

See the adult, see the child

Working together when the health of adults could impact on the safeguarding of children

Guidance for adult and children's services

1. Introduction

1. In the Children Act 2004 there was a very clear message from the government that services should be working together around the needs of children, young people and their families. This will be better achieved through earlier identification, intervention and more effective information sharing. The needs of parents/carers should not be seen in isolation from those of children and young people. (*See the Adult, See the Child Swindon Protocol*)
2. A Government document “Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children” (March 2010) states “Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority, working in partnership with other public organisations, the voluntary sector, children and young people, parents and carers, and the wider community.” (page 9)
3. Within Devon there are the SAFER Golden Rules which emphasises that safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility.

By adhering to this guidance the support needs of parents/carers will be recognised through improved inter-agency work leading to improved outcomes for children.

4. This guidance will be used by:
 - a. Adult services where there are concerns around parenting capability of a client to provide appropriate care to an unborn child or young person who they are responsible for
 - b. Children and family services where there are concerns around appropriate care for an unborn baby, child or young person because of the adults own problems.
5. The guidance was developed by a multi-agency task and finish group.

2. Purpose

1. The purpose of this guidance is to improve and ensure effective inter-agency working for the safety and welfare of all children. In particular it relates to family issues of adult substance misuse, adult mental health, adult learning disability and domestic violence.
2. The guidance highlights the need to capture data around the needs of children with child protection concerns and ensures that all agencies work together to support parents and carers who have needs of their own to parent their children effectively.

Box 1: Some facts about Devon's vulnerable children

A case analysis of adult/carer needs in CAFs, Child Protection Plans and Serious Case Reviews within Devon has been undertaken. Parental needs around adult substance misuse, adult mental health needs, domestic violence, adult ill health/disability, single parents and parenting needs were examined

Highlights from the analysis are as follows:

Of 259 cases analysed where CAFs were undertaken:

- 14% had parental substance misuse noted
- 32% had adult mental health needs
- 22% had domestic violence noted

In 24% of cases 3 parental vulnerabilities were noted and in 12% of cases 4 parental vulnerabilities were noted.

Of 101 children with child protection plans analysed:

- 14% had adult disability/serious illness noted
- 43% had adult mental health needs
- 22% had adult drugs issues
- 36% had adult alcohol issues

In 26% of cases 3 parental vulnerabilities were noted and in 22% of cases 4 parental vulnerabilities were noted.

Of the 5 Serious Case Reviews that have been undertaken in Devon between 2007 and 2010 there was an issue of domestic violence in 3 cases, adult disability/serious illness in 1 case, mental health problems in 4 cases and substance misuse issues in 1 case.

Nationally, it is estimated that 200,000 children live in households where there is a known high risk case of domestic abuse and violence, with very many more affected at some point in time. Approximately 450,000 parents are estimated to have mental health problems; an estimated 250,000 – 350,000 children have parents who are problematic drug users, and around 1.3 million children live with parents who are thought to misuse alcohol (10) p 38.

In view of these high numbers of possible vulnerable unborn babies, children and young people it must be assumed that figures relating to parental issues within CAFs and Child Protection Plans are under reported. It is for this reason that Guidance between adult and children services around safeguarding is of such importance. It is vital that the whole workforce is aware of the possibilities of parental issues affecting the lives of their children or those they have responsibility for and work together to ensure that children are safe.

