



Safeguarders Panel

Safeguarders Panel Newsletter

Summer 2021



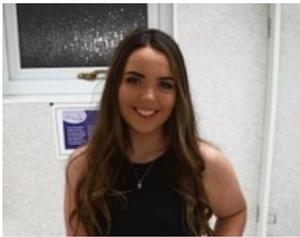
Welcome to the Summer edition of the SPT newsletter. We hope you have been enjoying the summer sun and are enjoying more freedom with the further easing of restrictions.

SPT News

Staff Biographies

Our newest members of staff have provided some information about themselves to allow you to get to know them better...

Aisling Crossan (Administrator)



What attracted you to the role at the SPT?

I was in my final year of my LLB Law Degree and wanted to look for a job which would allow me to develop my legal knowledge and

understanding of the Children's Hearings System. I had also heard great things about Children 1st through family and friends who work in different departments of the organisation.

What roles have you been involved in prior to joining the SPT?

I have worked as a legal assistant and intern for various law firms as well as an administrator at an opticians. These roles allowed me to significantly develop my administrative and organisational abilities.

What activities take up most of your time when not at work?

I am part of the Shotts St Patricks Amateur Opera Group. Each year we perform a production at Howden Park Centre in Livingston with our most recent being Andrew Lloyd Webbers CATS.

What, in your view, have been the best and worst parts of lockdown?

The best part has been having enough free time that I have been able to become much more health and exercise driven. I have really enjoyed

utilising the free time to become much fitter. The worst part was not being able to see friends and family for such an extended period of time.

Sarah Louise Davies (Service Manager)



What attracted you to the role at the SPT?

I have been involved in supporting children to participate in their Children's Hearings for many years, and was a Children's Panel member prior to joining SPT. I have always

valued the special role that a Safeguarder has in this process and felt that this was a great opportunity for me to work alongside the team to ensure that the child's best interests are always at the heart of their hearings.

What roles have you been involved in prior to joining the SPT?

I have worked with Care Experienced children and young people for the last 22 years in England and Scotland. More recently I have worked for the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland as a Children's Rights and Engagement Officer working to promote and protect the rights of children and young people, as well as a Service Manager with Aberlour Children's Charity. My experience has given me a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities that children and their families face when trying to be listened to, respected, involved and heard in decisions that affect them, and being part of making that happen.

What activities take up most of your time when not at work?

Spending time cycling and hill-walking with my children and partner takes up most of my time outside of work.

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I also absolutely love to read and do this in any spare time that I have. I have an arts background so have recently been dusting off my pencils, paints, canvas' and clay. Although I think the Turner Prize is safe for now – I still have a lot of practicing to do!

What, in your view, have been the best and worst parts of lockdown?

I valued getting to spend some extra time with my children, especially before my daughter left for university. I felt like we had been given permission to stop, slow down, do things together as a family, and appreciate each other. The worst part was seeing the significant health and financial impact that lockdown had on some of the children and families that I was working with. I also missed getting to see my parents, brothers, and sister for a long time.

Resignations

Safeguarders Susan Martin and Mae Boyd have recently resigned from the national Safeguarders Panel. The Safeguarders Panel Team would like to thank both for their years of service dedicated to the Panel and to the children and families through Safeguarder appointments.

Support Session Venues

In recent months, there have been ongoing conversations between the Senior Leadership Team & Support Managers about different venues for face-to-face meetings. It has been agreed that Children 1st Offices or meeting spaces would be the preference and support sessions only take place in Safeguarders' homes as a last resort. In response to this, Support Managers will be utilising Children 1st offices where possible. Once restrictions have eased further, appropriate venues can be agreed between Safeguarders and Support Managers. Given the ongoing uncertainty re Covid -19, Support Managers will continue to facilitate remote sessions via Microsoft Teams where this is the Safeguarder's preference.

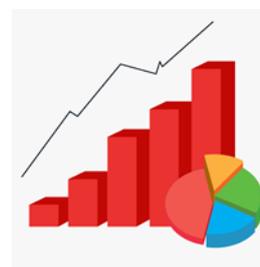
Allocations Update

As you will be aware the number of Safeguarder appointments has seen a significant drop since the start of the pandemic and this has affected Safeguarders in different ways. The drop in the number of appointments has not been seen equally across Scotland. For example, the number of appointments in Edinburgh and Lothians has dropped by approximately 50% in comparison to pre pandemic numbers, whereas the number of appointments in Clackmannanshire has remained around the same.

