

Welcome

to the 2024-25 Children & Young people's Annual Report

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership

The voice of children and young people making a difference!

Our Voices Help...



Make Change Happen!



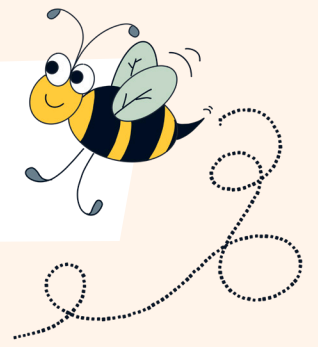
Norfolk Safeguarding
Children Partnership



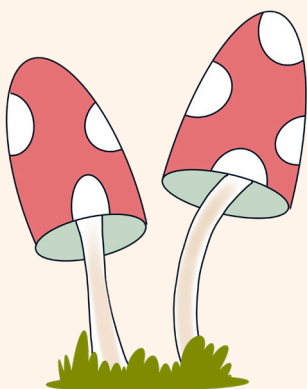
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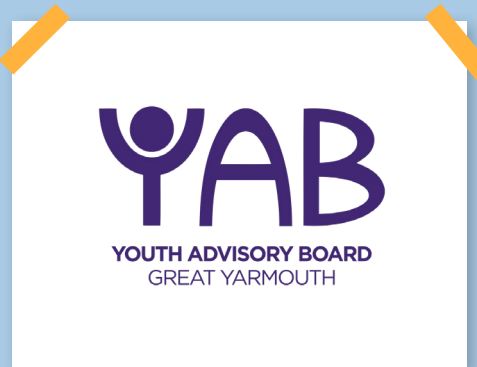
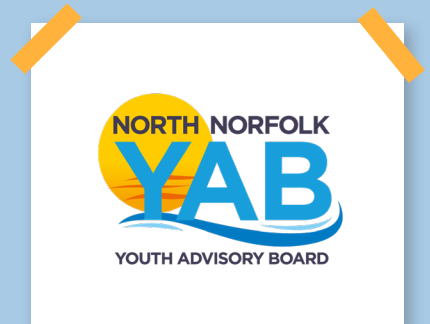
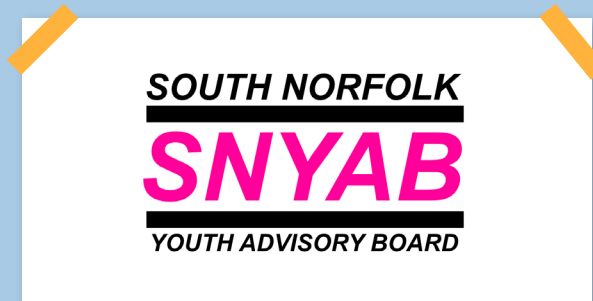


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Introduction: About Us!

Welcome to the children and young people's annual report for the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). Young people with a wide range of experience and different backgrounds worked with members of the NSCP Business Unit and Participation Officers to co-produce this report. We are happy to share our understanding and experience of safeguarding so we can help the partners appreciate what it's like to be child or young person growing up in Norfolk today.



Introduction: About Us!

This version of the annual report serves as an executive summary with our thoughts and experiences highlighting what we think needs to happen to keep us safe. Professionals should also see the full report for more detail on the NSCP's achievements and challenges in 2024-25.



Governance: How does the NSCP work?

Arrangements for keeping children safe are included in a local plan for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA). This was published in November 2024 after the government updated the national guidance which is called Working Together. The named partners in this are: the Local Authority (Norfolk Children's Services), Police and Health. They work with lots of different partners, but this year there has been a big change....



Tom McCabe



Sara Tough OBE



Tracey Bleakley



Paul Sanford



Chris Balmer



Tricia D'Orsi



And Introducing... Education as the Fourth Partner!

Education plays one of the most important roles in most children's lives. There are over 400 schools in Norfolk and one school can't represent everyone so we now have a group of dedicated school leaders to help the other partners understand how schools help keep children safe.

There are representatives to cover all ages, including Further Education, and they help get safeguarding messages out to all the other schools in Norfolk. The school leaders are:

Primary



Jessica Balardo

Secondary



Jon Ford

Special Schools



Amanda Fewkes

Further Education



Helen Richardson-Hulme

All the named partners also work with other professionals from a wide range of backgrounds, like housing and voluntary groups, so that together we can protect Norfolk children from harm and help them to flourish.





Key Messages

“

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Working together is really important. Communication and talking to each other makes this happen. It's more than a dialogue – make it a multi-logue!

”

“

We have to have confidence and trust in support services. Sometimes we just need one special person to make a difference.

”

“

Respect our stories and what we choose to share.

