at the events.

Some qualitative comments on the events were as follows:

- Presentations were excellent
- Gaining a more in depth knowledge of the CMR process
- Opportunity for professionals to reflect on cases and learn from the mistakes made
- Very informative and enlightening to the issues faced by other agencies
- Sharing learning with partner agencies was a valuable opportunity to do so in a multi-disciplinary context
- Gaining knowledge of the CMR process
- The event was focused and clear
- The importance of information sharing between agencies
- The table discussions are an excellent way to share thoughts.



CMR Learning Event Mossley Mill



CMR Learning Event



CMR Safeguarding Learning Event

CMR Action Plans

Each agency identified in a Case Management Review recommendation is responsible for producing an Action Plan as to how they intend to undertake/implement the recommendation, including the timescales involved. These Action Plans are reviewed by the relevant local Statutory Safeguarding Panel.

Local Safeguarding Panel Activities

Regulation 31: Functions of Safeguarding Panels

- (a) co-ordinating the implementation of the Safeguarding Board's strategic plan for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;**
- (b) monitoring the implementation of the Safeguarding Board's policies and procedures;**
- (c) promoting an awareness of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;**
- (d) implementing any arrangements established by virtue of regulation 38(b) for sharing the findings of case management reviews; and**
- (e) promoting communication between the Safeguarding Panel and children and young persons.**

Five Local Safeguarding Panel Activities

The membership of each Safeguarding Panel is reflective of SBNI and is interagency and multi-disciplinary in nature with an Independent Chair and representatives from all organisations with statutory responsibility for or a stake in safeguarding and child protection.

The five Panels met bi-monthly throughout 2019-2020 and continued to increase and enhance their alignment and engagement with the SBNI Board, the Central Support Team and the SBNI Sub-Groups. Attendance of the Professional Officers, the Business Support Manager and the EITP Project Manager at panel meetings has supported and strengthened the focus and content of the panels' work locally. This has led to better alignment with the aims and strategic priorities of the SBNI. The Independent Chairs provided a progress report and update on Panels to the SBNI Board meeting in February which included work planning for the incoming year. A five Panels Development day had been planned for March, its purpose being to consider and develop plans for 2020/21, to facilitate networking and to encourage regional consistency where appropriate. Unfortunately this has been postponed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent restrictions.

In early March, the two Independent Chairs, of the five Safeguarding Panels, were invited to attend the community Paediatricians regional meeting and used this as an opportunity for discussion on the work of the panels.

Co-ordinating the implementation of SBNI's strategic plan

Neglect, which is one of the SBNI's strategic priorities, has become a standing item at Panel meetings, with a continued focus on the importance of interagency collaboration.

In 2019, well attended and successful seminars were convened across Northern Ireland using a template developed by the Western Trust. The feedback, together with the information gained from agency action plans, has been collated by the SBNI Neglect Sub-Group. The outcome was a training package which has been agreed and developed by the Sub-Group with the recommendation that Levels 1 & 2 training will be delivered via the Panels in the forthcoming year 2020-2021.

Domestic and Sexual Violence is also a strategic priority of the SBNI. The Belfast Safeguarding Panel contributed to, and supported, the Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid to review its services for children and young people. This included a small financial contribution to the launch of a presentation of its important findings to Panel members. Additionally, the Southern Panel has agreed to financially support the production of a video, created by young people who have benefitted from the services of Armagh/Down Women's Aid, which will be used to raise awareness and will be included in training.

Within the area of **Sexual Violence**, all Panels have had input this year on the progress of the Harmful Sexual Behaviour framework. This has been developed by NSPCC in partnership with the five Trusts. This work was initiated in the Southern Trust area following a Case Management Review (CMR). Also, Dr Alison Livingstone provided a very useful update to members of the Northern Panel on the resources available to medical practitioners where there is suspected Child Sexual Abuse.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a standing item at each Panel, with updates provided by the police representative. This enables and encourages interagency collaboration and reminds all members that child protection and safeguarding is everyone's business.

Mental Health - another SBNI strategic priority - continues to be both very wide ranging and multi-faceted and therefore, difficult to harness. The Western Panel benefitted from a very informative presentation which provided information on services and support available to families and young people where alcohol/substance abuse is a concern. The South Eastern Panel organised a seminar on Perinatal Mental Health which attracted staff from across the Health and Social Care sector, as well as those from Hydebank Wood Women's Prison. In addition the local mental health team provided information to the South Eastern Panel on the work of the Towards Zero Suicide project

Monitor the implementation of SBNI's Policies and Procedures

All five Panels work to ensure that members are kept informed of core policies and procedures with respect to safeguarding our children. Safeguarding Panels are expected to note and discuss significant developments, to ensure consistency, compliance and best practice.

This year, with the implementation of Signs of Safety, each Panel had a presentation from their local Signs of Safety lead. This enabled discussion and encouraged members to take up the training offered.

The Belfast Panel took some time to focus on the Child Protection Case Conference process and its appeals procedure and how it is functioning in the practice environment.

Each Panel reviews the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) child protection data reports relevant to their area, to discuss and address trends.

Promote an awareness of the need to safeguard children

The Belfast Panel benefitted from a presentation by two of the Governors at Hydebank Wood Secure College and Women's Prison. This highlighted the issues with the young men, many of whom have come through the various social care systems, and are parents; and the trauma endured by their female population - many of whom have experienced domestic and sexual violence, mental ill health, addictions etc. This session also had an input from the Trust Social Worker responsible for the Baby Unit within the prison. In the Northern Panel the representative from the education sector gave a presentation on



SBNI Northern Safeguarding Panel

the use of the Assessment Intervention and Moving on (AIM) guidance within education and how schools are supported in risk assessing and completing a Risk Assessment Management Plan (RAMP). This demonstrated the multi - disciplinary/agency nature of this work how it involves the young person and his/her parents/carers. It also clarified the role of the Education Authority's Child Protection Support Service (CPSS), to offer advice, guidance and practical support in the management of this process.

The Western Panel members discussed concerns regarding the vulnerability of young people who are excluded from school - the impact upon their mental health and potential involvement in criminality. Work has commenced in year collating data on the numbers of young people, which will continue into 2020-2021.

The South Eastern Panel held one of its meetings within Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre. It was briefed on the issues faced with regard to safeguarding and the measures in place to identify, protect and support the adolescents entering its care.

A presentation on safeguarding within the area of Children in Employment and Entertainment was given by Education Authority to the Belfast, Southern and South Eastern Panels, providing useful and important information and guidance.



SBNI South Eastern Safeguarding Panel

Implement arrangements for sharing the findings of CMRs

Each Panel is responsible for ensuring that the key learning from case management reviews (CMRs) is disseminated and events have been held across four of the five areas. The Western Trust area event had to be postponed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Attendance and participation has been extremely encouraging, with some interesting variations in attendance of both agency and discipline by area. This year, the feedback has been gathered and collated with recommendations for the year ahead.

Promote communication between the Panels and Children and Young People

This year, in line with Business Objective 1(1.4), each Panel carried out a review of the existing fora of children/young people and parents/carers, within their members' agencies. Whilst this illustrated some very good engagement already in place, it also served to remind us of the need to develop more opportunities to ensure that the views of young people and their parents are heard and responded to in relation to our safeguarding and protection systems. The Panels will continue this work into the next reporting period.

The Western Panel commenced an audit with parents and children involved in the child protection process to ascertain their views. The findings of this are currently being analysed and will be reported in the next Annual Report.

The review of children and young peoples' services by Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid and the video being produced by Armagh/Down Women's Aid, referred to above, are excellent examples of how the Panels encourage and support this priority.

Child Protection Sub-Group

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 2019-2020 were:

- 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
- To address intergenerational abuse by introducing an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) informed approach across statutory partners.



SBNI Child Protection Sub Group

The SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group was established in 2017 following a recommendation in the Jay report, to provide a vehicle for the statutory partners within the SBNI to focus on their statutory responsibilities concerning improved protection of children.⁵

The SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group meets at least five times per year, to consider the range of child protection information available and to use this to agree priorities which can be actioned through an outcome based accountability framework.

The Chair of the Child Protection Sub-Group is a Director of Children's Services from one of the Health and Social Care Trusts. Membership of the group comprises all five Health and Social Care Trusts, the Public Health Agency, the Education Authority Northern Ireland, the Department of Justice, the Health and Social Care Board, the Police Service Northern Ireland, the National Society for the Prevention Cruelty to Children, and the Probation Board NI. The Child Protection Sub-Group has focussed work plans on the following areas:

⁵ Alexis Jay, Independent Review of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI), 2016. Available at: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/independent-review-safeguarding-board-northern-ireland-sbni>

Early Intervention Transformation Programme Workstream 4 Trauma Informed Practice Project

April 2019 saw the Early Intervention Transformation Programme Workstream 4 Trauma Informed Practice Project enter its second year.

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 for the whole programme commenced in April 2014 and was anticipated to end in March 2020. It has, however, now been extended until March 2021.

The EITP Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) project is a workforce development project which aims to ensure that the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) member agencies and partners:

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

April 2019 – March 2020 saw the SBNI continue working across the five sectors of; Community and Voluntary (CVS); Education; Health; Justice, and Social Care, to build the capacity of the workforce in their understanding of ACEs and trauma informed practice skills development. In addition, the project team worked across the sport, arts, housing and faith communities in Northern Ireland.

Throughout the lifetime of the project, governance has been provided by a Steering Group. The Steering Group is responsible to the SBNI Board for the overall direction and financial management of the project and has provided advice and support to the project team in the delivery of the project. The group is chaired by a non – executive member of the Board, and has representatives from; PSNI, Education Authority, Executive Directors of Social Work, HSC Learning and Development, HSCB Finance, the Public Health Agency and the Youth Justice Agency.

To ensure consistency of information surrounding the ACE agenda and to avoid any duplication of effort the Steering Group has continued to be represented on the NI ACE Reference Group through the Project Lead.

Throughout this reporting period organisations across the five sectors were able to avail of bespoke training resources for identified professionals, staff and volunteers which included:



- Level 1 – Ace Awareness
- Level 2 – Trauma Sensitive Approaches to Practice Skills Development
- Online introduction to ACEs and Sensitive Practice, Levels 1 and 2
- Train-the-Trainer Programme of Professional Development
- Level 3 – ‘Be the Change Leadership’ Programme.

The Level 1 and Level 2 training programmes delivered by the SBNI project team and its Community and Voluntary Sector delivery partner ASCERT had a total of 4,062 participants, of which 3,626 took part in face-to-face classroom based training and 436 in the Solihull online learning.

