



# Safeguarders Panel

## Safeguarders Panel Newsletter

Winter 2019-20

Welcome to the winter edition of the Safeguarders Panel newsletter. The newsletter is designed to keep you updated with news about the Safeguarders Panel and the Children's Hearings System, as well as highlighting relevant issues. We hope you enjoy reading.



### SPT Updates

#### Children 1st Receive LGBT Charter Award



Children 1st has been working closely with LGBT Youth Scotland and are very proud to confirm that Children 1st has been awarded the Charter and is now accredited for the next three years. The Charter means that we ensure that we are an inclusive, comfortable and a positive place for our team members and everyone who come into contact with us. Below is a brief summary of what this involved:

We first embarked upon the LGBT Charter process in 2018. Since then, our LGBT Charter Subgroup has worked with LGBT Youth Scotland in reviewing our policies, practice and resources, seeking to proactively include LGBT people in every aspect of our work, to ensure that LGBT staff and users of our services feel protected, supported and acknowledged. This is part of our endeavour to recognise that each person we work with (e.g. colleagues, contractors, volunteers, children and families amongst others) come to us as whole people, with experiences and life circumstances that require to be acknowledged and supported. Throughout the process, Children 1st has worked toward a variety of quality standards around best practice in supporting LGBT people, which included team members embarking on LGBT awareness training, reflecting on culture, development of our staff survey and working with a dedicated Charter Manager, Cara Spence. Cara supported us to ensure that we are not only meeting legislative requirements in respect of LGBT people but that we are relational on a day to day basis, and that we are living the values that strive for equality and diversity.

In response to our learning, we have developed a short LGBT Briefing Booklet [here](#) to share with all team members. This booklet provides information

about the day to day support of LGBT people who come into contact with us. It includes correct terminology and language, and information about the experiences and difficulties facing the LGBT community. It also includes practical tips on how to be a safe LGBT ally, and what to do when colleagues, children and families confide in or come out to you. If you have any questions, please do get in touch with one of the LGBT Champions listed on the last page of the booklet. More information about the LGBT Charter Award can be found on the [LGBT Youth Scotland website](#).

#### Safeguarder ID badges

We are now in the reappointment period and recommendations will be sent to the Scottish Government shortly.

In anticipation of reappointments due on 1 May 2020, we would ask that those Safeguarders due for reappointment **send in one passport photo** to the Safeguarders Panel Team for your new ID card. This will enable us to ensure all Safeguarders have a valid ID from the start of their reappointment. Please send to us at the usual address: 83 Whitehouse Loan, Edinburgh, EH9 1AT.

Safeguarders who are not due for reappointment this year (i.e. those appointed in May 2019) do not need to send us photos.

#### SPT Annual Report

We are pleased to say that the SPT Annual Report for the period 2018-2019 is currently available on the [Children 1st website](#). This highlights key achievements over this period in improving the quality of the service, supporting respectful relationships, fairness and accountability whilst ensuring children's best interests are represented in the Children's Hearings System.





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### SPT Updates (cont.)

#### Allocations

We understand that conflict of interest can be an issue for Safeguarders which can sometimes lead to the reallocation of cases. We would like to remind all Safeguarders that the SPT retain the names of children and young people. Should you wish to request those names on receipt of an allocation request you are free to do so. We can only provide these names securely, via either secure email or phone, this information can be confirmed *before* the case is accepted. We do not hold any information regarding names of relevant persons and are unable to provide this information. Please contact the SPT if you have any questions or wish to check whether a conflict of interest might exist.

#### SPT Staff Update

This month, the SPT said farewell to Lyndsay Wishart who was a Support Manager for the last four years. The SPT would like to thank Lyndsay for her contribution to the team over the last few years.

#### Safeguarder Allocations

[Click here](#) for the latest figures for Safeguarder appointments by Children's Hearings and Sheriffs across Scotland.

#### Research, Policy & Practice

##### Supreme Court Judgement in Relation to 'Relevant Persons'

ABC (AP) (Appellant) v Principal Reporter and another (Respondents) (Scotland). In November 2019, a Safeguarder was required to provide submissions and opinion to the Supreme Court in a judicial review regarding a sibling being

deemed a 'Relevant Person' for the purposes of the Children's Hearing. Although the full judgement is not yet available, the Supreme Court website provides recordings of each session. The Safeguarder input in the case can be [viewed here](#) (14 November 2019, afternoon session at 1 hr 33 minutes).

#### Stand Up for Siblings

Stand Up For Siblings is a Scotland wide partnership aimed at improving and changing legislation, policy and practice; in circumstances where children's relationships may become disrupted, for example, through children becoming looked after or when the courts intervene in parenting. [Their website](#) contains helpful information and guidance for professionals working with children, young people and families, including law and guidance on the placement of siblings, sibling contact and helpful considerations in promoting sibling relationships when making recommendations.

You can also [click here](#) to read the research carried out by SCRA and Strathclyde University on supporting sibling relationships of children in permanent fostering and adoptive families. This includes key findings as well as the implications for law, policy and practice.

#### Independent Care Review

The purpose of the Independent Care Review in Scotland is to transform the life chances and wellbeing of infants, children and young people in care in Scotland.



Final recommendations from the Review are due on **5 February 2020** and Safeguarders are encouraged to keep track of their website [here](#) for important updates.



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### Research, Policy & Practice (cont.)

#### Children (Scotland) Bill

The Bill was introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 2 September 2019. It is proceeding through the justice committee and evidence is being heard on key aspects including the voice of the child across private family actions and Children's Hearings. The committee are interested in how the voices of young children under 12 are heard and reference has been made to the role of the Safeguarder as one of the professionals being able to assist in sharing a child's views. One of the main aspects of the Bill is the regulation of Child Welfare Reporters in family cases, with many responses highlighting the positives resulting from the changes to the administration of the Safeguarders Panel, in terms of widened recruitment and training. The Stage 1 report on the Bill can be [found here](#).

[Click here](#) for the full explanatory note which outlines amendments in relation to other aspects of legislation such as vulnerable witnesses and contact centres.

A recent research article in support of the legislative changes 'Resolving parenting disputes: Scotland compared to other countries' is also available to read [here](#) which considers how various other legal systems deal with

parenting disputes.

Furthermore, SCRA have submitted written evidence to the Justice Committee in relation to the Children (Scotland) Bill and a summary of their 'key messages' is [available here](#).

#### Police Scotland

In Oct 2019 Police Scotland launched a new animated film aimed at adult survivors of childhood abuse and people working with survivors. This aims to raise awareness of how to report childhood abuse to police, the criminal justice process and the existence of survivor support services. It focuses on key areas and covers some frequently asked questions and it is available to [view here](#).

#### Book recommendations

'[The Body Keeps the Score](#)' by Bessel Van Der Kolk who draws on thirty years of experience about the effects of trauma on the mind, brain and body and pathways to recovery.

'[The Goldfinch](#)' by Donna Tartt, a novel and reflective journey of a thirteen-year-old boy who is struck by trauma and adversity from childhood.



## Contact the Safeguarders Panel Team:

Call us on **0345 60 44 296**

Email us at **safeguarderspanel@children1st.org.uk**

Visit **www.children1st.org.uk/safeguarders** to find out more



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