”



“

Get involved early on. Don't wait for something bad to happen. Prevent problems before they happen.

”

“

Take us seriously, don't lower your standards or talk down to us.

”



“

Be patient with us.

”



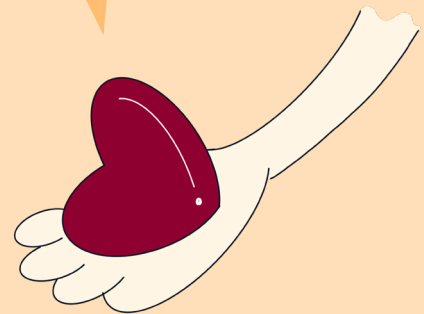
“ Model self-care and taking care of yourself. We can learn about working out our emotions if you show us the way so look after yourselves. ”

“ Understand difference and don't make assumptions. We all have different starting points and experiences. ”



“ Get all sides of a story. Need to understand root causes of behaviour and see different perspectives. Don't forget to work with people causing the problems e.g. bullies, not just victims. ”

“ Be interested. ”



“ Mental health is a safeguarding issue. It is huge and we need you to demonstrate you care. Remember lockdown? Learn from when we got it right. ”

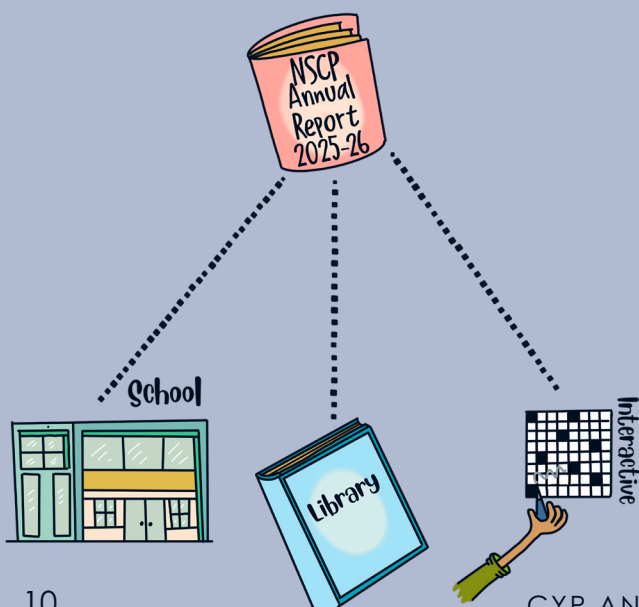
Our voices in practice

The NSCP is committed to hearing from children and young people. Last year, the children and young people's version of the annual report was awarded a Quality Mark by a panel of children and young people, but we asked the NSCP to do a bit more. There were three bits of really useful feedback:



Be more inclusive in co-producing this report. This year, we were joined by young people from Dragons (an advocacy and participation group of young people aged 13-25 yrs with SEND and/or neurologically diverse/developmental differences) as well as someone with care experience. The NSCP is supported by Children's Services Participation Team to get the invite out to as many young people as possible.

Tell us what you do with our feedback. In addition to sharing this report with lots of important people, like local politicians, very senior partners and other partnership boards, the NSCP's scrutiny team were interested in the observations we made last year about poor school attendance. They had a closer look at this and will be reporting back later in 2025.

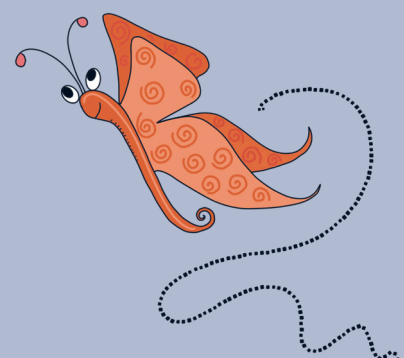


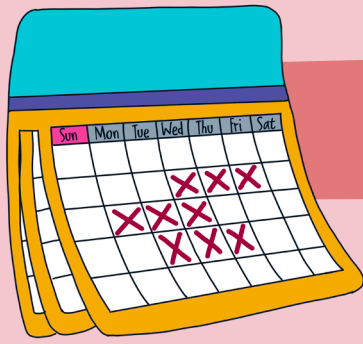
Make sure the report is shared more widely. The NSCP is going to work with schools and libraries to think about how we can make sure that this report is seen and understood. We also had a suggestion to make it more interactive so we have added some fun stuff at the end of this report!