In terms of the profile of attendees, of those who attended training just under one-third (31%) were from the education sector, followed by the community and voluntary sector (26%) and justice (18%). Sector representation varied considerably across the various types of training and support. The education and community & voluntary sectors accounted for the majority of those trained at Level 1 (68% combined), Level 2 (87%) and the Train-the-Trainer sessions (56%).

No statistics are currently available in terms of the number of participants who have accessed the Level 1 ACE Awareness and Level 2 Trauma Sensitive Approaches e-learning introduction options as these programmes were made accessible across the sectors from March 2020. However data is being collected and this will be used to monitor and inform decision making regarding future developments.

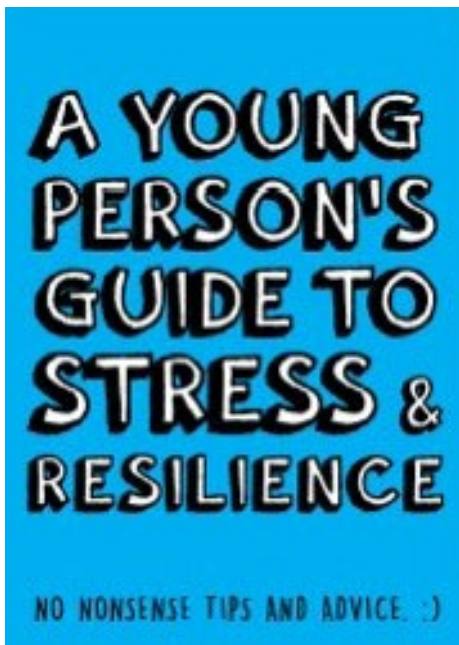
In addition to the training numbers noted above, organisations, such as Probation Board NI and NI Prison Service, have trained staff in the Level 1 and Level 2 programme. In February 2020 the project team worked with the Clinical Education Centre (CEC) to share the training with 7 clinical consultants from across midwifery, nursing and clinical education to build capacity in the delivery of the ACE/TIP training and associated training resources. Elements of the ACE/TIP training have now been incorporated into Domestic Violence training and the children’s safeguarding training programmes within the CEC.



PBNI Trauma Informed Practice Training

It was always the intention of the project that the various agencies and bodies involved in safeguarding here would become self-sufficient by embedding the ACE and Trauma Informed practice training into their training syllabuses once the project closed and by the end of March 2020 this has proven to be the case.

In addition to the bespoke training provision the project team developed a suite of 30 support resources and these have been made available across all sectors. Two examples of the resources are the; 'Help me make sense of the world' brain development booklet, and the 'Children and Young People's Stress and Resilience' leaflets. 16,000 of the brain development booklets have been disseminated to trainers, across Sure Starts in Northern Ireland and through trauma related programmes across the sectors. The booklets were also produced in the Irish language with almost 11,000 shared across the Irish Medium schools sector with other languages also available



CYP Stress and Resilience Leaflet

The stress and resilience leaflets were developed by young people for young people. Over 40,000 leaflets have been disseminated across all education bodies including the Education Authority (EA), Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), Conradh na Gaeilge (CnaG) and a number of CVS organisations. This resource has been translated into six other languages and is available to download on the SBNI website. The translated leaflets have also been shared with the EA Intercultural Team for dissemination.

All of the resources are available to access on the SBNI website and as part of the Level 2 training programme and can be accessed [here](#)⁶

⁶ EITP Publications & Resources, Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland. Available at: <https://www.safeguardingni.org/aces/publications-and-helpful-resources>

Building on the Solihull 'Understanding Your Child' programme, the SBNI commissioned a two-year licence of the Solihull Understanding Trauma* online course for professionals in Northern Ireland. This course was developed by Solihull Approach UK/Heart of England (NHS) and targets those working with children, families and adults. The aim of this course is to deepen understanding of the effects of trauma, the recovery process and how society can support recovery from trauma. Access to the course went live in November 2019 and will be available until November 2021



Solihull Trauma Flyer

The Train the Trainer Programme was completed at the end of February 2020 with over 350 participants. These trainers will be able to cascade the training and associated resources after the project closure and ensure training sustainability across the system.

The training resources have also become established with the CAWT MACE⁷ project deliverables in Northern Ireland and Ireland and the project team continues to work with the 'Review of Regional Facilities for Children and Young People' project team as to how the training content can be embedded within a level four therapeutic model across residential care.

⁷ Cross Border Multiple Adversities in Childhood Experiences Project (CAWT MACE Project) Available at: <http://www.cawt.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/MACE-Project-Summary.pdf>



Be the Change

The Level 3 'Be the Change Leadership Programme' commenced in September 2019 and was delivered over 7 days spread across 6 months and was undertaken in partnership with a range of organisations including; Big Motive⁸, Health and Social Care (HSC) Leadership Centre, PSI Consulting, and Queen's University Belfast. The programme was specifically targeted at senior leaders and executives across the four public sectors targeted by the TIP project and others beyond this. (A separate programme was run for the community and voluntary sector).

The programme comprised three modules:

- Module 1: Leading from within
- Module 2: Leading through organisation design
- Module 3: Leading within systems through collective leadership.

In addition, a range of other activities were undertaken to support learning within and between organisations. This included cross agency live work projects where an aspect of an organisation's work was reviewed through a trauma informed perspective. The Programme's overall aim was to develop an implementation pathway for the trauma informed practice agenda within organisations and across the system in Northern Ireland and to nurture and develop trauma informed leadership. The programme also provided an opportunity to acknowledge the significant work that has already taken place within these organisations, with the content of this programme supporting organisations to build upon that work as they move forward in their journey.

8 Big Motive is an experience design and innovation studio.



Be the Change Group Photo

The programme concluded at the NI ACE Conference 2020 on the 5th March when the 55 participants showcased their live work and personal journey experiences on the programme through poster presentations and presentations during the conference. The live work posters are available in the project review report for [2018-2020](#).⁹



Faith sector and BHSCT Reps at NI ACE Conference March 2020



PBNi Staff at NI ACE Conference 2020

As mentioned above, as part of the leadership delivery element of the programme, the project team hosted a two-day community and voluntary sector (CVS) leadership programme in February 2020 in partnership with the HSC Leadership Centre. 48 CEOs, Directors and Heads of Service attended the programme. This was an opportunity for leaders to understand the relevance of ACE awareness and trauma informed practice in the CVS, to hear about opportunities to embed trauma informed approaches within the workplace and learn from others.

9 Northern Ireland Ace Conference 2020, Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland. Available at: <https://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/NI%20ACE%20Conference%202020%20Report.pdf>



Community and Voluntary Sector Leaders

To ensure sustainability of the training element of the project all of the following organisations / curriculum providers, have agreed to collaborate with the project team to embed ACE Awareness and TIP into existing training courses, frameworks and training programme schedules: PSNI, PBNI, YJA, NIPS, PHA (AHP, Nursing), RCGP, Medical F2 (induction and refresher programmes) QUB Undergraduate, Post Graduate and CPD courses for Medicine (including pre Paediatrics placement) , Nursing and Midwifery Housing Executive, UU PGCE Course, Stranmillis QUB Teacher UG Programmes, Further Education, Sport NI, Child development and play work courses. The train the trainer programme is now complete and will sustain the knowledge and training resource within member and associate agencies.



SBNI Members & Partners Working Together

In partnership with QUB and Trauma Informed Oregon the project hosted a Trauma Informed Physical Environments seminar in March 2020 that was attended by 181 leaders and frontline staff from across the sectors. This was an opportunity to hear about the research recommendations on how to create trauma informed environments to promote physical and psychological safety. It was also an opportunity for Trauma Informed Oregon to share practical guidance and toolkits that they have implemented across the state of Oregon as they build consistency of trauma informed approaches across their state services. The seminar afforded organisations in NI, already working to provide trauma informed environments, the chance to share experiences and learn from each other.



INVITATION

Creating a Trauma Informed Care Environment Seminar
A place of physical and psychological safety

4 March 2020
9.30am-13.00pm
Stormont Hotel, Belfast
(Includes refreshments at registration and lunch)

Keynote speakers include:

- Mandy Davis, Director of Trauma Informed Oregon
- Suzanne Mooney, Systemic Practice and Family Therapy Programme Director, Queens University Belfast

Registration
If you would like to attend this seminar please register the following details; name, job title, organisation, contact details & special requirements by email to Lia.Mckenzie@hscni.net no later than **21 February 2020**.

TI Environments Seminar invite

Throughout year 2 the project team has continued to engage with the 5 Nations ACE Group (comprising; England, Scotland, Wales, Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland) to share research and best practice in relation to both sector specific and system change, trauma informed activity .

Also, as in previous years, the SBNI as part of the Northern Ireland Regional ACE Reference Group (NIRARG) held its third leadership conference This was entitled; ' A Trauma Informed Conversation: Leading a Trauma Informed System Into The New Decade' and was attended by 152 senior leaders,

The Conference was opened by Minister for Education, Peter Weir, and delegates heard from; Professor Mandy Davis, Director of Trauma Informed Oregon, Professor Mark Bellis, Public Health Wales, James Kerr, Author and specialist in leadership and high performance cultures and Sean Holland, Chief Social Work Officer.

**Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland
Annual Report 2019-2020**



DE Minister Peter Weir Keynote Address at NI ACE Conference 2020

A full conference report, plus video and powerpoint presentations, is available here [ACE Conference 2020](#)



Delegates at the NI ACE Conference 2020



NI ACE Reference Group members with keynote speakers at NI ACE Conference 2020



Be the change leadership programme representative speakers at NI ACE Conference 2020

Independent evaluation of the project aims has been undertaken and can be accessed by [clicking here Part A](#))¹⁰ and [clicking here for Part B](#)).¹¹ It was the ambition of the project to ensure that by March 2020, SBNI member organisations:

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

The independent evaluation report noted that, "taking the first three aims above, without doubt the project has been a success". However it also stated that, "in relation to the fourth project aim of the TIP project – the development of policies and practices to embed trauma informed practice – while some notable achievements have been made, it has been recognised that this is a substantial area of work that requires a long term commitment, momentum and implementation across the system" This analysis is accepted by the SBNI members and additional funding has been secured to take the project into a third and final year until March 2021. The purpose is to deliver on aim four. The project team will continue to build on the sustainability planning from years one and two and work with SBNI member agencies and partners to build a trauma informed system across Northern Ireland. This work will be underpinned by the QUB Evidence Review of Trauma Informed Care and by applying a Sequential Intercept Model alongside the application of the Universal Service Delivery Model to enhance / improve service responses/care.¹²

10 EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project Review Reports for 2018-2020 Available at: https://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/EITP%20TIP%20Project%20Review%20Report%20Part%20A%20-%20%28Final%29_0.pdf

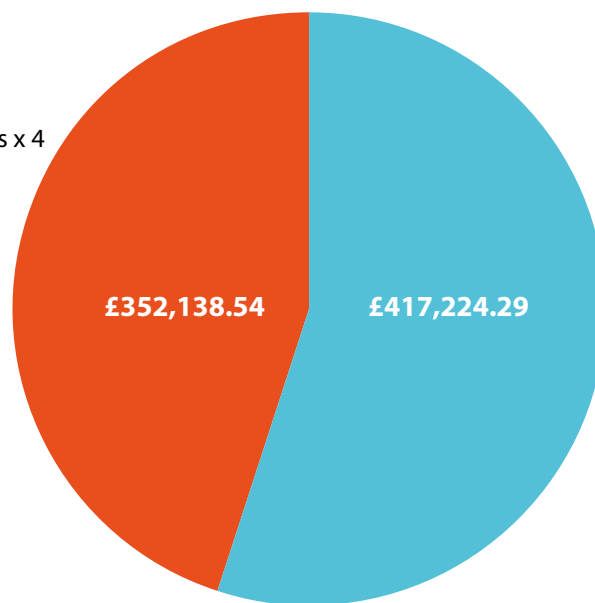
11 EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project Review Reports for 2018-2020 Available at: <https://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/EITP%20TIP%20Project%20Review%20Report%20Part%20B%20%28Final%29.pdf>

12 EITP Publications & Resources, Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland. Available at: <https://www.safeguardingni.org/aces/publications-and-helpful-resources>

Year 1 Financial Breakdown of Spend 2019/2020

EITP TIP Project Team

Project Lead
Project Manager
Implementation Managers x 4
Admin Support



Goods and Services include

Contrast/SLAs

ASCERT training services
NCB Project Enablement & Evaluation
Barnardo's NI
Solihull Understanding Trauma
E-learning & Train the Train Trainer Programme support via HSCLC

Staff Substitution

Be the Change Leadership Programme with HSCLC

Salaries Good and Services

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

The 'Signs of Safety' model of intervention is now being implemented across NI. The Health and Social Care Board are in year two of the 5 year implementation plan.

By the end of the business year 2019-2020, 462 one day awareness raising training courses had been delivered to 2117 (85%) children's social workers in Northern Ireland. Seven more intensive five day training courses had been delivered to 371 social workers working specifically on child protection cases.

As part of monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of the model, an annual social work staff and parent survey was undertaken in 2019 and 2020. The second staff survey indicates several areas of improvement since 2019. Most significantly there has been a substantial increase in social workers who have used the practice (49.3% to 77.1 %.) The survey also suggests that the social work workforce is generally positive about using Signs of Safety. Some areas for improvement have been noted for 2020-2021.

The dominant message from the parent survey in 2020 continues to be positive. Most positive comments related to feeling 'listened to' (79.8%), their social worker doing what they say they will do (72.7%) and the worker being clear about their concerns about the family situation (85.4%).

A Northern Ireland 'Signs of Safety Leaders day' was planned to be held in June 2020 to review the on-going implementation progress and set goals for the new business year.

'Signs of Safety' partner agency awareness training

During the business year 2019-2020 the Child Protection Sub-Group agreed to place specific emphasis on ensuring partner agencies were sufficiently equipped to understand the Signs of Safety model and the language associated with it. This was to enable them to participate effectively in child protection meetings where the model was being used for example a Child Protection Case conference. The SBNI co-ordinated the delivery of training sessions, to member and partner agencies. These were designed to complement Trust based training events. One hundred and ninety (190) staff from SBNI member and partner agencies availed of the 'in Trust' training opportunities relating to Signs of Safety.

The training provided an overview of the Signs of Safety model including an outline of the purpose and conduct of "Network meetings", the role of "Safety Planning" and parental participation in Child Protection Case conferences.

A total of 114 professionals representing 25 disciplines attended four SBNI training events in January and February 2020 with a further two events planned for later in the year.

The training received positive feedback. Examples of the evaluation narratives are detailed below:

- Clear, Focussed and intelligible
- Comprehensive tool, good resources and lots of info
- Straight forward and easy to understand
- Love the positive approach – aiming toward problem solving
- Non- Judgemental, family are a partner in the process
- Delivered in a clear precise way by trainers who had the ability to impart their knowledge and enthusiasm on Signs of Safety
- Very informative, very engaging
- Facilitators were excellent.

Data Collation

The Child Protection Sub-Group has re-focussed efforts on sharing member agency data sets across the statutory agencies to inform strategic planning in respect of Child Protection priorities.

A representative working group has been established chaired by an Assistant Director of Children's Services to agree the most relevant data to be shared by each member agency. This work will continue into the next business year.

Work on measuring outcomes for children in the child protection system

This was an area of work which transferred from business year 2018-2019 into the current year. In an attempt to begin to develop measurements in respect of 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" system¹³ as the most suitable process with which to quantify the movement families and children make towards better outcomes.

The Sub-Group determined that the best approach was to focus first on the implementation of the Signs of Safety Model and awareness raising across member agencies in respect of the model. The aim is to seek to embed this before integrating the Outcomes Star approach into practice. Towards the end of the current business year a renewed task and finish group was established to consider whether/if/how the Outcomes Star could be incorporated into multi-disciplinary practice. This group was chaired by the Director of Youth Justice Agency and comprised of representatives from Health and Social Care Trusts, the Health and Social Care Board Police and Education. The work will be carried over into the next year of the SBNI Business Plan. Further progress on this work will be reported upon in the next business year.

13 Outcomes Star is a family of evidence-based tools for measuring and supporting change when working with people.

Commissioning and Delivery of 'Invictus' Theatrical Performance

The SBNI Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022 places particular emphasis on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their influence and impact upon the life of the child and his/her family. In particular the three ACEs of Mental Health, Domestic Abuse and Neglect have been identified as key issues facing the childhood population in Northern Ireland.

To endeavour to bring these themes together the SBNI commissioned a theatrical performance addressing all three areas whilst highlighting that adversity can be overcome.

'Alter Ego' which specialises in artistic performances dealing with socially complex themes was commissioned to work with young people to create a piece of work called 'Invictus'. The play was designed to help start conversations with young people and adults around childhood adversity and building resilience. The author also liaised with member agencies of the SBNI when developing the theme of the play using some of the life stories of young people availing of services. The author also met youth workers working with chronically disadvantaged young people in Belfast.

The play highlighted how core skills and behaviours can be nurtured to help young people overcome and mitigate against the damage of toxic stress helping them to manage and navigate a number of critical life moments.

The play:

- raises awareness of the differing forms of childhood adversity,
- identifies core skills to be nurtured to mitigate against the damage of toxic stress
- highlights core skills to manage and navigate critical life moments
- seeks to inspire hope and resilience amongst young people who may be experiencing adversity in their lives
- Sign-posts young people to organisations etc. where they can receive support.

The target audience of the performance was students in Year 9 (12 years of age) and above, parents, carers, teachers and professionals working with young people. The duration of the play was 55 minutes which included a short 'after show' discussion between the specially briefed actors and the audience discussing the play's content.



INVICTUS Play School Performance

Barnardo's Children and Young People's Forum hosted a youth engagement programme which brought together 91 children and young people from different Barnardo's services including those from diverse ethnic backgrounds, community backgrounds and geographical spread of both rural and urban areas to develop a leaflet to be distributed to the children viewing the play. This provided details of support services and how young people can manage stress.

The children and young people's stress and resilience leaflet was circulated during the screening of the Invictus Play.



Stress and Resilience Leaflet

For adult audiences, the play raises awareness in a more detailed manner of the environments which can be used to nurture the resilience in the young person.

The SBNI Central Support Team worked closely with the Education Authority Child Protection Support Service to identify schools across the region in which the play would be delivered. The identification of the host schools was compliant with Section 75 Equality regulations. The tour began in January 2020 and continued for seven weeks.

Performances were delivered to the following audiences:

- 53 mainstream school audiences
- 11 Special Educational
- 3 Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) educational facilities
- Garnerville PSNI Training facility for Police cadets
- University Of Ulster Faculty of Education in Coleraine – PGCE Student Teachers
- Stranmillis University College
- The Youth Work Alliance
- The Youth Faith Community (Hosted by Presbyterian Church Council for Social Witness)
- Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre
- Staff within the Child Protection Service in the Education Authority
- Include Youth – young people and staff.

The play was delivered to approximately 13,400 young people across Northern Ireland.

The performance was exceptionally well received by all audiences. The issues portrayed generated significant discussion in the after show Q&A.

Peer Mentoring in Child Protection Services

During 2019-2020 the SBNI commissioned the Centre for Effective Services (CES) to conduct a scoping exercise to ascertain if a Peer Mentoring Service for families involved within the Child Protection process, which is used in other countries, could be relevant in Northern Ireland. The work undertaken by CES involved extensive global research into Peer Mentoring Projects, the nature of these, the strengths and challenges of the various projects and the outcomes associated them. The report will be presented to the SBNI Board later in the year before being delivered to the DoH for their consideration as to whether to introduce this service into Northern Ireland.

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.

SBNI Business Objectives 2019-2020

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 be a major focus for the SBNI, constituting one of the SBNI Strategic Priorities for 2018-2022. The issue is addressed by the SBNI through the work of the multi-agency Neglect Sub-Group which includes parental representation. Within Northern Ireland Neglect continues to affect large numbers of children. This is reflected in the number of children on the Child Protection Register in Northern Ireland (June 2020) who were registered solely under the category of Neglect (601 children 23.7%). Neglect therefore represents the second highest category of children on the register. The highest single category on the register relates to physical abuse constituting 716 children. Neglect and Physical Abuse is the highest combined category with 552 children.

The SBNI Neglect Strategy

The work of the SBNI Neglect Sub-Group during the reporting year 2019-2020 has continued to focus on the implementation of the SBNI Neglect Strategy. The Strategy aims to assist agencies in Northern Ireland involved with children, young people and parents to take action to prevent, reduce and manage effects of Neglect on children and families. The work of the Sub-Group works alongside the SBNI Early Intervention Transformation Programme work on Adverse Childhood Experiences.

The focus of the Sub-Group during 2019-2020 has been on ensuring the issue of Neglect is being addressed at local level through the Safeguarding Panels. Each Panel has Neglect as an ongoing agenda item and discussions centre on how agencies are now working together through their individual agency Neglect Action Plans.

Awareness Raising and Training

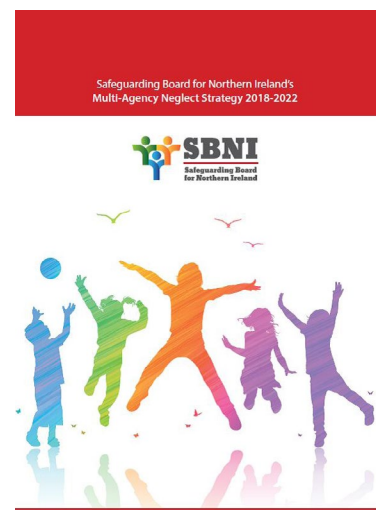
Awareness raising sessions regarding Neglect have continued to take place at local Safeguarding Panel level supported by members of the Neglect Sub-Group.

A training task and finish group has now completed its work to address the issue of neglect training for multi-agency staff in accordance with Levels 1–4 of the SBNI Learning and Development Strategy and Framework (LDSF). Training packages for Levels 1/2 and 2/3 have now been developed, approved by the SBNI Board and made available to member agencies. The LDSF can be accessed [here](#).

Infographics

An infographic depicting the profile of Neglect in Northern Ireland in 2019 has now been finalised and circulated to member agencies. This can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.safeguardingni.org/NeglectINFOGRAPHIC.pdf>



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

Work on obtaining the views of children/young people parents/carers and practitioners have continued. Discussion has taken place with the PHA lead for the 10,000 Voices Project, to ascertain if gaining the views of service users in relation to experience of Neglect could be included in the schedule of work for 2020-2021. The project was invited to attend a Sub-Group meeting but unfortunately this could not be progressed due to the COVID-19 pandemic but will be picked up again. Safeguarding Panels have been proactively seeking the views of children and young people through existing multi-agency forums

Focus on Outcomes

A task and finish group has been established by the Neglect Sub-Group to measure the impact of the Neglect Strategy.

The Sub-Group found it difficult to identify clear indicators to evidence the success of the Neglect strategy. It is hoped, however, that the following indicators, will, over time show whether increased awareness / training through implementation of the Neglect strategy has made a positive impact in the numbers of children/young people affected by Neglect. It is anticipated that referral and Child Protection Registration figures may increase in the initial stages but reduce in the future.

The key indicators agreed by the Neglect Sub-Group to measure the Outcome are as follows:

- Attendance of children at school who are subject to a Child Protection Plan under the category of Neglect
- The number of re-registrations (within three years of original deregistration) on the Child Protection Register under the category of Neglect
- The number of dental registrations in respect of children per Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) for children aged 0-2 years and 3-5 years
- The number of children who have had dental caries extractions per HSCT by age group
- Number of children escalated to Gateway from Early Intervention Support Service and the reason
- % of children under the category of Neglect registered on the Child Protection Register by HSCT
- Number of NSPCC Helpline Referrals that relate to the issue of Neglect.

A task & finish group has been established to organise a Multi-Agency 'Master Class' event to include feedback and update participants on outcome measures within the Strategy. It is anticipated this Masterclass will be delivered in the next business year.

Extension of Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) Project

During the reporting year this project has continued to raise professional awareness of Neglect and develop best practice. ECHO uses a hub and spoke model to raise awareness of issues relating to health and social care. The Neglect ECHO is where multi-agency staff come together at one location, either in person or remotely, to discuss agreed topics associated with the issue of neglect with the view to building expertise at the front line. It is hoped that such discussions and sharing of good practice will enable staff to better manage and work within the complex area of Neglect. These sessions take the form of lunchtime seminars on a monthly basis. Staff can register to participate in the Neglect ECHO by using the following link <https://tinyurl.com/y8u2duug>

Domestic Violence

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

SBNI Business Objectives 2019/20

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.



DSV Committee

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 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 an Assistant Director of Children’s Social Services from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. Membership comprises representatives from the five Health and Social Care Trusts, Police Service of Northern Ireland, Probation Board of Northern Ireland, Public Health Agency, Youth Justice Agency, Include Youth, Barnardo’s NI, Women’s Aid Federation NI, NSPCC, Education Authority Northern Ireland and NEXUS. The representatives from the five Health and Social Care Trusts also chair the five local domestic violence partnerships. Their presence on the SBNI Sub-Group therefore facilitates connectivity with local and regional initiatives.

The focus of the Sub-Group is to ensure the child is recognized as a victim in his/her own right in a situation where domestic violence is a feature. The group endeavors to progress this via a number of work streams as follows;

Working with government departments and their agencies to prevent Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) from occurring.

The SBNI participates in a two Domestic Violence forums to promote the voice of the child as a victim of Domestic Abuse in his/her own right:

- The Stakeholders Assurance Group (SAG) co-chaired by the Department of Health and Department of Justice
- The PSNI Independent Advisory Group (IAG) chaired by a PSNI Chief Inspector with responsibility for Domestic Violence.

1. Stakeholders Assurance Group (SAG)

The Cross Departmental Strategic Delivery Board (SDB) 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 government departments of Health, Justice, Education, Communities and 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) ensuring the voice of children and young people is represented to policy makers and Influencers. As mentioned, the SAG is co-chaired by Senior Civil Servants from DoH and DoJ. It also involves 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 particularly as they relate to the impact of domestic violence on children. The SBNI Sub-Group Chair keeps the SAG informed of any developments in respect of children.

2. Independent Advisory Group (IAG)

The SBNI participates in the Domestic Violence Independent Advisory Group (IAG). This group was set up, and is chaired, by the 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 in respect of its response to Domestic Abuse. The IAG also provides constructive advice to the PSNI in improving the quality of service delivery to victims of domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and honour based violence, across all communities.

Membership of the IAG comprises 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 Courts and Tribunal Service, Victim Support, Action on Elder Abuse and NSPCC. This forum previously was 'adult – focused'. The presence of SBNI representation on the group has encouraged consideration of the child as a victim in his/her own right and promotes the child's voice in police management of Domestic Abuse.

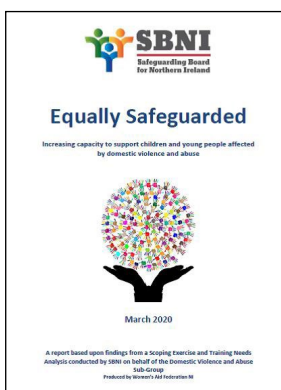
Working with partners engaged in the DVA arena to raise awareness among parents/ carers and professionals of the impact of DVA on children and young people.

Towards the end of the reporting period for this report SBNI member agencies recognised from experience and contemporaneous international data that the 'lockdown' experience would be difficult for many families and the attendant stress could potentially lead to an increase in domestic abuse incidents. The SBNI worked collaboratively with member agencies and particularly the PSNI to ensure both emergency and support contact details were easily available and accessible for victims of Domestic Abuse via a range of media and social media platforms.

At the commencement of the COVID-19 pandemic SBNI worked alongside Women's Aid Federation to provide financial support to assist children who were leaving their home on an emergency basis as a consequence of Domestic Violence. Given the prevalence and transmission rate of the virus at the point of 'lockdown', families could not immediately access a refuge and had to undergo a period of 'quarantine' to mitigate against transmission of the virus in the residential communal setting. Financial support assisted in offsetting costs associated with this period of quarantine for children.

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

In 2018/19 SBNI undertook a scoping exercise of the current service provision for children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse. This work crossed into the current reporting year. The exercise aimed to scope the nature and location of services available to children and families who experience this form of abuse. The exercise also sought to determine the extent of awareness of the impact of Domestic Violence upon children. The scoping exercise involved all member agencies of the SBNI Domestic Violence Sub-Group. The SBNI then commissioned the Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland to undertake an analysis of the data collected and produce a report on the findings. The report 'Equally Safeguarded' was due to be presented to the SBNI Board in April 2020 for consideration before being brought to the Stakeholders Assurance Group. Unfortunately as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic the presentation of the document was postponed until later in the year.



Equally Safeguarded Report

During 2018-2019 the SBNI Domestic Violence Sub-Group undertook to scope the training provided to professionals of all member agencies working with children who are victims of Domestic Abuse with analysis of this work being undertaken in this reporting year. This exercise 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. As detailed above Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland analysed the returns received and the outcome is also detailed in the 'Equally Safeguarded' document due to be presented to the SBNI Board in the next business year.

A short SBNI task and finish group met during the 2019-2020 to consider tools available to all practitioners to work with children who experienced Domestic Violence. The group comprised membership from the Health and Social Care Trusts, the NSPCC and Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland. The group collated and considered the range of graphically animated tools available within the agencies who primarily work with children. The group determined that the 'storyboard tools' used by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust were consistent with the current models of intervention used by member agencies of the SBNI (for example the Signs of Safety model tools had previously been consulted upon with children, parents and practitioners). The SBNI task and finish group has now recommended these tools as good practice to member agencies who work with children.



Storyboard Animation

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is an initiative currently operating in England and Wales. It involves the reporting to schools by police, before the beginning of the new school day, 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 asked that an SBNI task and finish group be established to determine if such a initiative should be delivered in Northern Ireland.



Operation Encompass

The SBNI task and finish group was established in November 2018 comprising representatives from government departments of Health, Justice and Education. The group also had representation from the Education Authority, two Health and Social Care Trusts and the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The terms of reference were:

- Consider how notification to schools of domestic 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 comment on whether the introduction of Operation Encompass is considered necessary within the Northern Ireland context
- Determine the required steps to be progressed around the in terms of development, governance and implementation of such a scheme.

To prepare an initial findings paper for the Strategic Development Board.

The group has undertaken significant work during the 2019-2020 reporting year. This work began with the development of a process map of how Operation Encompass works to ascertain its applicability to the Northern Ireland context. The group then examined the existing systems in Northern Ireland including the statutory infrastructure available to support the introduction of Operation Encompass. The Departments of Health, Justice and Education are presently examining the legal advice on the issue of consent, with a view to considering if any legislative change is required. The group has also recommended an Operation Encompass pilot for the County Down area based on the consent of the parent) allowing the PSNI to share limited information to the school of a child victim of Domestic Violence to ensure the child is appropriately nurtured and understood during presentation in school the following day.

Developments will be reported on in the next Annual Report.

Mental Health

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

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.

Over the past 2 years, demand for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) has risen with figures for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 showing an increase in number of referrals received by CAMHS up by 22%, while the number of referrals accepted by CAMHS rose by 29%¹⁴.