Safeguarder availability has reduced with the easing of restrictions as we are all finally free to get in some time away from home and enjoy some down time. Safeguarders have been experiencing delays in appointments due to the pandemic and this has also affected availability due to the increase in the timing of Safeguarder involvement. The hope is that appointment periods will return to 'normal' as restrictions ease and there is less reliance on virtual hearings.

After a Safeguarder request and some consultation with the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Services we have agreed on a new Safeguarder referral form which includes information regarding any orders currently in place. This means that we can inform Safeguarders of this when approached regarding appointments. This will also allow Safeguarders to better understand the time constraints of the appointment they are being offered and bring the information in line with what is provided by SCRA.

[Click here](#) for the latest stats on Safeguarder appointments.





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Learning & Development

A number of digital training modules are now available to access on the Virtual Learning Academy. These include The Children (Scotland) Act 2020, Unconscious Bias and Drug Awareness. Launch dates for the two requisite modules which will require to be completed prior before May next year have still to be confirmed. The requisite modules are **Children's Rights** and **Trauma-Informed Practice**. Support Managers look forward to discussing learning from the digital modules in individual support sessions.



Please note that in order for the modules on the Virtual Learning Academy to appear as 'complete', you must complete the very brief feedback questions at the end. Please remember to do this to support the accuracy of training records.

Learning & Development Session with Sheriffs

The SPT have recently been involved in working with the Judicial Institute to promote a clear understanding and learning about the role of the Safeguarder. In March, a learning & development session took place with Sheriffs and follow up discussions are being planned for later in the year. We produced a briefing paper on the role of the Safeguarder to support the session and create an environment which encouraged shared learning, open discussion and feedback, particularly within the current climate of legislation and policy changes in relation to children and young people.

Interpreter Services

Safeguarders are reminded to notify the SPT when seeking interpreter services. [Read this article](#) about an individual's reflections on translating for her parents as a child, on arrival in the UK.

Service Policy Reviews

We are coming closer to the launch of the revised SPT policy documents, including the Practice Standards for Safeguarders, Practice Note on the role of the Safeguarder and Performance Support and Monitoring Framework. These will be available in the coming months and Safeguarders are encouraged to communicate any thoughts or comments about the policy reviews via email, telephone or through discussion with your Support Manager. Please look out for further communications on this in future emails and newsletters.

External Training & Learning Opportunities

[The National Wellbeing Hub](#) have created a webinar programme for those working in Health and Social care, with a focus on wellbeing. There are events throughout August and September 2021 which are available to book [here](#). Podcasts are also available on the website to support individuals' health and wellbeing.

[The Scottish Child Law Centre](#) have online training available to book [here](#). This includes;

Parental Responsibilities and Rights
10th November 2021

Capacity, Consent and Confidentiality
17th November 2021

Legal Foundations of Child Protection
22nd January 2022

These are half day events and are not free. For more information, please contact events@sclc.org.uk.



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Research, Policy & Practice

Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011

On 26th July 2021, new Children's Hearings rights came into force centred around changes to the Children's Hearings Rules of Procedure, which will help hearings focus on maintaining strong relationships between brothers and sisters – one of the challenges set by The Promise. These changes are designed to respect siblings' right to family life. Maintaining relationships with brothers and sisters can be extremely important for looked after children and young people, so siblings, and those with a sibling-like relationship, will now have the right to participate in Children's Hearings and give their views on keeping in contact. The 'Staying together and connected: getting it right for sisters and brothers: national practice guidance' is available to read [here](#).

The regulations also bring in changes around exclusion/virtual attendance/sharing of reports and electronic signatures. [Click here](#) for more information.

Each and Every Child



Each and Every Child is a new initiative to shift public attitudes and improve life chances of children, young people and families with care experience. The ultimate aim is to create a new narrative by

reframing the language used regarding children in care. Their [Toolkit](#) provides tips and advice on how to put this aim into action. A number of research reports are available to download and you can also sign up to their newsletter to keep informed of the latest developments. *'Instead of sharing shocking stories of individuals making bad choices... try explaining how external factors can lead to involvement in the care system..'*

'Write Right About Me'

Safeguarders may have come across a series of [online webinars](#) as part of SIRCC 2020 online, featuring input from CELCIS, Aberdeen City Council and Who cares? Scotland. A two-part webinar took place last October with a focus on record keeping and the implications/ challenges for young people in accessing their own records. Adults with lived experience of the care system talked openly about their own experiences of this and highlighted the importance and impact of language in reports.