3. Processes

1. There are a range of processes within Devon to safeguard children within the County.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

2. Devon's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is currently being developed and will provide information sharing across all organisations involved in safeguarding – encompassing statutory, non-statutory and third sector sources. Essentially the hub will analyse information that is already known within separate organisations in a coherent format to inform all safeguarding decisions.
3. All partners will work together to provide the highest level of knowledge and analysis to make sure all safeguarding activity and intervention is timely, proportionate and necessary.
4. MASH focuses on three key functions:
 - Victim identification and early intervention
 - Harm identification and reduction
 - Coordinating partner agencies
5. Professionals will be making a MASH enquiry to a multi-agency team not a referral to children's social care. The outcome of the enquiry will be a referral to children's social care or CAF and signpost to Early Response Service (ERS).
6. Further information about MASH can be found on the Devon Safeguarding Children Board website on devon.gov.uk.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

7. The main aim of the MARAC is to reduce the risk of serious harm or homicide for a domestic abuse victim and to increase the safety, health and wellbeing of other victims, both adults and children. In a MARAC local agencies will meet to discuss the highest risk victims of domestic abuse in their area. Information about the risks faced by those victims, the actions needed to ensure safety, and the resources available locally are shared and used to create a risk management plan involving all agencies.
8. MARAC is open to any agency to refer cases to where high risk victims have been identified by using the CAADA/DASH Risk Assessment process. All relevant agency workers should be trained in the usage of this process and make referrals to the MARAC Co-ordinator accordingly. Cases that meet the High Risk threshold will be offered support by an IDVA. Those meeting medium risk will be offered support by Outreach Services.
9. From April 2009 to March 2010 a total of 703 cases have been discussed at MARAC in Devon; 907 children and young people were associated with their cases.
10. There is a high degree of overlap between the cases reviewed at MARAC and those that are known to adult services, such as drug and alcohol treatment services. Representation from services will help other agencies at the MARAC by providing information on the impact of the adult's behaviours and how to support those involved.

11. Agencies should receive a MARAC meeting agenda from the MARAC co-ordinator. All agencies should have a contact point within their organisation to identify and respond with relevant information to the MARAC group about individuals who are being discussed at the meeting.
12. Disclosures to the MARAC are made under the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act. Information can be shared when it is necessary to prevent a crime, protect the health and/or safety of the victim and/or the rights and freedoms of those who are victims of violence and/or their children. It must be appropriate to the level of risk of harm to a named individual or known household. (Toolkit for MARAC)
13. Further information is available at www.caada.org.uk and www.devon.gov.uk/adv-partnership.

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

14. MAPPA represents a set of arrangements to manage the risk posed by certain sexual and violent offenders. They bring together the Police, Probation and Prison Services in Devon and Cornwall into what is known as the MAPPA Responsible Authority.
15. A number of other agencies are under a 'duty to co-operate' with the Responsible Authority. These include: Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Health Trusts and Authorities, Youth Offending Teams, local housing authorities and certain registered social landlords, Jobcentre Plus, and electronic monitoring providers.
16. Offenders eligible for MAPPA are identified and information is gathered and shared about them across relevant agencies. The nature and level of the risk of harm they pose is assessed and a risk management plan is implemented to protect the public (Devon and Cornwall Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements Annual Report 2008-2009).
17. Again, the need for adult services to participate in MAPPA around the safeguarding of children and young people is vital. Further information can be found on www.devon-cornwall.police.uk or www.dcpa.co.uk.

Child Protection Meetings/Child in Need Meetings

18. Professionals working with adults with mental health problems, adults who are misusing drugs or alcohol, and adults where there is domestic violence and abuse must recognise the possible risk to all children. They must risk assess the effects of illness, disability or lifestyle and habits on the children of patients/clients who are parents or carers and make a referral to MASH where concerns are identified. If necessary, a further risk assessment should be carried out in consultation with Children and Young People's Services and the Police. If adult services are to attend or prepare reports as much notice as possible should be given to agencies by children and family services.
19. All professionals within Devon should refer to the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Group website on <http://swcpp.org.uk> or the Devon Safeguarding Children Board website on www.dscb.info for further information

Common Assessment Framework

20. Devon Children's Trust states that the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a key part of the Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme. The aim is to identify, at the earliest opportunity additional needs which are not being met by the universal services children are receiving, and provide timely and co-ordinated support to meet those needs.
21. The CAF is voluntary and consent-based. It is underpinned by a partnership approach between families and practitioners, with emphasis on family-based decision-making. The CAF assesses the strengths and needs of the child and their family, and families play a big part when developing an action plan for meeting any identified additional needs.
22. Although it may not be considered appropriate for adult services to commence a CAF as they do not work specifically with the child/young person contact should be made with the Early Response Service for consideration that a CAF should be commenced
23. The Early Response Service should have contact details of professionals in adult services that can input into the CAF process and aid any action plan that is put in place.