Since its publication last year the CAMHS Integrated Care Pathway: 'Working Together: A Pathway for Children and Young People through CAMHS' continues to be rolled out across Northern Ireland, with training taking place to assist with implementation. Given the significant issue of transitioning of children to adult services a pilot project has been established to improve transitional arrangements for young people moving from CAMHS to adult mental health services. The project is being led by the Belfast Trust in partnership with the South Eastern and Southern Trusts and will be subject to a full evaluation to ascertain if it is suitable for full implementation across Northern Ireland. This will be reported on in the next Annual Report

With the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 and the legislative underpinning of arrangements for children placed in adult psychiatric wards, all five Health and Social Care Trusts now have protocols in place for children on adult wards. They have also confirmed that the protocols will be updated in light of the commencement of the Mental Capacity Regulations.

Consideration is underway of the development of a regional protocol to ensure consistency in practice across the Trusts.

A number of other initiatives have also taken place by SBNI members to promote awareness for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to mental health. An Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework is being developed by the Education Authority (EA) and the Public Health Agency along with the Department of Education (DE) and Department of Health (DoH) focusing on ensuring that children and young people are empowered to take care of their wellbeing and receive the right support, at the right time, according to their needs. The EITP Project Team of the SBNI has been able to contribute to this work through the trauma informed agenda and developing a trauma sensitive approach to practice.

The Southern Health and Social Care Trust is currently developing a service model to address the emotional wellbeing and mental health of young people known to the Youth Justice Agency (JYA). This project has made excellent progress to date and has received very positive service feedback. Given the success of this model of practice and its potential for regional replication, future commissioning/funding options are presently being explored.

14 Available at: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/Draft-Progress-Report-Dec-19.pdf>

To fully understand the mental health needs of children and young people a prevalence study commissioned by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) of child and adolescent mental health in Northern Ireland is currently underway. It is hoped this will provide the SBNI with a better understanding of the needs of this population, particularly given the trans-generational impact of the Troubles on children and young people, the impact of current pockets of sectarian conflict and the high levels of deprivation across Northern Ireland.

Within Education a number of preventative and early intervention projects are being developed to support the emotional health and mental wellbeing of children and young people. An example of this is the 'Stress Control in Schools Programme' aimed at 15 year olds. This incorporates cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), mindfulness and positive psychology. Another example is 'BLOOM' which supports young people's mental health resilience by equipping young people with the tools and knowledge to maintain their mental health through life's transitions, both now and in the future.

The Education Authority recognises there is a lack of regional consistency in respect of many schools' response to mental health service provision - this can vary on a school by school basis. The SBNI worked with the Education Authority in organising an event 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 aim of the March event was to encourage multi-agency working and collaboration in addressing the issue of the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people. However this had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is hoped this event can take place in the next reporting year.

As part of the work to promote recognition of mental ill health the theatrical play 'Invictus' commissioned by the SBNI on Adverse Childhood Experiences was delivered to schools, youth clubs, faith sector organisations, student teachers, student social workers and police cadets across Northern Ireland during the reporting year. This play had a significant mental health component threaded throughout it. Feedback on the Play has been very positive.

A number of disclosures in respect of Children's mental health were received following the delivery of the play – especially in schools where there were children who experience special educational needs and struggle to verbalise their experiences and worries. It appears the theatrical performance provided a vocabulary for the children to articulate their personal experiences. The children were then referred onwards for assessment and support.

Multi-disciplinary Teams have been established in a number of GP Federation Areas. As part of this Mental Health practitioners are now based within the majority of GP Practices. These staff work as part of the wider multi-disciplinary team within the GP practice to promote positive mental health and well-being for all GP patients including children and young people and consequently raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of poor mental health on children and young people. The Multi-Disciplinary Team Project was formally launched on Tuesday 15th October 2019.

The SBNI worked this year on the cross Departmental On-line Safety Strategy. The Strategy received almost 1000 consultation responses from Children and young people and 300 responses from adults and organisations. The consultation overwhelmingly highlighted the need for the Executive to ensure overall positive emotional health and well-being of children was incorporated into the strategy. This was acknowledged and accepted by the Strategy's Advisory Board and has consequently been integrated into the document.

Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group

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

- **Ensure Services in Respect of Child Sexual Exploitation are Effective across SBNI member agencies**
- **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 manage the transition of the SBNI CSE Sub-Group into the SBNI Child Protection Sub-Group**
- **To deliver the revised Night-Time Economy Programme 2019-2020.**

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 August 2017).

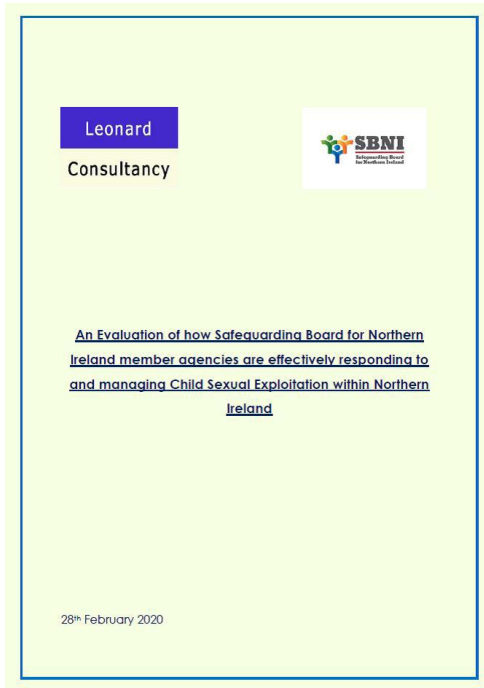
The SBNI has had a key role in highlighting and managing the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland. This has been undertaken through the SBNI Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group. The aim of the group is to facilitate SBNI members to work collaboratively to ensure the safeguarding and 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 Procedure Committee by identifying good practice and to highlight areas where practice required to be improved
- Reporting 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” November 2015 (Pinkerton).

The CSE Sub-Group has, in this reporting period, been chaired by a PSNI Chief Superintendent and comprises senior management representation from Health and Social Care Trusts, Education Authority Northern Ireland (EANI), NSPCC, Probation Board (PBNI), Youth Justice Agency (YJA), the Social Work Regional Lead for CSE and Barnardo’s NI Safe Choices Project.

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



Leonard CSE Report

‘Evaluating the responsiveness of SBNI member agencies to the prevention, recognition, treatment and management of CSE’ (Leonard Consultancy 2020).

The “Getting Focused, Staying Focussed 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’ with a record of repeated going missing where there are concerns about CSE.

CSE Evaluation 2020

In 2018, in response to the above, SBNI commissioned an overarching review and evaluation of all member agencies response to CSE. This review was undertaken by [Leonard Consultancy and Associates](#).¹⁵

This Multi-Agency Evaluation examined, both at a strategic and operational level, how the member agencies of the SBNI have been addressing CSE from prevention to intervention within Northern Ireland.

The evaluation also took account of the 'Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland, Report of the Independent Inquiry', by Professor Kathleen Marshall (Nov 2014)

The methodology for undertaking the review was as follows:

- A Self-Evaluation audit was undertaken by all SBNI member agencies. The audit was undertaken by the use of a tool provided by the Evaluation team. The respective audits were then collated and analysed by the team
- A Case file review of 15 Children's cases where CSE was suspected or confirmed from across the multi-disciplinary group involved with the children.
- Focus groups undertaken with 9 groups of multi-agency members of SBNI
- A multi-disciplinary case specific discussion on a complex case where CSE was confirmed was chaired by members of the evaluation team
- Individual interviews with children who have current lived experienced of CSE.

All SBNI member agencies co-operated fully and in a timely manner with the intense evaluation process.

Overall the review determined that the focused efforts post "Marshall" and "Pinkerton" have been effective in embedding the awareness and knowledge of CSE as a form of sexual abuse across the SBNI member agencies. There was a confidence and competence from practitioners across the member agencies in their recognition and understanding of CSE as a form of sexual abuse. The appointment of CSE Leads in both HSC Trusts and Police has overwhelmingly had a positive impact in enhancing the information sharing and joint working between police and social workers. This has led to a shared understanding between both agencies and led to improved joint working.

The Evaluation however also found that young people who are deemed to be at risk of sexual abuse through exploitation, or have been confirmed as having been sexually exploited, will have experienced different forms of child abuse and a range of childhood adversities. The review recommended that these children should be assessed, managed

¹⁵ Leonard Consultancy , An Evaluation of how Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland member agencies are effectively responding to and managing Child Sexual Exploitation within Northern Ireland. 2020. Available at: <https://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/SBNI%20CSE%20Report%20PDF.pdf>

and interventions provided as complex child sexual abuse within the child protection procedures. This would ensure more rigorous governance processes, more effective multiagency working and better sharing of information which should help to reduce risk and promote recovery.

The Evaluation made 14 recommendations in respect of how the improvements made in the management of CSE could be consolidated and developed. In summary the recommendations are:

- I. Children who experience or who are at risk of CSE should be managed within the Child Protection Process to ensure the effective sharing of information
- II. The DoH and DoJ should issue correspondence to SBNI member agencies reaffirming the commitment to sharing information within the child protection system
- III. A Regional Adolescent Drug and Alcohol Service should be established
- IV. A review should be undertaken in respect of 'Return to Home' Interviews
- V. A therapeutic framework considering the Building and Sustaining Relationships with Families / Carers of Young People deemed 'at risk' of CSE should be developed
- VI. Training should be consistently and more inclusively developed and co-ordinated across the member agencies of SBNI
- VII. There should be continued work on the Night-time Economy
- VIII. There should be improved collaboration between victim and offender management within and between agencies
- IX. A 'Social Work' / Co-located CRU Team should be established
- X. Improved data collection systems to be established
- XI. Improved accommodation to be developed for older teenagers
- XII. A 'Young Adult' strategy to be developed
- XIII. Continued development of work to highlight Male victims of CSE
- XIV. The development of a PSNI 'NICHE' Alert on the computer system.

The Evaluation report was presented to the SBNI Board in February 2020. The report is due to be published on the SBNI website in the next reporting year following final factual accuracy checks. The SBNI CSE Sub-Group will oversee the Action Planning in respect of the range of recommendations and report to the SBNI Board on on-going progress. Work is underway between the DoH, DoJ and SBNI to ensure effective governance arrangements are in place to oversee the consideration and implementation of the action planning process of both the Leonard and Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland report (due to be published in June 2020) into CSE in NI.

Jonathon Crego – 10,000 Volts workshop exploring Practitioners’ understanding and experience of working with CSE.



Chair of CSE Sub-Group and SBNI Independent Chair



Technology Enabled Interaction



Attendees at Jonathon Crego Event

In May 2019, the PSNI in collaboration with SBNI hosted a 10,000 volts workshop for multi-agency partners working with CSE.

