



Safeguarders Panel

Safeguarders Panel Newsletter

Autumn 2021



Hello and welcome to the Autumn edition of the national Safeguarders Panel newsletter. We hope that you enjoyed the generous summer sunshine over the last few months and are feeling positive about the months ahead.

SPT News

Staff Biographies

The last monthly email update to Safeguarders explained some of the staffing changes that have taken place within the team in recent weeks and months. Our newest colleagues have provided some information about themselves to allow you to get to know them better, in the absence of any planned face to face meetings.

Ying Zhang (Service Manager)



What attracted you to the role at the SPT?

To be able to contribute to the delivery and development of this unique service.

What professional accomplishment are you most proud of?

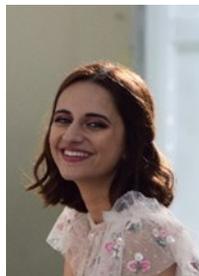
With a background in Social Work, a role as an Area Convener in the Children's Hearings and now a future in the SPT, I have to say that the thing that I am most proud of is

that, on this journey of development, I have met, got to know, learned from and been inspired by so many colleagues, who are utterly committed and devoted to working together and achieving the best outcomes for our children and young people.

What is an interesting fact about you?

I am a mum of an eleven year old boy, and I love cooking.

Sumeiyah Koya (Administrative Support Assistant)



What attracted you to the role at the SPT?

I felt a real connection with the mission of Children 1st and the impact of the work the SPT does. It's not always easy work but it's extremely important!

What professional accomplishment are you most proud of?

I'm really proud of my work as the Head Facilitator at a SEN Education Centre in Zambia where, regarding neurodivergence and special education, government funding doesn't exist and public education is extremely scarce. Working with those children and watching them grow was the most rewarding job I've ever had.

What is an interesting fact about you?

I grew up in Zambia and have walked lions and cheetahs twice (spoiler alert: the lions have a superiority complex and the cheetahs are just giant domestic cats).

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Safeguarder Recruitment

We are about to embark on a recruitment campaign to new recruit Safeguarders to the national Safeguarders Panel and an advert is now live.

Over the last few months we have experienced difficulties when trying to appoint Safeguarders who can travel to Aberdeen, Falkirk, Clackmannanshire, Stirling, the Scottish Borders, Orkney, Dumfries & Galloway, Argyll & Bute and the Highlands. This is due to the recent resignation of some Safeguarders, the impact of Covid, Safeguarders currently being on Time-Out, and a change in personal circumstances. We have reached out to Safeguarders in other areas to help cover these areas temporarily, but this isn't a long-term solution, and the Scottish Government have agreed that new Safeguarders are required.



Now the advert is live, we would be grateful if you could profile it with anyone who you believe could perform this role. Information is available on the [Becoming a Safeguarder webpage](#) for those who may be interested and we will be happy to respond to any telephone queries from potential applicants.

We are using a range of networks to advertise the role and will be contacting all those who have registered their note of interest in becoming a Safeguarder to advise them of this new recruitment campaign.

Please use any networks that you access to spread the word.

Thank you for any help that you can provide in letting people know about the recruitment and about the valued role of the Safeguarder.

Learning & Development

We have been working hard to develop a training module re *Safeguarders in Court* and are excited to say that this will be completed and ready to access on the Virtual Learning Academy in the next few weeks. Please look out for this module from mid-November.



Safeguarders are also encouraged to provide any feedback about the modules you have accessed so far.

Launch dates for the requisite courses *Children's Rights* and *Trauma informed practice* will also be confirmed in the next few weeks.

Policy Update

Safeguarders will be aware that our policies and Practice Standards are in the process of being reviewed to ensure that they reflect best practice in working with children and families. Some of these documents are still in draft form with the official launch dates still to be agreed.

The SPT are also currently working to produce some supporting documents for Safeguarders in report writing and the role of the Safeguarder. Watch this space for further updates about their progress!