4. Confidentiality and information sharing

1. If unborn babies, children and young people are to be safeguarded agencies need to work together to share information. Learning Lessons from Serious Case Reviews: Year 2 states “Clear processes for communication and information sharing across different remits within children’s services, and across adult and children, are vital where there are child protection concerns in families”
2. There have been historical concerns over the issues of when and how to share information. The Government have issued several documents around sharing information: Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers (HM Government 2008). Alongside this document other information can be found on www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/informationsharing. A further publication “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused” (Appendix 3 - Information sharing) can also be downloaded from www.everychildmatters.gov.uk.
4. In addition to the above the Code of Practice for sharing children and young people’s information is available on www.devonchildrenstrust.org.uk. Partnership contact officers for advice on information sharing are also available on this site.

Box 2: Information sharing requirements

All staff in adult and children services should be made aware of their responsibilities around confidentiality and safeguarding. It is critical that all practitioners, whether working with children or adults are in no doubt that that where have reasonable cause to suspect that a child or young person may be suffering significant harm or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, they should always make a MASH enquiry to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. Practitioners should discuss any concerns with the family and, where possible, seek their agreement to make a MASH enquiry.

This should only be done where such discussion and agreement seeking will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm. The child’s interest must be the overriding consideration in making such decisions

Where a child is not suffering significant harm parental permission should always be sought for the sharing of information. Parents should be made aware that information will be shared between partner agencies in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub to ensure that their child is safeguarded and to ensure than an appropriate, timely and informed decision is made regarding any services their child may need. Parents need to be made aware that if a social care referral is not required, the MASH enquiry will be shared with the Early Response Service, to support any assessment made under the Common Assessment Framework. Emphasis should be put on the help and support which can be accessed by the family as a result of sharing information with other agencies.

5. Workforce development

1. The importance of inter-agency training cannot be emphasised enough. Adult and children workers attending safeguarding training together not only encourages all workers to understand the issues from all perspectives but also encourages a collaborative approach for the future.
2. It has been recognised, within the County, that large numbers of staff require safeguarding training. As a positive response to this an e-learning addition to training is being implemented. "Working Together to Safeguard Children" highlights the need for inter-agency training and has suggested target groups, training content, methods and includes the responsibilities around training for the employer, LSCB and Children's Trust. (Pages 125-131).

Box 3: Workforce development requirements

All staff working with children, young people and their carers should receive core multi-agency safeguarding training and refresher + training in the context of the staff members work within a three year period.

Appropriate staff should receive training around the CAF process, Domestic Violence, the MARAC process, the MAPPA process and MASH to a level commensurate with their involvement.

It is recommended that staff in adult services should attend training on the wider needs of the family and the impact of parenting.

It is recommended that staff in children services should attend training on the specific issues of adult mental health, substance misuse, domestic abuse and learning disability.

Agencies need to provide evidence that their workforce have the appropriate skills and knowledge to work within the family to improve outcomes with an understanding that parents want to be good parents and may need help and support to do so.

6. Initial assessment process

1. In order to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of children within the County is considered a priority it is essential that adult services are aware of clients parental responsibilities. This includes biological parents, parent figures eg step parents, carers, cohabitees and should include not only those who are living with children but also those that have sole caring responsibilities.
2. It is also essential that any assessment of needs of a child or young people consider the needs and issues of the family and wider networks as a whole.
3. Children and young people practitioners when undertaking assessments (whether child protection or CAF) will consider the wider issues of those people who are involved in the child or young person's life in relation to safety and wellbeing including caring responsibilities of the child and should consider whether onward referral to adult specialist support would be beneficial eg mental health.

Box 4: Initial assessment requirements

All practitioners working with adults when undertaking assessments will ascertain and record if they are pregnant, a parent or have parental responsibilities including children not currently living with them. Practitioners will seek to get permission from clients to share information with those agencies that can improve outcomes for their own and their family's situation as soon as possible. Practitioners will also be aware of the possible need to share information if there are changes in the family's situation which may have implications to safeguarding of children. This also includes assessments on pregnant women.

Concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children

4. If any practitioner has concerns about a child's welfare these should be discussed with manager when a decision as to further actions should be decided upon. Other agencies can be contacted for general guidance if considered useful. If concerns are still apparent a referral should be made to appropriate service.

Box 5: Concern about the safety and wellbeing of children

If a practitioner has any safeguarding concerns about a child (whether or not they have had actual contact with the child) further action should be taken following discussions with manager.

All agencies should have current information as to referral pathways.

If any adult agency considers that a CAF would be appropriate they should contact a named practitioner in the Early Response Services to provide information about the child. This needs to be done with the consent of the family.

If a child and family service undertake a CAF for an unborn baby, child or young person adult services should be contacted with the agreement of the family in addition to contacting other children and young people agencies to gain further information.

7. Attending meetings

1. As highlighted above there are a range of meetings which may be instigated around the safety and well being of unborn babies, children and young people. Supporting of families where there are multiple risks need to be an integral part of all work and it is therefore important that all agencies involved with any member of the family have the opportunity to expand on their understanding of the family set up.
2. If adult services are working with individuals that children and young people services have discussed with them the sharing of information should be undertaken. In CAF situation the family will already have given consent for sharing of information.
3. Any agencies that are asked to attend meetings in relation to safeguarding issues of children should do so if at all possible. If it is not possible a report should be submitted prior to the meeting.

Box 6: Requirements for attending meetings

Any assessments on young people will cover issues around parental needs and adult services will be contacted and asked for further information.

All services will provide information which relates to the safeguarding of the child.

If asked to attend meetings all agencies will endeavour to do so. A written report must be provided and sent to CYPS 48 hours prior to the meeting. If it is not possible a report will be submitted to the meeting administrator prior to the meeting. Minutes of meetings that are held will be passed to all agencies that have been requested to attend meetings. Adult services will be given as much notice as possible if asked to attend meetings or provide reports

On occasions adult agencies may be asked to give professional guidance on parental issues when the person in question is not a client.

8. Working with the family

1. Referrals from children and young people services to adult services will be given priority given by adult services when safeguarding issues are identified. If taken on as client the service will specifically assess the impact of parental capability in relation to the issue. The service will also ensure that appointments are made at a time and venue appropriate for the service user taking into account parental responsibilities and child care needs.
2. Reports for follow up meetings will be written.
3. If child protection plans (or team around the child plans) are in place adult services will inform children and family services of any changes that have occurred which may affect the safety and wellbeing of the child without waiting for a meeting. This will include results from any drug testing that has been agreed with Adult drug treatment services.

Box 7: Requirements for working with the family

Children Services will refer appropriate adults to adult services and will liaise with adult services around required information for meetings on an ongoing basis. Children Services will give adult services as much notice as possible of meeting dates. If circumstances change around the family settings children's services will inform adult services.

Adult services will prioritise referrals from children and family services if it is considered there is a safeguarding issue. Adult services will take into consideration child care responsibilities and ensure that meetings take place in a child friendly environment if it is necessary for children to be present at an appropriate time. Adult services will inform children and family services immediately if there are changes in the family circumstances that could affect the safeguarding of children.

Children and family services will ensure that adult services are aware of any action plans relating to adult treatment requirements that are put in place. Adult services will collaborate with children and family services to ensure that any actions required are fulfilled.