Jonathan Crego is the designer and owner of **'Hydra, Minerva and 10,000 Volts Debriefing Methodologies'**. He has driven and developed technological debriefing methodologies for over 25 years in Policing, Fire Service, Counter Terrorism, Major Incident and Multi-Agency management of critical incidents and Child Protection:

- The workshop on CSE was designed to bring together multi-agency stakeholders who work with victims of CSE to explore through the specialised use of technology how individuals and agencies are working with young people at risk of CSE
- explore what is working well and what are the challenges in this very complex area of work and to explore the impact upon the worker.

The workshop used the most up-to-date live technology to allow participants to respond in real time to details and explore their working knowledge of, culture and practice within their respective agencies when managing CSE. The technology allowed the immediate collation of information from practitioners across a range of disciplines working in this complex and challenging area.

The 60 participants attending the event included:

- 20 PSNI officers of all ranks across the Public Protection Branch and local districts
- Social Services – both managers and CSE lead practitioners as well as frontline social work staff who work with young people at risk in the community and in residential care
- EANI representatives
- Safe Choices (Barnardo's NI)
- HSCB staff
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Staff
- Youth Justice Staff (community and Woodlands)
- Representatives from the Leonard Consultancy team who were undertaking the CSE Evaluation.

Jonathon Crego analysed the contributions of the participants at this event and provided an evaluation to the PSNI and SBNI towards the end of 2019. This analysis was consistent with information being collated as part of the research for the Leonard Evaluation Report, in terms of staff reports of their experience.

CSE Risk Assessment

Barnardo's are leading on work in the UK in respect of a review of the professional risk assessment for practitioners who are concerned re Child Sexual Exploitation. The SBNI Sub-Group has commissioned Dr Helen Beckett of the University of Bedfordshire¹⁶ to explore this work and determine its potential relevance for Northern Ireland. It is anticipated this work shall be undertaken in the next business year.

¹⁶ Dr Helen Beckett, Director, The International Centre: Researching Child Sexual Exploitation, Violence and Trafficking & Reader in Child Protection and Children's Rights

Therapeutic Intervention with children and their families

The CSE Sub-Group has also begun to consider the Barnardo's 'Tiger' model as a possible assessment framework for working with children, young people and their families who experience CSE. This assessment framework is built upon a trauma informed practice model. Work on this is in the early stages and will be progressed during the next business year.



TIGER
Trauma Informed Growth and Empowered Recovery

A new, innovative approach to trauma recovery for sexually exploited children

Believe in children
Barnardo's

barnardos.org.uk

Tiger leaflet

Safer in a Digital World

SBNI Strategic Priority 1 2019 - 2020:- to provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children and young people

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



SBNI e-Safety Forum

The SBNI e-Safety Forum

The use of the internet and mobile technologies have opened 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.

Membership

The e-Safety Forum provides space for the sharing of new initiatives, trends and risks in respect to 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. The forum's membership comprises representatives from the following agencies – Police Service of Northern Ireland, the 5 Health and Social Care Trusts, Child Exploitation Online Protection command (CEOP – overseen by the National Crime Agency), Education Authority Northern Ireland, C2K (Education Technology Managed Service for Schools), NSPCC, the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), Include Youth, Northern Ireland Anti – Bullying Forum (NIABF), National Children's Bureau NI (NCB), Nexus NI, Parenting NI, Children in Northern Ireland and a SBNI Professional Officer.

During the Business year 2019-2020 the Forum took up a place on the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) Education Working Group.



UKCIS

The Development of the e-Safety Strategy

The Northern Ireland Executive commissioned the SBNI to oversee the development of an e-Safety Strategy. In doing so the Executive recognised that safety of children and young people when using the internet and electronic technology (e-safety) is a continuing concern for parents, carers, professionals, and broader society. Evidence of this concern is clear from the increased research focus and media coverage of incidents of cyber-bullying, grooming and exploitation.

During the 2018-2019 business reporting year the Forum launched a consultation on a revised Executive's e-Safety Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland. This had been delayed previously due to the Northern Ireland Assembly suspension. The e-Safety Strategy proposes a new vision with core principles and commitments to underpin online safety for children and young people in Northern Ireland. A co-design process with children and young people informed the development of the Strategy. It focuses on three key pillars for action to achieve the vision of keeping all children and young people in Northern Ireland safe online;

- 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



Children and Young People's Stakeholder Group

To make sure all children and young people are safe and secure online the Strategy will ensure that:

- All parents and carers are supporting their children and young people to stay safe online
- All those working with children and young people are supporting them to stay safe online
- The general public are supporting children and young people to stay safe online.

The overall objectives of the Strategy are to support the development of a comprehensive cross-government 3 year action plan that will improve online Safety by:

- Reflecting existing evidence of good practice in e-Safety approaches
- Engaging with existing e-Safety mechanisms elsewhere in the UK, seeking to add value and not to 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 consultation on the Strategy was launched on March 4th 2019 and closed on April 29th 2019. Analysis of the Consultation responses was undertaken by NCB to inform cross departmental consideration of the introduction of the Strategy to Northern Ireland.

As part of the consultation process various awareness raising and engagement activities took place alongside the consultation survey. NCB facilitated five group consultation activities. Three of these were directly with children and young people involved in the Children's Law Centre Group, the NSPCC Group and Barnardo's NI Sixth sense Group.

Response to the consultation.

A total of 334 survey responses were received from individuals, schools and other organisations, as well as 10 written responses submitted outside the survey template. 964 children and young people responded. Of these:

- 80% were aged between 10 and 15
- 10% under 10
- 10% over 16

Responses were overwhelmingly positive, with the vast majority of respondents supportive of the proposed approach set out in the draft strategy. Quotes from the responses from the various groups of responders are detailed below. The overall view was that:

"We welcome the emphasis on facilitating young people's use of the internet in a positive way while staying safe online."

Both the direct engagement and written responses provided very rich information to be analysed and collated. Given the volume of responses the analysis stage of the process took longer than had originally been anticipated and occurred during May, June and July 2019.

Children provided responses such as follows;

We consider 'e-safety' outdated terminology... 'Digital safeguarding' rather than 'e-safety' may be more apt." "[The definition] places too much responsibility on the user/young person."



"Whilst there are a variety of terms, the more commonly referred to title is now 'online safety' rather than e-safety."

"Mental health and well-being with regards to technology [could be included]."

'Parents are nervous as they don't know too much about [the internet] and because there have been a lot of stories like cyber-bullying.'

'My family over-exaggerate the dangers a lot. I will be laughing at something and they will be going: "Who took that photo, who is that etc."'

Parents and carers provided information such as;

'I try to give them trust and not question. I keep the Xbox in the living room but still don't feel like I'm in control of what they're watching on their phones or tablets. I try to read their behaviour when I go in to check but they're exposed to so much I don't know how to control what they see.'

'I'm very strict with my teenagers about age restrictions on games but my husband isn't so it makes it very hard.'

Policy makers provided responses such as follows;

'We can't consider e-safety in a silo. It's all part of the wider safeguarding focus with particular links to Child Sexual Exploitation.'

Practitioners provided responses such as follows;

"Research into e-safety needs to be much broader than a statistical count of incidents – particularly as many incidents will not be formally reported and recorded, or are seen as too 'everyday' to be raised despite having a harmful impact on a child or young person."

(Discussing online safety training) 'The parents you want to target are not coming. It is the parents that come that you know you have no worries. They are the ones that are sitting in front of you.'

(Discussing school policies) 'There is pretty much nothing in place, really, if I am honest about it. Apart from acceptable use of internet within a closed system anyway, so it is entirely pointless. But it is just a box ticking exercise. It is just paperwork. It is not actually affecting having our kids make good decisions online, really, at this stage.'

Following analysis of responses, updates were made to the draft strategy, including:

- Review of the language and terminology used throughout, with 'e-safety' replaced with 'online safety'
- Increased focus placed on children's rights
- Emerging policy and research was reflected, including recent GDPR implications and the HM Government Online Harms White Paper.

- Further emphasis was placed on potential wellbeing implications for children and young people.
- Further clarity was provided around the governance structure and implementation plans.

One significant change which was accepted by the Project Advisory Group, was that the term 'e-Safety' should be changed to 'On-line Safety' SBNI will also adopt this terminology in place of e-Safety.

The Strategy was presented to the SBNI Board in February 2020 and it endorsed the finalised version.

Online Safety is a cross-cutting matter and requires the agreement of the Executive before publication. The aim is to progress this through the Executive as soon as possible.

Revision of the SBNI Safeguarding Application (App)

The SBNI continued to host and support an SBNI Safeguarding App during 2019-2020. The App provides current and relevant information in respect of all aspects of safeguarding and Child Protection issues for Professionals and parents / carers.



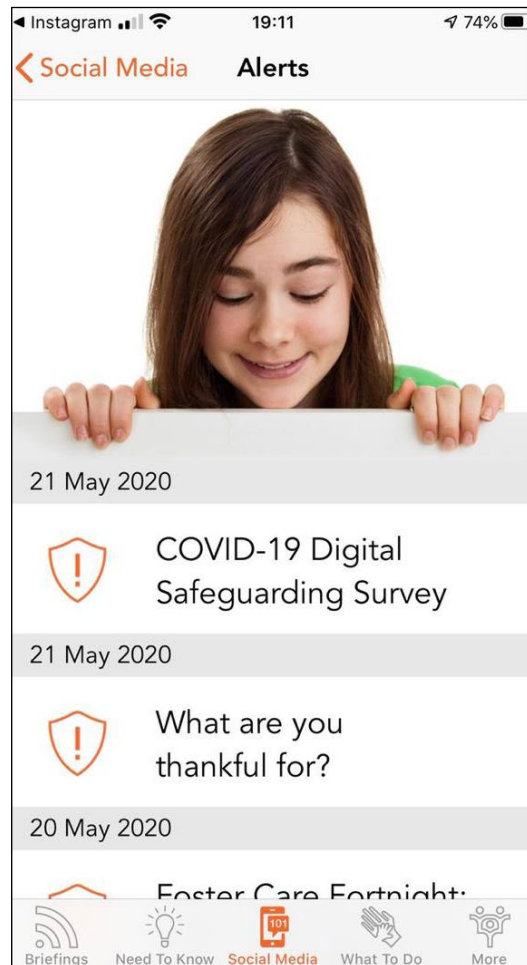
SBNI App Relaunch 2020

During the previous and current reporting periods the SBNI has undertaken an extensive 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 notifications up-dating of relevant and topical social media alerts and advice for children, parents and professionals on gaming and new electronic On – Line Gaming and social media apps such as 'Kik', 'Fortnite', 'House-Party', 'Zoom' and 'Tik Tok' etc.