The NSCP has also been listening directly to children in some of the other work that they do, both directly through the NSCP Business Unit or indirectly through partners. Some good examples this year were:



- Talking to young carers, children leaving care, young offenders and teenagers with special needs to understand what becoming an adult meant to them (otherwise known as transitional safeguarding) ☒
- Consulting with a Youth Advisory Board and a Parents steering group on a poster promoting Family Networking, which is really important for children. ☒
- Working with young people from Norwich City College's media department who not only made a film about exploitation but also got an award for this project! ☒



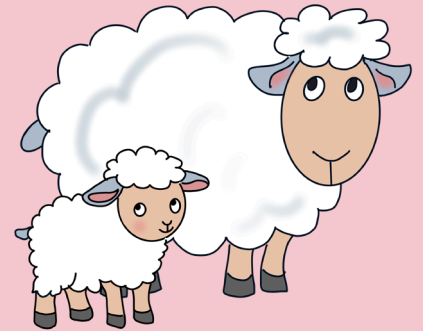


The year at a glance

APRIL

Safeguarding Practice Review: Talking with professionals who were trying to keep a child safe from harm. They were worried the parent might have been making her sick on purpose.

Voice of the Child: Hearing directly from different groups of teenagers who are about to become adults so that professionals can understand what is worrying them. (Transitional)



MAY

Father Inclusive Practice: Making sure that fathers are included in the lives of their children and helping them be the best possible parents they can be. This was highlighted through the launch of a series of radio shows called 12th Man Talking Dads.

Voice of the Child: Our annual workshop to produce this report!

JUNE

Governance— Making sure partners are on the same page. Every year the NSCP looks at its priorities. It was agreed to carry on prioritising neglect, exploitation and family & community networking.

Education as a Fourth Partner: Working with the government's Department of Education to agree how schools are represented in the local safeguarding arrangements.





JULY

Scrutiny – Taking a Closer Look. The NSCP scrutineers report back to the partners on what the young people and professionals told them about transitional safeguarding.

Priority – Neglect. A toolkit to help professionals working with families where neglect is a worry was launched in a series of workshops across the county.

Workforce Development: A best practice workshop held for safeguarding trainers to promote best practice.

AUGUST

Voice of the Child: The NSCP is awarded a Quality Mark for this report!

Priority – Neglect: Norfolk hosts a national summer leadership programme for professionals, including our learning about neglect.

Priority – Teenagers: The NSCP publishes a report on serious youth violence.

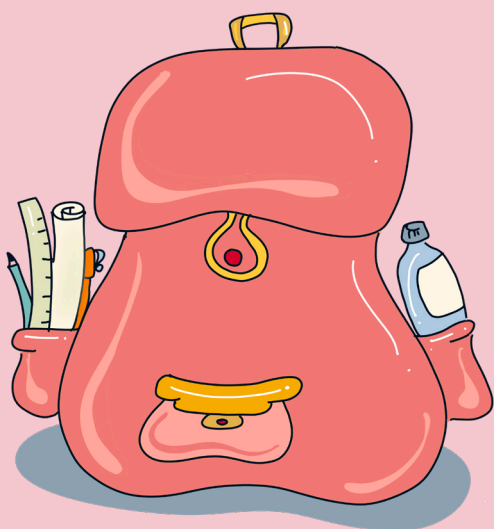


SEPTEMBER

Scrutiny – Taking a Closer Look: The NSCP worked with professionals who look after adults to make sure that we understand the problems and vulnerabilities as soon as they are raised. They call this risk assessment at the front door.

Voice of the Child: A film about child exploitation made by students from Norwich City Council wins a Flourish award.

Governance – Being Held to Account: The NSCP's annual report and this version of the report is presented to the Health & Wellbeing Board.



OCTOBER

Governance – Leadership & Learning: Partners brought together to understand how well we manage safeguarding risks at the front door.

Priority – Neglect: Professionals who identify as Neglect Champions have a Forum meeting to share best practice.



NOVEMBER

Governance – Duty: Norfolk's local plan for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements published on the NSCP website.

Innovation – Being Creative! Launched new procedures for Joint Agency Group Supervision. This is a space where professionals can come together and talk about their feelings and the emotional impact of keeping children safe.

Governance - Knowing Ourselves: Section 11 is a self assessment process where all agencies have to report on how well they think they are doing to keep children safe. Challenge and support days were held to check this. Multi-agency workshops were held to share good practice.

DECEMBER

Inspection! Four different inspectorates joined together to look at how well Norfolk partners protect children from domestic abuse. The report was published in February.

Safeguarding Practice Review – Learning: There was a review of a child who came from Bedfordshire but visited Norfolk. Sadly the child died and Norfolk had to understand the role we played in this case.

Innovation – Something New! Norfolk introduced the use of Multi-Agency Chronologies. This is a tool that helps families see what is happening over time including what works for them and when things get tricky. Leaders are proud of this work and made some films to help explain it. The films and other tools were published on the NSCP website.





JANUARY

Inspection! A report on the Youth Justice Service was published. This showed that staff helping children who might be getting involved with crime are doing a good job helping them get back on track.

Priority – Neglect. A tool to help understand how neglect might affect teenagers is developed.

FEBRUARY

Governance – Leadership & Learning: Partners, including professionals who work with adults, came together for a whole day's learning to think about how we help children into adulthood.

Safeguarding Practice Review: A review was completed about a child who was hurt. It won't be published until next year because the police have some more work to do but learning has started. (We will report more on this next year!)



MARCH

Priority – Teenagers: A conference about serious youth violence was held. The NSCP joined up with the Officer of Police and Crime Commissioner to think about how we can help prevent knife and other types of crime in the future.

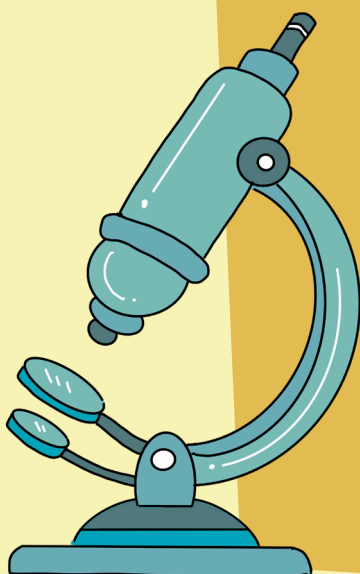
Father Inclusive Practice: The NSCP held a second conference showcasing all the work we have done to get better at working with fathers. Still have a lot of work to do, but we are making progress!

What Does Data Tell Us About

Being a Child or Young Person in Norfolk



The chapter on data in the full report is really comprehensive and interesting and looks at trends and patterns as well as how the NSCP uses data on understanding its priorities. Data use is important so that work is evidence based and helps us to recognise gaps and tailor services to address this, but it may not always tell us the whole story.



We looked closely at an average week in Norfolk.

The data tells us:
(see table on next page)

[Note: data about an average week taken from national returns and local systems, using the most recent data available, and using either the most recent snapshot figure or an average figure for the last 12 months].

Telling our story with data: the scale and range of safeguarding activity in Norfolk

In each week in Norfolk...

- In each week, in Norfolk, around **148** babies are born.
- There are around **189,000** children and young people aged 0-19, with around **125,000** attending schools.

Within the context of this, each week there are around:

Within Health services around:



- **1030** A&E attendances for Under-18s
- **370** for under-4s
- **17** acute hospital admissions caused by injuries for under-15s
- **3** acute admissions for mental health problems
- **2** for substance abuse

The Police:



- **8** children are screened for exploitation by the Police
- **99** Police investigations are started where domestic abuse is suspected and there is a child present
- **10** children and young people are stopped and searched, and around **19** are arrested

The Council:



- Around **950** contacts are made to the Children's Advice & Duty Services (CADS);
- around **265** from schools and education services
- around **188** from the Police
- **160** from members of the public
- **115** from health services

Where contacts suggest there may be a risk to the safety or wellbeing of a child, partners work together to agree the best course of action through formal safeguarding routes. Each week this means around:

- **65** referrals prompt a social work assessment, and around **47** prompt a multi-agency strategy discussion.
- **10** children start a Child Protection Plan, including around **2** who will have had a previous CPP. In addition, around **7** children will become looked after each week (with a similar number ceasing to be looked after).
- **2** children and young people entered the Youth Justice system for the first time.

All of this means that at any one time in Norfolk there are around:

440

children and young people with a Child Protection Plan

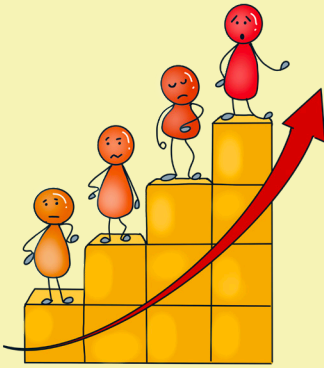
1,115

Looked After Children

145

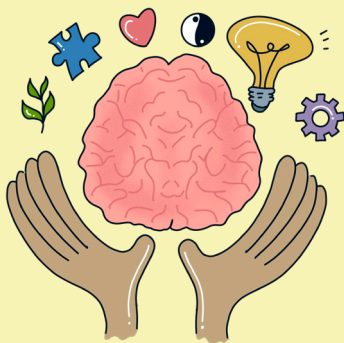
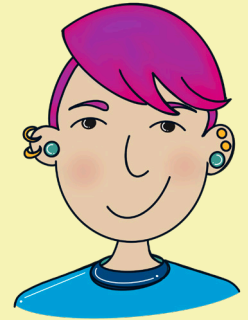
children and young people receiving Youth Justice Service interventions

Some of the things that caught our eye were:



- **Referrals:** The number of referrals is high. This tells us a lot people are struggling, but how many others are not seeking help? It is important to look at how we intervene early. Is there more data and evidence about early interventions?

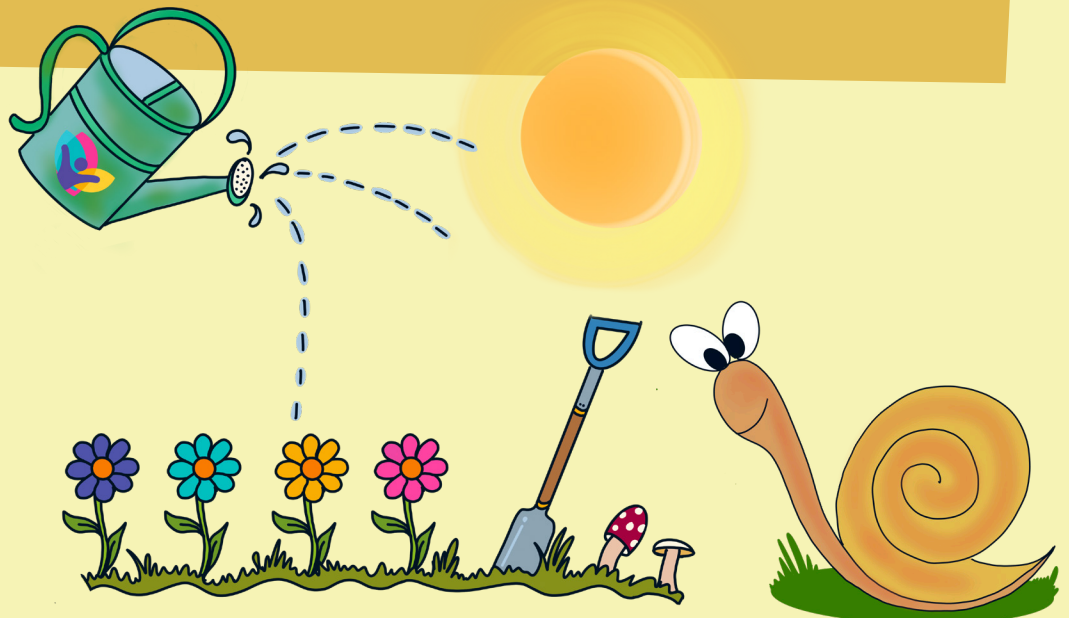
- **Safeguarding:** We would like to know how we compare with other LA's and compared with previous years. It would also be helpful if there were more of a gender breakdown to see if that tells us anything about how males, females and gender fluid children may present with different safeguarding issues.



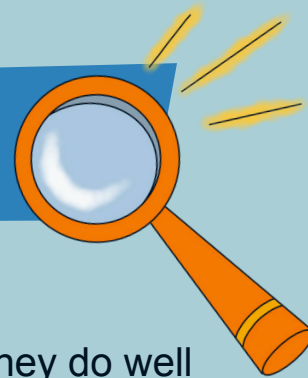
- **Mental health:** We know that mental health is a big issue for young people and is getting worse. Three acute mental health admissions seems low. Are we missing numbers or are we catching things early?

- **Domestic Abuse:** The levels of domestic abuse per week is worrying.

We also know that there was a lot of work done on a Flourish survey that captured our voices. There is more detail in the full report and we are interested in how the NSCP will use this information in the future.



An Inspector Calls!

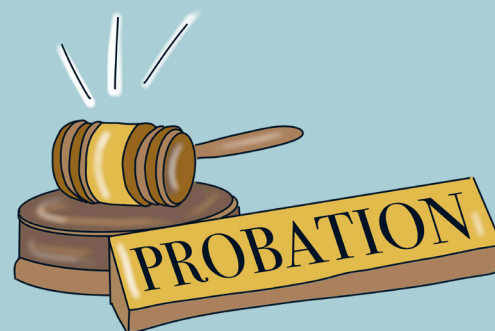


The partners really want to make sure that they know what they do well and what they need to work on. They invest well in an independent scrutiny team who have dedicated time to look at how well our safeguarding system works. The scrutineers do a great job reporting on things that partners and children are worried about, like becoming an adult or school attendance, and there is a long chapter about their work and the other ways we check the system in the full report.



This year, however, we were even busier and Norfolk had inspectors in a few times to give us external validation. Sometimes this was just for one agency, for example, the Police or Probation. Police are doing some things really well and have a few things to work on: their crime data is outstanding and they are good at preventing and deterring crime and anti-social behaviour, but they need to get a bit better at responding to the public and protecting vulnerable people.

Probation is the service that is responsible for people coming out of prison or who have suspended prison sentences. It is their job to help these people back on track while keeping the public safe. Earlier in the year, inspectors found that Probation needed to think more about any children who might be affected by these offenders.



The Youth Justice Service also had an inspection in the autumn. This is a service that helps young people who are at risk of, or are involved in, criminal behaviour. Inspectors talked about the staff being “creative”, “motivated” and going “above and beyond” to help these young people. This is great news! We really appreciate adults being curious about what drives behaviours and finding ways to help us manage.



And if that wasn't enough inspection in one year, then all the inspectors for health, social care, police and probation came together! In December there was something called a Joint Targeted Area Inspection, which meant that the inspectors were really interested in the way partners worked together. The targeted part was looking specifically at domestic abuse for children who were seven or younger. All the inspectors agreed that Norfolk has a lot of strengths but there were five things that partners need to work on, including the voice of the child. This is what we think about domestic abuse:



- Domestic abuse can change a child's path in life: it affects our self-esteem, our confidence and how safe we feel in the world
- Words in anger can lose context, leaving only fear
- It is really sad to see adult role models verbally and/or physically attacked
- The way people behave around children and young people influences us and you might see that in our behaviour.

Headlines from all the inspections can be found in the full report. We look forward to hearing what has happened as a result of this learning in the future.

The NSCP Priorities and Projects

The NSCP has three priorities - child exploitation, neglect and family & community networking– and some of our project work is directly linked to these tricky issues. The full report provides a lot of detail but here's what we thought about NSCP priorities this year.

● Child Exploitation

We understand that exploitation means when people, including children and young people, are used by others. When children get to secondary school we learn about this in our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons. We think that messages about exploitation need to be delivered by someone who cares about it and is engaging, maybe pastoral staff or someone from a safeguarding team. (Don't do it on a Friday afternoon!) We need to hear about difficult topics. Please recognise that we want to be responsible and need to be informed to make responsible decisions.



● Neglect

Neglect is generally a passive way of mistreating children by not giving them the care and attention that they need. It can be hard to recognise the harm which is why it needs to be prioritised so it is better understood. Even the person experiencing neglect may not recognise it! We need to be able to articulate what it is as well as find ways to work with a family over time, including slowing down so they don't feel pressured and extending the times we visit with them. It is extra important that we

hear the child's voice to understand whether a change is really happening. It is helpful if you include the family network so the child has access to as much love and support as possible, particularly if the child's parents or carers are having a bad time. The NSCP has also developed a tool called a Multi-Agency Chronology which helps professionals and families understand what is happening over time, identify patterns and deal with root causes.





● Family & Community Networking

We all want to be part of a loving family but for some families this might feel harder for lots of different reasons. The NSCP did some work on creating a communication campaign this year, in consultation with children and families, to help get the message across that it is okay to ask for help.

This priority area is also looking at how well we include fathers in safeguarding, it is important to hear dad's voices and get their perspectives. We are curious about when

and how dads learn about childcare. Do we have a hidden prejudice that men might be a bit useless? We see this on children's shows. We need dads to be equipped to be the role models to their children and the NSCP has done a lot of work to help professionals think differently about how they work with men and fathers.

● Talking About Safeguarding: Joint Agency Group Supervision

It is really important that people working in safeguarding have a chance to step away from the case and decompress. Most of these people really care about children and it is hard if you feel like you aren't making the difference you want to make or can't see change quickly enough or you just go to bed feeling worried about

J O I N T
A G E N C Y
G R O U P
S U P E R V I S I O N

children you might have seen during the day. The NSCP has also developed something called a Joint Agency Group Supervision (or JAGS) to give people some space where they can talk about their feelings and understand a bit more about how other professionals working with a child or family is feeling.

Sharing emotional responses can help professionals feel less alone, more supported, more hopeful and more connected to the child. Some people who have been involved in a JAGS have told us that it helped them think differently and they have better working relationships in the professional network. We think JAGS are a brilliant idea. We like that it is a co-ordinated approach and helps organisations work better together.



Learning and Training

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

In the full report there are two chapters that look at learning and training. This year we focused on what the NSCP has learned as a result of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. These are reports when the saddest thing has happened: a child or young person has died. The government says that Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships have to do these reviews in order to learn. This rule only applies to children under the age of 18 but Norfolk is determined to learn and so this year they did a review on an 18 year old who died from stabbing. We reflected on this case and learning about serious youth violence. We want professionals to know:

● The benefits of this approach to training and learning are:

- Parents and carers might not always see what's happening outside home and why young people behave the way they do.
- Explore the connection between violence and mental health? Maybe that's why young people don't open up.