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Feedback



The SPT have received some positive feedback about Safeguarders practice in recent months and the hope is that this will continue with the development and increase in partnership working by Support Managers; increasing the visibility of the SPT and partners' understanding of the Service. We have included some of this feedback below.

'I was exceptionally impressed with the detail and quality of the reports submitted prior to today's Hearing...I commend the Safeguarder for the respectful and pragmatic way in which she approached this case'

'My colleagues and I found [Safeguarder's] written report easy to read and understand. It was fair and balanced but, most importantly, kept the child's best interests firmly at the heart of the matter. In addition, her recommendations were very clear'

'When [Safeguarder] came to our home, he was totally child-centred. [The children] warmed to him so quickly. [Safeguarder] has a lovely manner and had the children playing games and drawing pictures for him. They opened up through conversation and made their views very clear. When [Safeguarder] left that evening the children were confident that he would speak up for them.'

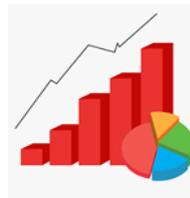
Our Service Manager, Sarah-Louise Davies, who oversees the **mentoring scheme** has also been evaluating this service. This is what Mentors and Mentees have said so far:

'I have enjoyed the experience of being a mentee, very much. It has been an extremely positive experience for me and I think this kind of support that is goal focused and time limited is incredibly valuable'

'My mentor was flexible and available when needed and had good listening skills. As I progressed towards my goals, we took time to prepare for our ending together. We then had a clear end point and a nice last meeting together. I would definitely consider asking for mentoring support again, if needed'

'I think that being offered the chance to be a mentor or mentee to another Safeguarder is a fantastic opportunity. It doesn't matter if you are a new Safeguarder, or an experienced one. We can all benefit from the professional advice and encouragement of our peers.'

Safeguarder Allocations - Stats & Referral Forms



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

We have been working with our partners to create new Safeguarder referral forms to ensure we give Safeguarders the most up to date information to help make informed decisions around accepting appointments. We have already implemented new SCTS forms that provide us with information regarding any current orders in place and have just come to an agreement with SCRA to proceed with the new SCRA Safeguarder referral forms. These new forms will be implemented on the 8th November and will provide Safeguarders with fuller information around the appointment.

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(Safeguarder Allocations - Stats & Referral Forms contd.)

We have also agreed a new reallocation process with SCRA and SCTS. When a Safeguarder needs an appointment to be reallocated, the Safeguarder will need to inform all agencies involved (SCRA/SCTS/Safeguarders Panel Team etc.) as usual but now there is no requirement to ask the agency that originally appointed the Safeguarder to send through a fresh referral form. Once we have been informed of the need for a reallocation we will chase up any additional information required to reallocate the appointment. A new referral form will not be required; the hope is that this will reduce the time it takes to reallocate a Safeguarder to the child or young person.

Research, Policy & Practice

UNCRC Incorporation

On 6th October, the UK Supreme Court gave its judgment on the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill. The judges unanimously decided that four sections of the Bill go beyond the powers of the Scottish Parliament. Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) have written a blog; available to read [HERE](#), explaining the background to the case, what the judges said and what could happen next.

LGBT Youth Scotland Survey

LGBT Youth Scotland have launched a survey on *Life in Scotland for LGBT Young People*. This aims to provide a snapshot of life across a whole range of areas, including education, NHS, mental health, coming out, safety, work, home life, representation and the media.

How can you help? If you work with young people aged 13-25 who might be eligible and interested, you can share the [link to the survey](#) with them.

It's important that LGBT Youth Scotland hear from a wide range of people from across Scotland to make sure the research is representative of what's happening in the real world. The research will then be used to influence the Scottish Government, Police Scotland, NHS and other decision-makers to make life in Scotland better for LGBT young people. The survey covers a huge range of issues and it's important to note that reporting these experiences may be difficult, so there is lots of guidance in the survey for sources of support should it be required. Participants can also choose to enter a competition for the chance to win vouchers to spend online.