The refreshed App was tested by SBNI staff and member agencies and re-launched to coincide with Safer Internet Day in February 2020. Member agencies promoted the launch through their own social media platforms.

The launching of the App on the social media platform Twitter, made a total of 5629 impressions/views on the general public's feed. This also included an engagement of 151 people and a further 54 Media engagements with the tweet.

The Government 'Stay at home' campaign, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, commenced immediately before the end of the current reporting period. This increased the vulnerability and risk for children and young people who were spending more time at home. Due to with the closure. of schools etc, the SBNI agreed with Ineqe, therefore, that all advice/guidance developed and promoted by them would be uploaded immediately onto the SBNI App. Information on the App was wholly consistent with the Safer Schools App promoted by the Department of Education during the "lockdown" period.



SBNI App Content Revision

Anti-Bullying Week and Safer Internet Day



ABW 2019 Change Starts with Us

The SBNI e-Safety Forum in conjunction with the Anti Bullying Forum supported Anti Bullying Week 2019 (ABW19) and Safer Internet Day 2020 as well as a series of events for young people in February 2020.

ABW19 Creative Art Competition

In a change to previous years, the launch of the Anti-Bullying Competition took place as part of the Anti-Bullying Week 2019 activities. The aim of the competition was to focus on the theme 'Change Starts With Us'. Entries were required to reflect the challenges as well as the positive messages of anti-bullying work and how this helps to build an anti-bullying culture in our schools and communities.

There were two categories; Art (including drawings, paintings, posters, sculptures, models, photographs, textiles) and Creative Writing (short stories, poems, drama).

There were four age categories for the competition, based on the school year group of the child/young person during ABW19 & Special Educational Needs Merit Prize:

- Up to Year 4
- Years 5 – 7
- Years 8 – 10
- Years 11 and over.



ABW 2019 Art Entries



Primary School Prize Winner ABW 2019



Post Primary Prize Winner ABW 2019

This year 1557 Art and 379 Creative Writing entries were received from 75 schools.

Prize Winning Celebration Event

Shortlisted entries were judged by a panel, including members of the NI Anti Bullying Forum (NIABF), Translink and the SBNI on 8th January 2020. The winners and runners up, accompanied by their teachers or families, were invited to a celebration event on Thursday 27th February 2020 at The Oxford Island National Nature Reserve in Lurgan.

Prizes (which were sponsored by Translink and SBNI) were awarded to outstanding entries across the categories and the winners from the written categories recited their poems and stories to the audience. The young people from Voice of young People in Care (VOYPIC) also performed their winning drama 'Just Jack' to the audience.

Attendees were able to contribute towards the development of next year's Anti-Bullying Week 2020 activities (which will be 16-20 November), by giving us thoughts and suggestions on our 'graffiti wall' about next year's theme, slogans and resources.

Feedback from attendees was very positive.

NIABF Anti-Bullying Young People Forum

The Young People's Forum, supported by SBNI, took place on 7 February 2020 in the Northern Ireland Assembly at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, with 80 young people aged 15-19, from 31 post-primary schools and colleges across Northern Ireland.



NIABF Young People's Forum at Parliament Buildings

The aim of the event which was co-facilitated by the NI Assembly Education Service was to bring together young people to consider a range of issues related to bullying, all under the theme of Anti-Bullying Week 2019 – ‘Change Starts With Us’.

The committee sessions discussed:

- Tackling Bullying in Education
- Tackling Bullying in Youth Clubs
- Tackling Bullying in Sports Clubs
- Tackling Bullying in Faith Organisations
- Tackling Bullying Online
- Tackling Bullying Motivated by Race, Faith, Culture
- Tackling Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying
- Tackling Disablist Bullying
- Tackling Sectarian Bullying
- Tackling Bullying Involving Young People in Care.

The 80 young people in attendance participated in two committees. Each and heard about work undertaken to address bullying by ‘expert witnesses’ from 20 organisations across the statutory, voluntary and community sector. These committees enabled young people to highlight issues and make a further call to action for responsible adults to support them in reducing the levels of bullying experienced by them and/or their contemporaries.

Safer Internet Day 2020

A video targeting parents was scripted and produced by the SBNI e-Safety Forum Chair, with Parenting NI assisting in the production. The video was uploaded on social media on February 11th 2020 – Safer Internet Day. The video was viewed several thousand times.

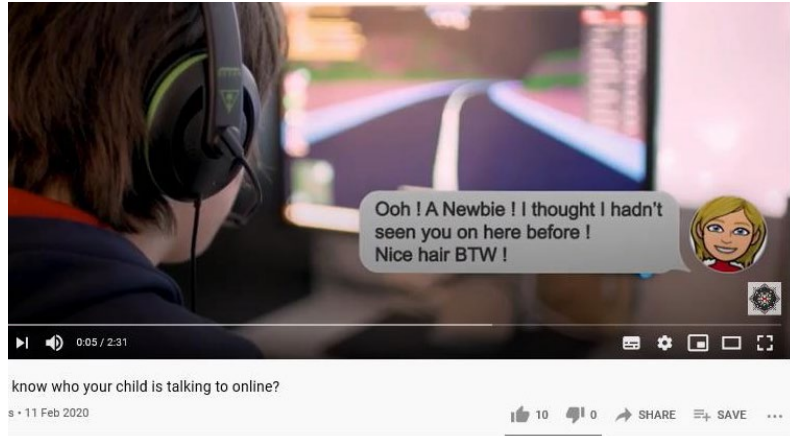
Detective Sergeant Elaine McCormill and Muriel Bailey from Parenting NI hosted a live Question and Answer session on the PSNI Instagram account. There was very positive engagement in real time which received excellent feedback.



Safer Internet Day Poster 2020



Production of online safety video



You Tube Do you know who your child is talking to online

Development of Guidance for teachers on 'Sexting'

As noted in the 2018-2019 Annual Report the SBNI 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). During the targeted consultation in the autumn of 2019 the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) noted a potential unintended consequence would emerge for professionals acting on the guidance. The PPS noted that the legislative infrastructure which underpins similar guidance in England does not exist in Northern Ireland. The task and finish group is continuing to work alongside the PSNI and PPS to seek a remedy to this issue.

The SBNI e- Safety Forum continues to work on the delivery of the business plan objectives and will update in the next reporting period on the launch of the Executive's Online Safety Strategy.



PSNI and Parenting NI Q&A

Safeguarding in the Faith Communities

The aim of the SBNI Interfaith Group is to enhance the safety and welfare of children and young people within the range of faith group provisions across Northern Ireland

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

- **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.**



SBNI Interfaith Sub-Group

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 to 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 within the SBNI partnership and work in collaboration with other SBNI committees to encourage effective communication and engagement in the development of key safeguarding initiatives. The groups continue to promote the importance of sharing safeguarding resources, skills and knowledge.

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, the HSCB and is 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 endeavours 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 SBNI Interfaith Sub-Group undertakes the following functions:

- a. Develop partnerships between the Faith Groups, SBNI and others concerned in safeguarding children in Northern Ireland
- b. Develop and share good practice arrangements and safeguarding resources suitable for use within this sector and encourage use across any Faith Groups
- c. 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
- d. Identify key localised issues and develops safeguarding initiatives within Faith Groups, while sharing these with the wider SBNI membership
- e. Support the promotion within Faith Groups of appropriate safeguarding messages at an operational level

During the 2019-2020 Business year the Committee has endeavoured to reach out to additional Faith sectors – the Muslim Community, the Jewish Community and the Salvation Army to endeavour to ensure inclusiveness and promote further consistency of safeguarding practice across the region. Discussions with these sectors were on-going at the conclusion of the current business year.

Interfaith Conference – Role and Impact of Social Media on the lives of young people in the faith sector.



SBNI Interfaith Conference Participants

During the business year 2019-2020 the SBNI Interfaith Sub-Group focused primarily on delivering a conference to the Faith Sector considering the role and impact of social media on the lives of young people. The decision to focus on this aspect of safeguarding was arrived at following feedback from all areas of the Faith Sector advising this was an area clerical and pastoral leaders struggled with and on which they required further guidance and assistance.

The conference was due to be hosted in March 2020; this date required to be rearranged to April 2020 and then, as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, had to be postponed to the new business year of 2020-2021.

The development of the agenda for the conference was a collaborative undertaking between all members of the Group. The Group recognized the need for young people to be involved in the process and commissioned a short drama to be delivered during the conference highlighting how young people and their parents / carers can struggle to safely navigate the ever changing on-line world. The drama was written and rehearsed by the young people from the "Play it by ear" drama group on behalf of the Interfaith Sub-Group. It was unfortunate the momentum of the experience of the writing and subsequent rehearsal of the drama was not met with the immediate delivery as planned due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

'Be the Change' Leadership Programme.

The Interfaith Sub-Group benefited from participation in the 'Be the Change' Leadership Programme. This was developed for, and delivered to, strategic leaders across the membership of SBNI who are critical to ensure Trauma Informed Practice becomes integral to service provision. The Interfaith Committee was given two places on this innovative programme. The places were up taken by Dr. Jacqui Montgomery Devlin (Head of Safeguarding Presbyterian Church in Ireland) and Reverend Fr Peter Owens (Catholic Diocese of Down and Connor). Dr. Montgomery Devlin commented below on her experience of this Programme;

"As head of safeguarding for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, I, alongside the Church of Ireland, and the Catholic Church (Diocese of Down and Connor), was a representative from the SBNI Interfaith Committee who benefitted from attending 'Be the Change' Leadership Programme. The importance of the faith sector being a part of this was evident throughout the Programme, in particular, equipping leaders to lead the change; working with different, as well as similar, sectors to help challenge existing thoughts on leadership; and aiding the transition from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset which has long-term benefits. Having access to a coach to help integrate perspectives and changes was the pinnacle of the Programme for me as a leader."



Be the change leadership programme representative speakers at NI ACE Conference 2020

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

The Interfaith Sub-Group built on the success of the 2018 /19 business year delivery of two workshops in Omagh and Ballymena. The 'Management of Offenders returning to Faith' workshop was delivered to Clergy, Ministers, Deacons, Prison Chaplains and designated officers with responsibility for managing risk in a Faith based setting. The Interfaith Sub-Group worked alongside the PSNI and delivered a further workshop in the greater Belfast area in March 2020.

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

- Examples of feedback from participants indicated the following:
- Very helpful and well run event
- Thoroughly enjoyed the Seminar, very informative
- Seminar met my objectives very much so
- Very beneficial, would like further sessions for Ministers to attend focussing on the importance of Safeguarding.