- It's hard for all young people but especially for men and boys. Young men may think it's not okay to be emotional. It might be easier to express yourself at home, but outside you need to 'take it on the chin.' These stereotypical attitudes towards male identity might be getting better but typically boys want to be perceived as strong.
- Think about the importance of fitting in: don't forget to explore peer pressure and friendship groups: some young people can get lost in pursuit of being popular and centre of attention.

We also looked at a case where a baby died in Suffolk. This little girl came from Bedfordshire and travelled through Norfolk before she was killed. Some of us had heard about this case on the news and we talked about how the news affects us. We found it hard to imagine that someone could hurt a child like that and it made us feel really sad. It was difficult for all three areas to know how much danger the child was in while the family was on the move, which is why it is so important to share information and be curious when you are worried about children.



● Training and Applying the Learning:

The full report contains details of other review activity Norfolk has worked on this year. It also has a lot of detail about the training offer which pulls through the learning into safeguarding courses and other learning activities. From our perspective, we would like the NSCP and its partners to consider the following in all training:

- The importance of consistency: look to the people that stick with the children and if you can't commit, don't overpromise.
- If you have to move on, make sure you pass on the child's story and guard against information falling through the cracks.
- Give children time and space to work through things.
- Pay attention to disability: not all disability is visible.





In conclusion

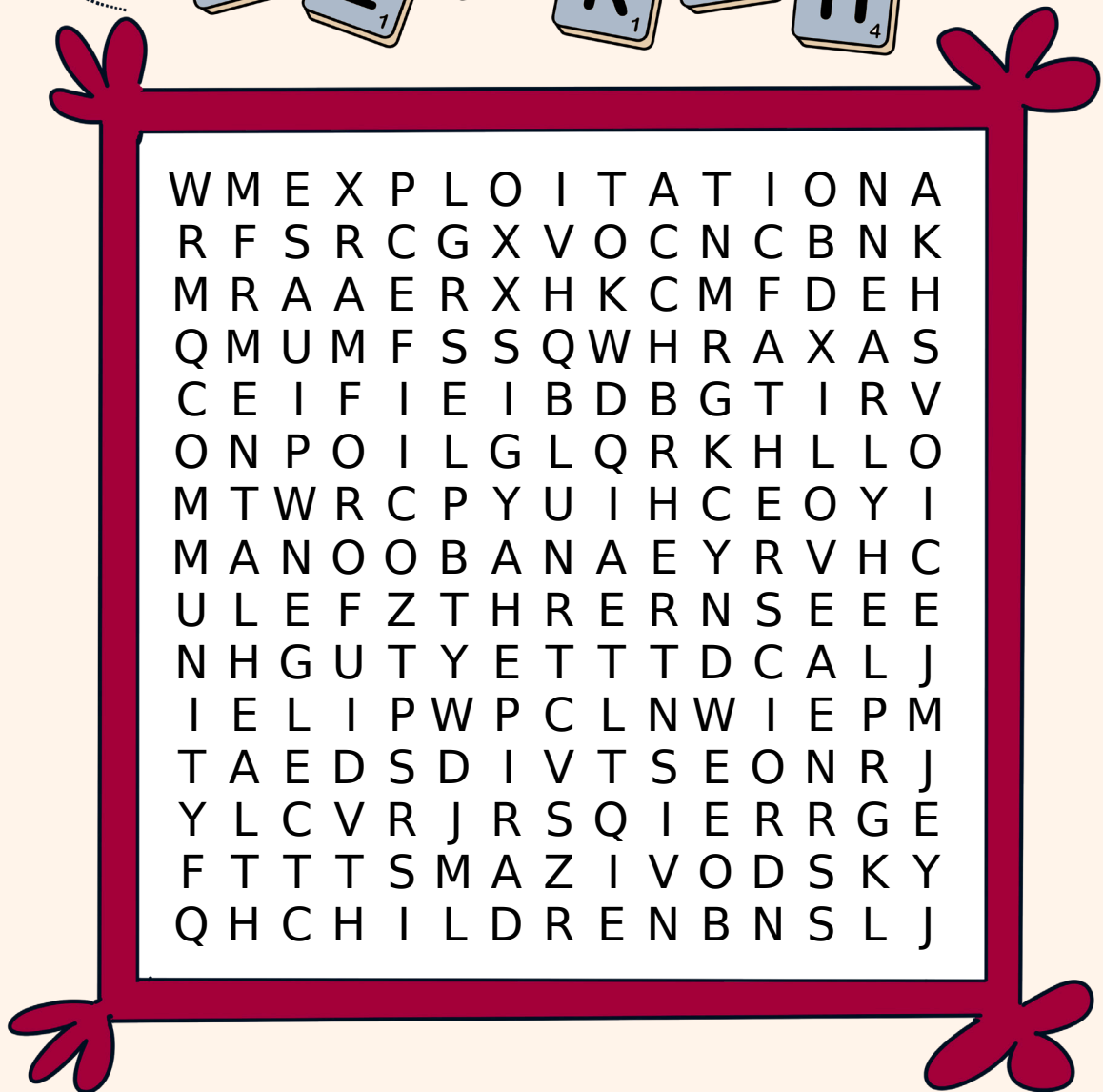
Thank you for reading about all of the NSCP's achievements this year. With safeguarding there is always a lot more to be done as children grow up and society changes. We don't know what lies ahead of us, but there are certain things that the NSCP wants to get better at.

