

Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board

Autumn Bulletin 2020

Welcome to the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board's Autumn Bulletin 2020. This year has been something like we have never experienced before. Agencies have worked extremely hard to maintain the high level of service that they've always provided, under exceptional circumstances.

At the beginning of the lockdown, the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Safeguarding Board produced a strategic response to ensure that safeguarding continued to remain everybody's business whilst our partner agencies and services cope with the Covid-19 pandemic.

As a Board, whilst we realised that we were facing a set of unprecedented circumstances, with the depletion of front-line staff due to social distancing and self-isolation, we continued to work hard to uphold our statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of our most vulnerable, who were in ever-increasing need of protection.

The Joint Chairs of the Board would like to commend and support all of those committed staff and volunteers who were working with the most vulnerable and delivering essential services at such a difficult and exceptional time.

It was recognised that the impact of Covid-19 on the wellbeing of our most vulnerable children and young people may be significant and could result in an increased risk of:

- Abuse and/or Neglect
- Domestic Abuse
- Parental substance misuse
- Illness/Isolation
- Poor mental health
- Poverty

Quickly put into place were measures that would ensure that children, young people and adults in RCT, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend were safeguarded as well as they possibly could be during lockdown.

These included:

Silver (regional) and Bronze (local) Command groups being established to

- Co-ordinate the critical safeguarding activities of our partner agencies.
- Providing weekly reports to Gold Command and the Regional Safeguarding Board on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, highlighting any risks or issues requiring escalation
- Receiving guidance from Welsh Government and the National Independent Safeguarding Board to ensure that the statutory duties of the Board were being fulfilled.



Gweithdrefnau Diogelu Cymru Wales Safeguarding Procedures

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures detail the essential roles and responsibilities for practitioners to ensure that they safeguard children and adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect.

These procedures are intended to guide safeguarding practice for all those employed in the statutory, third (voluntary) and private sector in health, social care, education, police, justice and other services.

The new Wales Safeguarding Procedures were launched on 11th November, 2019. There will be no printed copies of the procedures. Instead they will be available to everyone online, either via the dedicated [Wales Safeguarding Procedures website](#) or the mobile app which will be available for both iPhone and Android devices.

You can also find information on the Procedures on the Safeguarding Board's [website](#), including:

- [Wales Safeguarding Procedures – 7 Minutes Briefing](#)
- [What's different between the All Wales Child Protection Procedures and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures?](#)



A campaign to raise awareness that men can be victims of domestic abuse has been developed by the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board, in collaboration with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg VAWDASV (Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) Steering Group.

This was in response to a recommendation from a Domestic Homicide Review into the death of a man in the Cwm Taf area due to domestic violence.

The campaign, which has been named “Any Man Can...” aims to highlight the issue of domestic abuse against men and to raise awareness of where they can go for information, advice and support in Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend.

A communications toolkit, which can be accessed via this [link](#), has been developed to provide partners with digital materials to assist them in raising awareness of this campaign. If you haven’t already done so, please use the information and graphics available within your agencies on any communications channels you have available.

‘In My House’ animation highlights child on parents/carers domestic abuse



With the support of the Safeguarding Board, Safer Merthyr Tydfil and Merthyr Tydfil Youth Services, the Merthyr Tydfil Borough Wide Youth Forum produced an animation aiming to raise awareness about domestic abuse and violence by children and young people toward parents/carers.

The animation – ‘In My House’ – looks at some of the causes and consequences of child on parent domestic abuse, along with details of where to go for help and support.

The animation was due to be accompanied by a toolkit and launched through a regional event. Unfortunately, the event was cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. Despite the restrictions, the young people felt it was important that their message was aired, therefore the animation was uploaded to Facebook, Twitter and websites.

On Twitter the animation has gained 710 impressions, 5 media views, has had a total of 36 engagements and 3 re-tweets.

The original Facebook post by MTBWYF the animation gained a reach of 1877 people, 14 shares and 5 engagements. The second post by MTBWYF OF the animation has reached 1855 people, 8 shares and has had 43 engagements.

The animation was also uploaded on to the Board’s Facebook page and has been viewed 1,683 times.

Finally, the animation has been shared with the Welsh Government, Safe Lives, National Independent Safeguarding Board and the Victims Commissioners’ Group.