9. Management of safeguarding provision

1. To ensure that safeguarding of children is considered a priority it is essential that supervisors of all staff have appropriate training to understand specific issues that may arise and that safeguarding is discussed at all supervisions.
2. Within supervision, managers should be aware of stereotypes and prejudices which exist around adults who use drugs/alcohol or have other additional needs. Professionals should be sensitive to differing family patterns, lifestyles and child-rearing practices which can vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. However, all professionals must be clear that child abuse or neglect, caused deliberately or otherwise, cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons.
3. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that there are identified named workers who can be contacted by other agencies for information sharing and for expert advice and guidance. This applies to all adult services and children and family services. It is likely that there should be a named person in each locality who takes on this responsibility.
4. Within adult partnership groups, eg Commissioning Groups, representatives from children and family services should be represented and 'families' should be an agenda item at all meetings.
5. Representatives from all agencies should attend the DSCB subgroups such as Health, Substance Misuse and Domestic Violence and Abuse to ensure that issues around Serious Case Reviews and Multi-agency safeguarding audits can be discussed and recommendations taken forward.
6. Individual agencies should ensure that there are performance monitoring arrangements in place to check that the Protocol is in place and being adhered to.

The overall effectiveness of the Protocol will be checked within the DSCB multi-agency audit process. The Protocol needs to be reviewed on an annual basis and signed off by all duty to cooperate agencies.

Box 8: Requirements for management of safeguarding provision

All supervising managers in agencies should attend training to ensure that safeguarding within the family is considered within all care pathways and takes account of differing racial, ethnic and cultural groups.

All agencies should ensure that there is a named contact person within their locality, which is known to other services, for information sharing and information/guidance.

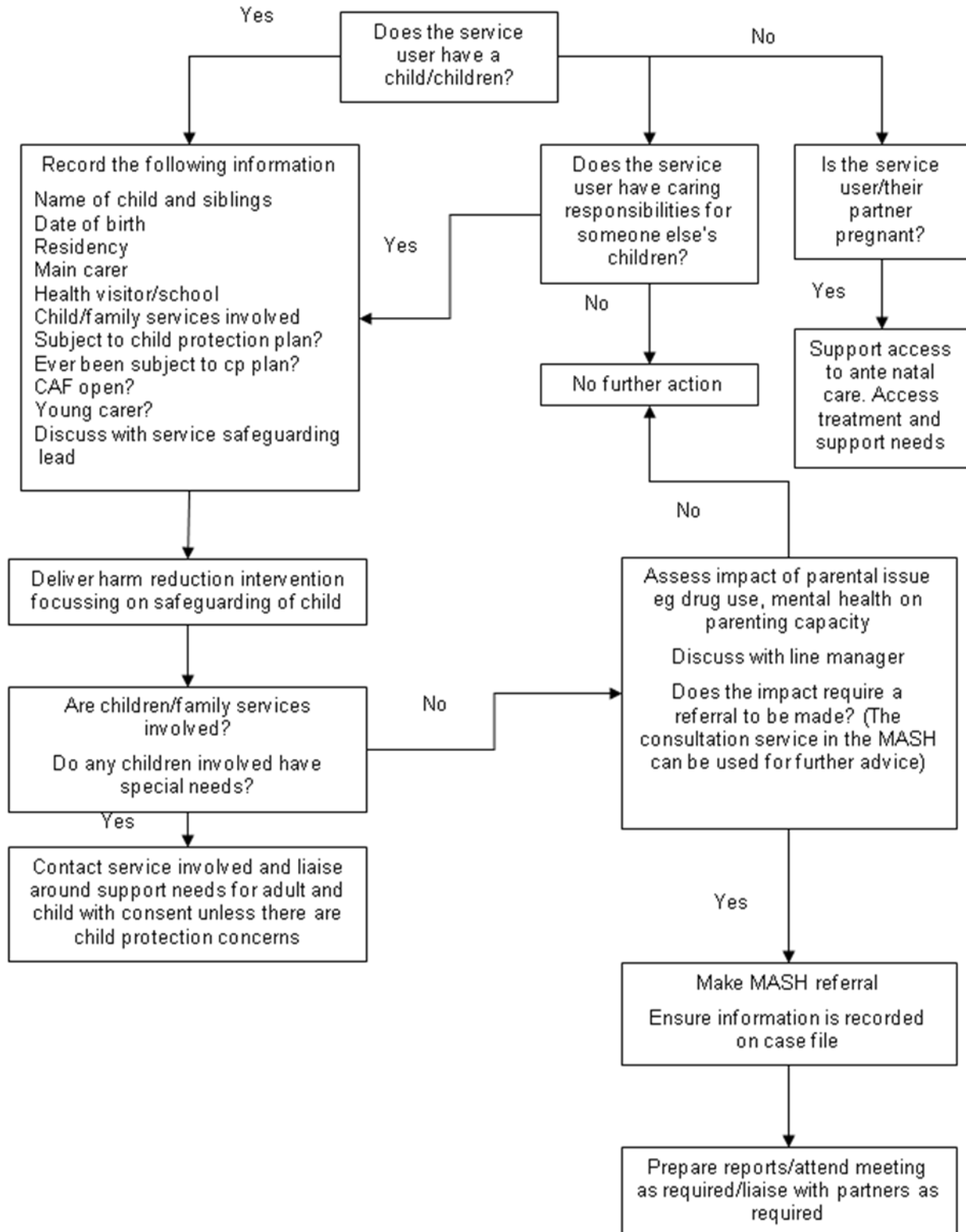
All agencies should ensure that there is a representative to attend partnership meetings in different agencies and that 'families' and safeguarding is a standing agenda item. Individual agencies will ensure that the Guidance is in place and being adhered to.

The Devon Safeguarding Children Board should arrange an outcome monitoring audit of safeguarding issues in relation to the Guidance to ensure that it is being used effectively

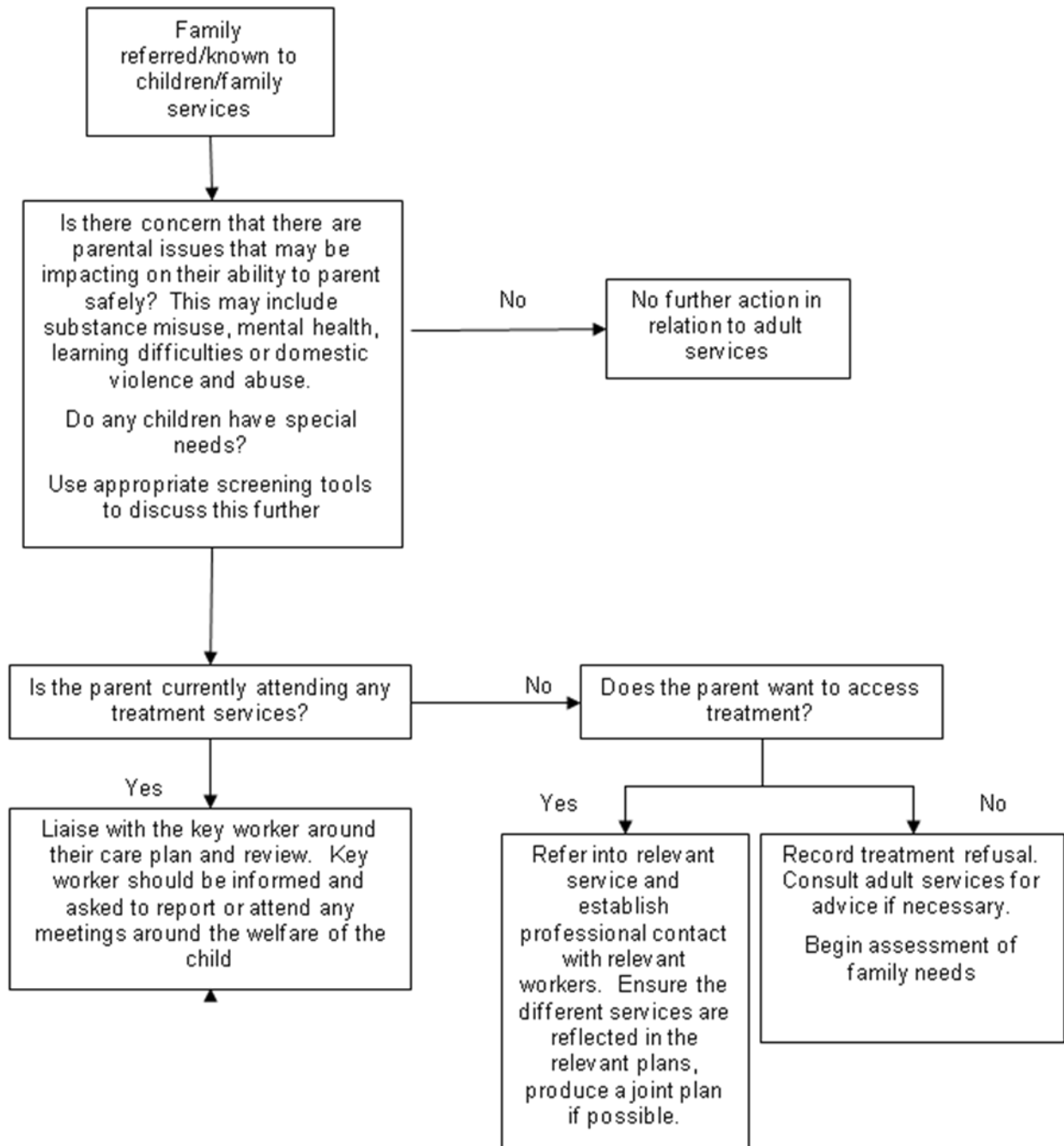
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Flow chart for adult services



Flow chart for children and family services



The Golden Rules

Devon safeguarding golden rules for multi-agency working to safeguard children and young people from harm



Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility

If you work with children, young people and their families or carers you have a responsibility to safeguard. These golden rules will make everyone SAFER.

S

Share information

- Communicate concerns across agencies involved with the child and family.
- Attend and participate in conferences, core groups, reviews and meetings.
- Do not use data protection as a barrier.
- Seek advice if in doubt.
- Record your decision as to why you share or do not share information.

A

Assess risk

- Always be child-centred in assessments.
- Use evidence to analyse risk and protective factors.
- Maintain a multi-agency focus, include all children, read the history and identify recurring patterns.

F

Focus on the child

- Use multi-agency guidance policy and procedures.
- Record the child's wishes feelings and behaviour.
- Listen to what the child is saying.
- Do not take adult explanation of injuries at face value; have the confidence to challenge.
- Plans for children must be SMART.

E

Evidence all decision making

- All professions must know who to go to with safeguarding concerns.
- Supervision must be regular and robust.
- Managers must have regular oversight of case files.

R

Recording is paramount

- Records must be legible, accurate, dated, and signed.
- Records must contain up to date information about the child.
- Share records as appropriate.



Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub service

Do you have concerns about a child?

Are you unsure whether to make a social care referral?

The MASH provides a consultation service to all professionals to consider if the concerns they have about a child or young person need to be addressed through an enquiry to the MASH.

The service will discuss the concerns you have without sharing identifying information about the child or young person, therefore consent to share information from the parents / carers is not required at this stage.

If the concerns do require MASH enquiry, the practitioner will provide advice and signposting. This is not a referral taking facility and MASH enquiries will still need to be directed to a referral coordinator in the MASH.