[Language that cares](#) is a resource worth reading and provides more examples of reframing language, as well as comments from young people and professionals.

Trauma-Informed Practice: A Toolkit for Scotland

The Scottish Government, in partnership with NHS have also produced a great resource which will compliment Safeguarders learning from the mandatory, digital Trauma-Informed Practice module on the Virtual Learning Academy. [The toolkit](#) focuses on five key principles to support a Trauma-Informed approach to practice: Safety, Trust, Choice, Collaboration & Empowerment, as well as recommendations on how practitioners should communicate with others about traumatic experiences.



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Improving the Management of Sexual Offence Cases

In continuing the discussion on the benefits of having a Trauma-Informed nation, proposals outlined in the [Final Report from the Lord Justice Clerk's Review Group](#) suggest a step in the right direction. The proposals for serious sexual offences in the criminal courts mean that everyone from the Judge to the Prosecutor, to the court staff to the defence, have to have received Trauma-Informed training, accredited by the Lord President. This extends to every person involved in a Children's Hearing referral.

Voice and Inclusion Project - for Young People Aged 12-26

CELCIS have created a Voice and Inclusion Project (VIP) for children and young people with care experience, to find ways to improve the experiences of young people taking part in Children's Hearings. There is no *minimum* level of participation required – young people can choose how they take part. Visit CELCIS.ORG to find out more.

Our Hearings, Our Voice – 40 Calls to Action

The independent children and young people's board for the Children's Hearings System have been working hard to launch their [Interactive Zine Online](#).

All Safeguarders received a hard copy of the Zine last year. The Zine includes the 40 calls to action, expressed by the board, and has received careful attention over the last two years to ensure this accurately reflects the voices of children and young people with experience of the Children's Hearings System. The SPT is looking at these 40 calls to action in more detail to see what steps can be taken to support practice improvement.



National Youth Justice Conference

Resources from the recent National Youth Justice Conference 2021 are now available on the [Children & Young People's Centre for Justice website](#). The presentations, covering a range of different topics, are available to watch, each promoting the need to make Scotland a rights-respecting nation and avoid the criminalisation of care-experienced children.

[Children in conflict with the law: An intervention planning approach](#) outlines an intervention planning approach to reducing harm and improving outcomes for children whose harmful behaviour has brought, or may bring, them into conflict with the law. [Older children in conflict with the law in Scotland](#), a report written for the Children & Young People's Commissioner Scotland, provides a legal analysis of Scots law compliance with the UNCRC, for children aged 16 and 17 years.

Change Programme ONE – The Promise

[Change Programme ONE](#) went live on 25th June and follows on from [Plan 21-24](#). This provides an assessment of change and service development to ensure Scotland is on track to #keepthepromise.



Child Bereavement UK

Child Bereavement UK provide sensitive and timely support to children (up to age 25) and families to rebuild their lives when a child is experiencing grief or has died. Their [website](#) includes information for young people as well as training and information for adults and professionals about working with bereaved families, like hints and tips on good communication.



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Children 1st News

Working with our partners in the Scottish FA, Children 1st has been using the goodwill generated throughout the Euros to bring a lift to children and families across the country. In April, the Scottish FA and The Terrace football podcast [raised enough to buy 210 new Scotland shirts](#) for children who were most impacted by the pandemic. An additional in-kind donation from the Scottish FA brought this up to 410 new shirts. Distributed to Children 1st service teams across Scotland, these tops enabled more children to feel part of the Euros excitement. Feedback from families has been heart-warming: "Caiden loves his new football kit, he said it is the best thing he has ever received".



Then in June, the Scottish FA gave its charity partners a central role in its media activity around the Euros. The EUROS2020 appeal raised over £7000 in total - £3500 each for Children 1st and the Tartan Army Children's Charity, with the help of John McGinn's offer of his [personalised tape measure!](#)

The Scottish FA has also offered to donate 300 skills balls to our service teams across the country. Children 1st partnership with them runs to December 2022 which will allow for more exciting things ahead, with live football opening up and a World Cup on the horizon.

If you or anyone you know is looking for a fun activity, try out the Children 1st [Homemade Olympic Challenge](#). Once you have completed your Olympic challenge you will be sent a medal to proudly show off your achievement!

Alternatively, if you are looking for exciting, affordable activities to keep children active during the summer holidays, sign up to the Children 1st [Let the Kids Win Scavenger Hunt](#). Perhaps #TeamKids will want to take on #TeamAdults – you will get stickers for both teams and a forfeit sheet to challenge the losing team to a dare!

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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