SBNI Faith Workshop Attendees

The development of an e- Learning Platform for Young Leaders

Following on from work which commenced in the 2018-2019 business year, the Interfaith Sub-Group brought to a conclusion the work of the group of young adults representing a range of Churches. The group had been tasked to consider how the voice of young people could be better portrayed in safeguarding training. The group had developed the idea of producing an e-learning resource accessible for 15-17 years olds which would provide them with an overview of safeguarding and help them make more informed decisions at 17 years of age of whether to pursue a leadership role. The group identified the areas to be covered and developed material required for the production of an e-learning resource. The Interfaith Sub-Group engaged with the Northern Regional College (NRC) which specializes in the production of e- learning resources. This has proved to not only be a cost effective measure but has also supported local enterprise and benefiting young people attending the college who worked on the project. It had been hoped the finished product would be launched at the Conference but unfortunately this has been postponed. It has been agreed that the platform should be hosted on the SBNI Website following a softer launch in the next business year.



Interfaith Youth Engagement

Delivery of 'Invictus' Play to the Faith Youth Sector

The Interfaith Sub-Group warmly embraced the opportunity to host the Invictus play for members of the Faith youth sector. In March 2020 the Presbyterian Church of Ireland hosted the performance in the Assembly Buildings Belfast. The audience comprised members of the various churches and was exceptionally well received by the audience.



INVICTUS Play to the Faith Youth Sector

Next Steps

This seventh annual report has outlined the work of the SBNI during the past year. It outlines both the challenges and the many successes of the partner agencies and members. The SBNI anticipate that the year 2020-2021 will bring a completely different set of challenges, as partner agencies strive to maintain safeguarding services within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is anticipated that within the context of a global pandemic many of the planned SBNI activities and events will be conducted 'on line' making use of technology to ensure key communications and engagements continue.

During the next reporting year the SBNI will continue to address each of the priorities agreed in the SBNI Strategic Plan (2018–2022) with particular emphasis on the three key priorities of domestic violence, neglect and mental health.

As regards domestic violence the SBNI will continue to progress the 'Operation Encompass' pilot which seeks to improve the sharing of information between key agencies following a domestic violence incident. The SBNI will also follow up on the work undertaken by the SBNI Domestic Violence Sub-Group and begin to progress actions contained within the 'Equally Safeguarded' report referred to earlier. This report will form the basis of the SBNI's work with the Domestic Abuse Strategic Development Board and will contribute to the development of a cross departmental seven year strategic plan 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence'.

As regards mental health, the SBNI intend to set up a subgroup with specific terms of reference relating to highlighting issues for children and young people dealing with mental ill health. This will build on the work already completed with children in schools, particularly following the period of 'lockdown'.

The SBNI will also continue to promote the work of the local Safeguarding Panels recognizing the important role they play, particularly in implementing the SBNI neglect strategy. We will also continue to build on the work of local panels in disseminating the learning from CMRs. This will be particularly important following the completion of the planned CMR thematic review in 2020, which aims to identify key themes emerging from CMRs over the last number of years.

Towards the end of the current reporting period the SBNI published the Leonard CSE evaluation report. In the 2020-2021 reporting year the SBNI intend to work through each of the recommendations of this report to ensure the continued improvement in services to children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation.

All of the SBNI work will continue to be delivered within the context of a trauma informed workforce. As a result of the EITP Trauma Informed Practice project Northern Ireland has seen significant progress in the development of trauma informed knowledge, skills and practice within the child protection system. There are concrete plans for the trauma informed approach to be further strengthened by our member and partner agencies. The SBNI will continue to support this journey towards organisational and system-wide change.

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

Annex 1

Business Objectives 2019-2020

Introduction

Our Business Objectives

The Business Objectives of the SBNI for 2019 – 2020 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.

The SBNI has a key role in contributing to the overarching PfG Outcome – “We give our children and young people the best start in life” and specifically to the relevant Outcomes in the forthcoming CYP Strategy:

- Children and young people are physically and mentally healthy,
- Children and young people live in safety and stability and
- Children and young people live in a society which respects their rights.
- The SBNI work in 2019 /20 under each of the aforementioned priorities are directly aligned to the relevant outcomes from the PfG and CYP strategy.

Performance measures have been developed in line with OBA – How much did we do? How well did we do it? And is anyone better off? – To monitor and improve our delivery and impact throughout the year.

The ‘Turning the curve’ which is a process which refers to the actions we need to take to improve the well-being of children and young people, will be used to engage our stakeholders and member agencies in developing actions to improve our performance through the year.

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

- PFG Outcome –Children and young people live in Safety and Stability
- CYP Strategy (draft) - Children and young people are physically and mentally healthy, Children and young people live in safety and stability and Children and young people live in a society which respects their rights.

1.1 Objective: To sustain 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 complements the Core P&P

SUMMARY UPDATE:

SBNI has sought assurance surrounding the dissemination and embedding of the 2017 Regional Core Child Protection Policies and Procedures (P&P). 45% of members responded and of those 100% did so positively. Identified gaps have been taken forward into the 2020/2021 Business Plan in order to support the remaining members.

A task and finish group has been established to ensure that the Signs of Safety approach is 100% complementary to the Policy and Procedures

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

1.2 Objective: Greater consistency and standardisation of practice through the provision of relevant 2018 Practice Guidance to support the Regional Core Policy and Procedures

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

Summary Update:

Guidance developed and the SBNI's Regional Protocol regarding Bruising / Marks (which could be due to injury) on Pre-Mobile Babies was issued March 2020

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

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

- Develop and agree a three-year SBNI Communications Strategy 2019-2022
- Develop and agree a two-year SBNI Engagement Strategy 2019-2021

Summary Update:

Development of the Communications Strategy was commenced in year and completion will be carried forward to the 2020/2021 Annual Report. A procurement specification for an Engagement Strategy was completed in year and will be published for procurement on the 2020/2021 financial year

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

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

- Safeguarding Panels will review the existing fora of:
- Children and young people
- Parents and carers

And identify the additional opportunities for eliciting 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.

SUMMARY UPDATE:

This is an ongoing statutory objective of the Safeguarding Panels, which has been undertaken, the details of which are noted in the main body of the report.

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

1.5 Objective: 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
- Undertake an analysis and review of the themes emanating from CMRs
- Develop a system for measuring outcomes for children and young people in the child protection system that are subject to a Child Protection Case Conference.
- Support the reform of child protection arrangements by the introduction of the 'Signs of Safety' approach
- Address intergenerational abuse whereby patterns of abusive behaviour transfer from one generation to the next, by the introduction of an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) informed approach to practice and culture
- **CSE**
- Ensure Services in Respect of Child Sexual Exploitation are effective across SBNI member agencies
- **E-Safety**
- Plan and implement a coordinated approach to e-Safety in Northern Ireland
- **Interfaith**
- Promote effective collaboration of stakeholders in ensuring children involved in the Faith sector are protected and safeguarded

SUMMARY UPDATE:

All of the aforementioned objectives have been undertaken the details of which are noted in the main body of the report.

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

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

- Participate in the regional Stakeholder Assurance Group (SAG) and Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to ensure that the voice of children and young people is represented.

SUMMARY UPDATE:

The aforementioned objective has been undertaken the detail of which is noted in the main body of the report.

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

- 2.2 Objective: 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.

SUMMARY UPDATE:

The aforementioned objective has been undertaken the detail of which is noted in the main body of the report.

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

2.3 Objective: 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.

- Analyse the scoping of the current service provision for children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse
- Analyse the scoping of the training provided and the needs analysis to inform a training plan to support agencies working with children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse.

SUMMARY UPDATE:

All of the aforementioned objectives have been undertaken the details of which is noted in the main body of the report.

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

SUMMARY UPDATE:

The aforementioned objective has been undertaken the Neglect Sub-Group and it is awaiting confirmation of the specific Graded Care Profile which has agreed

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

SUMMARY UPDATE:

3 awareness raising products developed and circulated all member agencies to improve public awareness and understanding of neglect – infographics were also developed to assist in awareness raising event presentations.

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 Objective: 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
- Work with member agencies to 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 on neglect

SUMMARY UPDATE:

The aforementioned objective has been undertaken the detail of which is noted in the main body of the report in the Safeguarding Panels chapter.

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

- Agree a regional implementation for the use of the assessment tool
- Continue to circulate awareness raising materials to improve public awareness, understanding and action on neglect for children and young people, families and carers

SUMMARY UPDATE:

The aforementioned objective has been undertaken the detail of which is noted in the main body of the report and above.

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

- 4.1 **Objective: 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 **Objective: 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 **Objective: 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/partner agencies to identify how SBNI can support raising awareness of the effect of poor mental health on children and young people.
 - Support actions arising out of research in respect of mental health.
 - Disseminate CMR learning regarding the impact of poor mental health.
 - Work with member and partner agencies to identify how SBNI can support the recognition and response to the effects of poor mental health.
 - Work with member and partner agencies to identify how SBNI can support partner agencies in relation to the promotion of training on mental health.

SUMMARY UPDATE:

The aforementioned objectives have been undertaken the details of which are noted in the main body of the report in various chapters to include, Mental Health, CMR and Safeguarding Panels.

Glossary of Terms Chapter

ABW19	Anti-Bullying Week 2019
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
AIM	Assessment, Intervention and Moving on
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
CCEA	Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
CCMS	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CEC	Clinical Education Centre
CEOP	Child Exploitation Online Protection (Command)
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
CnAG	Conradh na Gaelige
CPSS	Child Protection Support Service
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CVS	Community and Voluntary Sector
CYPSP	Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
DE	Department of Education
DfC	Department for Communities
DfE	Department for the Economy
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
EOTAS	Education Other Than At School
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation

Gateway	the first point of contact for all new referrals to children’s social work services
GP/s	General Practitioner/s
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
LDSF	Learning and Development Strategy Framework
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
NCA	National Crime Agency
NCB	National Children’s Bureau
NIABF	Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum
NICON	Northern Ireland Confederation for Health and Social Care
NIRARG	Northern Ireland Regional ACE Reference Group
NRC	Northern Regional College
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
P&P	Policies and Procedures
PfG	Programme for Government
PHA	Public Health Agency
PPS	Public Prosecution Service
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
QUB	Queen’s University Belfast
RAMP	Risk Assessment Management Plan
RESWS	Regional Emergency Social Work Services
SAG	Stakeholders Assurance Group
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SBNI	Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland
SDB	Strategic Delivery Board
TIP	Trauma Informed Practice
ToR	Terms of Reference
UKCIS	United Kingdom Council for Internet Safety
UU	University of Ulster
VOYPIC	Voice Of Young People In Care
YJA	Youth Justice Agency