Managing Endings

The importance of relationships and positive human connection has undoubtedly been emphasised by the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. Part of managing relationships includes managing endings. [This document](#) includes some top tips to consider when managing endings with families in your role as Safeguarder, taken from guidance developed as part of Family Group Decision Making (FGDM).

UNICEF Report

UNICEF's flagship report [The State of the World's Children 2021](#) examines child, adolescent and caregiver mental health. It focuses on risks and protective factors at critical moments in life and attempts to shed light on the social factors that shape mental health and well-being.



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(UNICEF Report contd.)

Did you know...

- Globally, an estimated 13 per cent of children aged 10-19 are likely to live with a diagnosed mental disorder
- Almost 46,000 children die annually from suicide, making it the fourth leading cause of death among 15 to 19-year-olds
- Only around 2 per cent of government health budgets go to mental health spending.

[Learn more](#) about how to start mental health conversations with children.

'One question can change everything'

Scottish Government: Suicide Prevention Strategy

Events are taking place across Scotland to allow you to contribute to the next national suicide prevention strategy in Scotland. [Click here](#) for more information about the events. You can also contribute via an [online questionnaire](#) which will be accessible until 21st November 2021.

Children and Young Peoples Centre for Justice (CYCJ) Information Sheets

CYCJ have produced an [information sheet](#) detailing how the UNCRC articles relate to children who are taking part in restorative processes. They have also produced an [information sheet](#) written by the Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Hub Scotland, about supporting people with FASD who are in conflict with the law. Finally, their [information sheet](#) on routes to secure care has been updated to reflect recent changes in legislation.

COP26 Glasgow

SCRA have issued some information in preparation for COP26 – the UN Climate Change Conference 2021. This can be found [here](#) and will be relevant to Safeguarders who typically attend hearings in the Glasgow area.

The Promise

For an update on The Promise and the proposed redesign of the Children's Hearings System, please [click here](#)

Celebrated Days

Adoption Week Scotland 15-19 Nov 2021

Take part in Adoption Week Scotland to raise the profile of adoption, encourage discussions about what adopting a child involves and highlight the continuing need to find adopters for children. The Adoption and Fostering Alliance Scotland has created a full [programme of events](#), covering topics such as contact, Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and therapeutic parenting.

External Training Opportunities

Families Affected by Imprisonment Training by Families Outside

Dates: 30th November (module 1), 7th December (module 2), 9th December (module 3)
Location: Online

Module 1: Understanding the issues for families affected by imprisonment
Module 2: Supporting children and young people who have a family member in prison
Module 3: Prison and prison visiting.

For more information and to book please visit the [Families Outside website](#).

Families Outside have also created a series of webinars specifically for families, to provide information they might need throughout a family member's sentence. These events will take place from Monday 8th November to Thursday 11th November. [Click here](#) for more information.



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(External Training Opportunities contd.)

Children and Young People's Centre for Justice, Post Graduate Certificate: Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law

The Children and Young People's Centre for Justice has teamed up with Strathclyde University to develop a PG certificate for individuals who wish to improve outcomes for children and young people who are in conflict with the law.

Start date: January 2022

Application deadline: 3rd December 2021

Study mode and duration: 12 months part time distance learning

Visit [University of Strathclyde](https://www.strathclyde.ac.uk) to find out more about entrance requirements and costs.

Betsy de Thierry on Trauma Informed Meetings

Betsy de Thierry offers trauma training and consultancy across the UK and talks in this [short video clip](#) about the importance of connecting with others. [Access Betsy's website](#) for additional information and resources/ free downloads.



Adoption & Fostering Alliance (AFA) Scotland 2021 Legal Conference

This year's legal conference will focus on the impact of the decisions made on the child and family where the child moves into permanence or ceases to be a looked after child.

Date: 5th November 2021

Location: Online (MS Teams)

For more information and to book please visit the [AFA Scotland website](#) and complete the [booking form](#).

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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Children 1st Registered Office, 83 Whitehouse Loan Edinburgh EH9 1AT
Registered Scottish Charity No. SC016092