Here are some of the things listed in the full report:

- Positioning ourselves to respond to policy change, notably Keeping Children Safe and Helping Families Thrive.
- Improving our systemic response to transitional safeguarding in partnership with colleagues in adults' health and social care.
- Learning from inspection, scrutiny and audit and implementing action plans to address our response to domestic abuse.
- Developing robust monitoring and quality assurance systems to better support Joint Agency Group Supervisions.
- Delivering on the Workforce Development Group forward plan with a particular focus on measuring the impact of training on practice.
- Working directly with the children, young people and families of Norfolk to ensure that their voices are heard and they contribute directly to strengthening the safeguarding system.
- Continue to promote and support the FLOURISH agenda.
- Continue to promote equality and inclusion and celebrate diversity in Norfolk.

We hope that we, the children and young people of Norfolk, are fully involved in supporting the NSCP achieve its future goals.

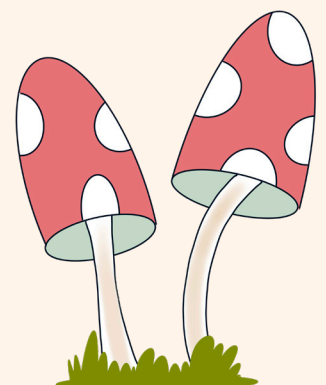
Puzzles & Quizzes



FAMILY NETWORK
PROTECTION
CHILDREN
MENTAL HEALTH
FATHERS

SAFEGUARDING
RESILIENCE
PARTNERS
EARLY HELP
LOVE

EXPLOITATION
COMMUNITY
VOICE
NEGLECT



Puzzles & Quizzes



Were you paying attention?

(HINT: all answers are in this report...)

1. Name the three NSCP priorities:

.....

2. What icon/logo represents children with autism?

.....

3. Without peeking, what word is made up from the leaves on the front cover illustration?

.....

4. Who are the main partners responsible for safeguarding arrangements in Norfolk?

.....

5. How many babies are born every week in Norfolk?

.....

6. What does YAB stand for?

.....

Can you spot the difference?

(HINT: There are 12 to find...)

Dr. Smith Marvin Abi Taylor PC. Nicholls



Original

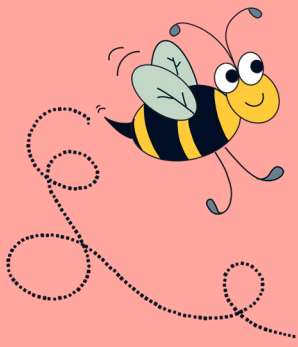
Dr. Smith Marvin Abi Taylor PC. Nicholls



Answers below... no peeking!

Paying Attention answers: 1. Child Exploitation, Neglect, Family & Community Networking. 2. Sunflower. 3. Flourish. 4. Children's Services, Police, Health and Education. 5. Around 148 babies. 6. Youth Advisory Board.

Spot the difference answers: 1. Part of Dr. Smith's stethoscope is missing. 2. Dr. Smith's ID badge missing. 3. Extra button on Marvin's green top. 4. Marvin holding a mobile phone. 5. Abi has different colour trousers. 6. Abi has earrings in. 7. Abi now wearing a necklace. 8. Taylor's lanyard is missing the person. 9. Taylor's hand is missing from PC. Nicholls's shoulder. 10. Taylor now has a pocket on their trousers. 11. PC. Nicholls has pens instead of a camera. 12. PC. Nicholls has a buckle on his trousers.



The full version of the annual report
can be found on the NSCP website:

www.norfolklscp.org.uk

*There are loads of resources on there for professionals
as well as children and families!*

If you are worried about a child you can call Norfolk's Children Advice and
Duty Service (CADS) or the NSPCC's Childline to help you.

Their phone numbers are:

CADS: 0344 800 8020

Childline: 0800 1111

Or you can always phone the NSCP Business Unit on:

01603 223409

and they can signpost you to the best person!



Norfolk Safeguarding
Children Partnership