You can contact the service on:

0345 155 1071 Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00 (Friday 4.00pm)

Useful contacts and further information:

Devon Safeguarding Children Board website: www.dscb.info

South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Group: www.swcpp.org.uk

Partnership contact officers for advice on information sharing:
www.devonchildrenstrust.org.uk

MASH (Referral Coordinators) 0345 1551071

Early Response Service:

North Devon

01271 386255

Mid/East Devon and Exeter

01392 383764/01392 383768

South Devon:

0845 860666

Adult mental health service:

DPT Adult Mental Health Wellbeing and Access:

WBA - Barnstaple - 01271 378781

WBA - Bideford - 01237 472379

WBA - Crediton - 01363 778600

WBA - Exeter - 01392 207799 or 207798

WBA - Exmouth - 01392 280300

WBA - Honiton - 01404 540100
WBA - Ilfracombe - 01271 866349
WBA - South Hams & West Devon - 01752 891700
WBA - Tavistock - 01822 610159
WBA - Teignbridge - 01392 388230
WBA - Tiverton - 01884 235710

To make a referral to Devon Drug Service:

Exeter, East and Mid - 01392 492360
South Devon Services (Teignbridge, South Hams and West Devon) - 01626 351144
North Devon Services – 01271 859044

To make a referral to Devon Alcohol Service:

**Referral Co-ordinator Devon
Devon Alcohol Service
1st Floor.
3 The Courtyard
New North Road
Exeter EX4 4EP**

Tel:(Referrals only) 08451 302605

Email:AlcoholReferralDevon@addaction.org.uk

To make a referral to Domestic Violence services:

MARAC Coordinator:

High risk: IDVA
Medium risk: Agencies should complete the referral form provided by either:
North Devon Women's Aid (NDWA);
Stop Abuse for Everyone (SAFE); or
Domestic Violence and Abuse Services (DVAS)
According to geographic area

Learning Disability Services

Health named professionals for child protection details.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ADVA	Against Domestic Violence and Abuse
AMH	Adult Mental Health
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
DDS	Devon Drug Service
DPT	Devon Partnership Trust
DSCB	Devon Safeguarding Children Board
ERS	Early Response Service
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
SCR	Serious Case Review
TAC	Team Around the Child
WBA	Well Being and Access

Useful references

Building on the learning from serious case reviews: A two year analysis of child protection database notifications 2007-2009 Department of Education 2010

The Munro Review of Child Protection Part One: A Systems Analysis (Professor Eileen Munro Department for Education 2010)

See the Adult, See the Child Protocol (Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Swindon Integrated Working Guidance Appendix 9 October 2009)

Safeguarding the Young and Vulnerable The Joint Chief Inspectors' recommendations and the Government's responses one year on (DCSF 2009)

Joint Working Protocol Safeguarding children whose parents/carers use drugs/alcohol or have mental health needs (Autumn 2008 Hampshire County Council)

Working Together to safeguard children A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children March 2010 (DCSF)

Joint Guidance on Development of Local Protocols between Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services and Local Safeguarding and Family Services (2009 DCSF/NTA/DH)

Learning Lessons from Serious Case Reviews: Year 2 (2009 Ofsted)

Inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services Devon County Council (Ofsted August 2009)

The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report The Lord Laming March 2009

Information sharing: Guidance for practitioners and management (HM Government 2008)

Achieving equity and excellence for children (DH) 2010

Safeguarding children A review of arrangements in the NHA for safeguarding children (Care Quality Commission) July 2009

Aiming High for children: supporting families HM Treasury Dfes March 2007

Evaluating the evidence. What works in supporting parents who misuse drugs and alcohol (National Academy for Parenting Practitioners)

Children talking to ChildLine about parental alcohol and drug misuse (NSPCC August 2010)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HM Government 2006)

Local References

Devon Safeguarding Children Board Business Plan 2010/13

Children's Trust Children and Young People Needs Assessment 2010

Safeguarding Children Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Feb 2010

Case Analysis of Adult/carer needs in CAF, CPP and SCRs

Together Everyone Achieves More (DCC CYPS September 2010)

NSPCC Consultancy services GOSW Project Overview of serious case reviews – final report 2009