To view ‘In My House’, please select this [link](#).



Welsh Government has published an [action plan](#) on tackling Child Sexual Abuse (CSA), including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB).

Included in this National Plan are actions for Regional Safeguarding Board partners who have a lead role in the implementation of this Plan.

One action is the promotion of Stop It Now! Wales and its campaign - ‘Child sexual abuse prevention – It’s time we talked about it’.

Stop It Now! Wales is a child sexual abuse prevention project that works across the country to ensure that parents, carers and professionals are as best placed as they can be to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

Stop It Now! Wales is run by the child protection charity The Lucy Faithfull Foundation and are currently running a campaign across Wales called 'Child sexual abuse prevention – It's time we talked about it'.

Along with raising awareness of child sexual abuse, including where the risks lie, it aims to spread awareness that sexual abuse can happen to any child. It aims to make people aware that perpetrators take advantage of the fact that sexual abuse is a taboo subject to abuse children and to silence them. That means that by being aware that sexual abuse can and does happen, everyone in the community can help to keep children safe.

We want to encourage individuals across communities to talk about child sexual abuse in a safe way which is supportive of victims, and to encourage the public to report any concerns they have that a child is at risk.

Sexual abuse can have a devastating impact on childhoods and throughout life. We must work together to do everything we can to prevent child sexual abuse, to protect children at risk and to support children to recover from the significant harm that sexual abuse causes.

Please help to support this campaign by promoting it on the communications channels available to you. The materials can be accessed by selecting this [link](#).

Safeguarding Week 2020

Safeguarding Week will be taking place this year from 16th to 20th November, with 'Suicide Prevention' being the theme for Cwm Taf Morgannwg. If you are planning any activities or events in relation to suicide prevention or any other safeguarding issue, please complete and return this form to beth.melhuish@rctcbc.gov.uk by Monday, Friday, 9th October.

First Virtual Learning Event a Success

During lockdown, the Safeguarding Board held its first ever virtual learning event. A learning event takes place as part of the process of an Adult or Child Practice Review and involves all practitioners who have had involvement with the case so that they can share their understanding of what has happened and identify key learning points.

The chair of the review was located in a venue along with one of the reviewers and the practitioners involved were in other venues with the panel members from their agencies, who were there to offer support if required.

Almost all attendees felt that, given the circumstances, this learning event was much better than expected, with plenty of opportunities for discussion.

The event did have a minor 'glitches' in technology prior to the start, however these were rectified quickly. It has also been noted that more time needs to be allocated for future events such as this.

There are clear benefits in that agencies can access their own information and systems while contributing virtually, in addition to the time and money that is saved by the reduced need for travel. The reduction in travelling time also allows people from wider geographical areas to be included more easily.

Several respondents felt that provided the attendees are supported at their venue, this is a good way to hold events and think that these events should be held more often as they are a great learning tool for agencies.

Annual Plan

The Safeguarding Board has published its Annual Plan for 2019/20, which includes the priorities which the Board will focus on and how they will be achieved.

The priorities are:

1. Enhance and promote a learning culture where the Board can evidence the difference it is making to safeguarding practice.
2. To have in place a fully integrated, functioning regional Safeguarding Board.
3. Improve communication and strengthen structural links with other Partnerships in the region in relation to areas of common concern.
4. Improve the way in which we engage and promote participation with our communities.

To view the Plan, please select this [link](#).

Annual Report

Every year, the Safeguarding Board is required to publish a report on its performance by 31st July. Due to disruption caused by Covid-19, we have been granted an extension which means that this year, the report can be published on 30th September.

The Report highlights the work that the Board has undertaken during in pursuit of its aim to ensure that the people of Cwm Taf are safeguarded from abuse, neglect or other forms of harm.

Once published, the Report will be available on this [page](#) of the Board's website.

Twitter

The Safeguarding Board was pleased to launch its Twitter account this summer, which provides an excellent opportunity to reach even more people and provide important information on safeguarding issues. Please follow us by searching @CTMSB1.



The Board also has a Facebook page and can be found by searching Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board. This is also updated daily. Please give it a 'like'.

Should you have any queries regarding the above, or if you have any information you would like included on the Board's website, Facebook, Twitter or future bulletins, please contact ctmsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk