



PUBLIC PROTECTION

EAST LoTHIAN & MIDLoTHIAN

SUPPORTING SAFER COMMUNITIES



STAFF NEWSLETTER

February 2023

Welcome to East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee's (EMPPC's) latest staff newsletter. Let us know what you think by emailing us at emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk

Our articles contain hyperlinks to connect you with current online resources and further reading.

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Dates for your calendar

20th February is National Adult Support and Protection day

8th March is International Women's Day

Thank you Anne



The number 9 in the science of numerology represents completion, but not finality. Think of it more in a cyclical sense; it is about the ending of one cycle and the potential it creates for another cycle to begin. The number 9 in numerology is said to act as an usher in the process of transition or transformation, guiding and empowering us with its wisdom. That sums up the departure of our EMPPC Chair Anne Neilson pretty well, who is stepping down after 9 years! Anne has Chaired the Committee from its inception and we thank her for her hard work, leadership, guidance and direction over the years. Here are some of her reflections.....

“East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee was set up in 2014 in recognition by partner agencies of the need to work together across the two local authority areas which were coterminous with one police division and one health board. The benefits of sharing resources and working towards consistency of practice seemed obvious and streamlined the onerous structure previously in place which was resource intensive. Partners were of the view that through greater collaboration we would be able to achieve better outcomes to meet our collective responsibilities to keep children and adults at risk of harm safe in our communities.

The aim of the Public Protection Committee, which was the first in Scotland, was to address the cross-cutting themes of Public Protection and focus on a lifespan perspective to reducing harm and abuse.

Over the past eight years there have been considerable challenges not least the wide agenda covering all aspects of child protection, adult support and protection, violence against women and girls and the multiagency public protection arrangements. The Committee and its subgroups have evolved over time and have constantly looked to review practice, process and procedures to meet the ever changing legislative and policy requirements. In addition, we have taken the learning from multiagency inspections, significant case reviews and continuous improvement activity to strengthen our services for children and adults.

The last few years have been particularly challenging with increasing demands on services, and the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic. Throughout the pandemic agencies pulled together to work innovatively to prioritise the safety of those most at risk in our communities. Going forward there continues to be challenges for partners with increasing demands on services and resources and the requirement to work collaboratively is more important now than ever. It has been a privilege to chair the EMPPC for the past eight years and I would like to thank colleagues in the EMPPC and Committee for their support, dedication and determination to get it right for the children and adults most at risk within our community”.

Meet the Committee.....

Every edition we introduce you to our EMPPC members. In this edition we meet Julie Watson, CEO of Women's Aid, East and Midlothian



Women's Aid East and Midlothian (WAEML) is the largest specialist domestic abuse provider in East Lothian and Midlothian. WAEML offers a safe, caring place for all women, children and young people who have been subjected to domestic abuse by providing information, support, advocacy and temporary refuge accommodation. You can find out more about the work of WAEML here: www.womensademl.org

As CEO I hold overall responsibility for the work of the charity. My job role is specifically around strategic and financial management and leadership to develop the organisation and its workforce in achieving our charity mission although leading a public facing and busy charity guarantees that no two days are the same.



Work tasks are often very varied with a continual juggle of operational and strategic tasks, time, and resource management with a few “crisis events” thrown in to keep me on my toes. Maintaining a very strong and effective relationship with all our stakeholders and partners is so important and I am always striving to ensure that locally we can achieve the best possible outcomes for women and children who have been subjected to domestic abuse.

Whilst my own specialism and area of interest is around violence against women and girls, all the public protection themes overlap in my day-to-day practice. My role on the Committee though is to represent the entire third sector, as a very diverse group across East Lothian and Midlothian this is no small task! I do this largely by remaining connected to a number of other charity managers to disseminate and collate updates but most importantly ensuring that our third sector interface organisations are kept up to date with developments around public protection business. As well as getting information out to third sector organisations, I am always happy to feed important issues facing our sector into Committee business so this is a reminder that you can contact me directly if you'd like me to draw attention to any specific issues affecting our work in charities. Please feel free to contact me directly by email: julie@womensademl.org

EMPPC Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Group

The VAWG Delivery Group is one of the sub-groups of EMPPC. It is chaired by Keith Mackay, Detective Chief Inspector or Public Protection. Keith describes the role and contribution of the Group here:

“The VAWG Delivery Group leadership and oversight of the governance arrangements for Public Protection across East and Midlothian local authority areas. The context of the sub group follows that, *‘A strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that perpetrate it’*. The group works according to the nationally agreed definition of gender based violence and are guided by the above vision and priorities identified in the national strategy “Equally Safe: Scotland’s strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls”

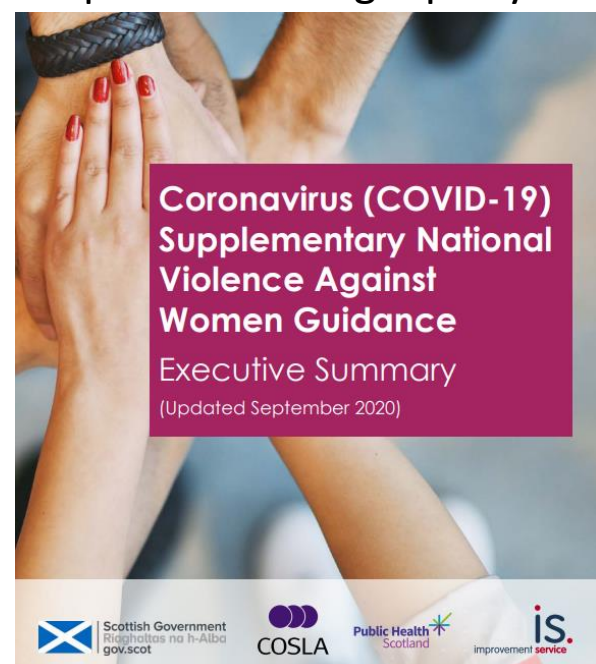
The portfolio of the VAWG DG is a diverse one looking to deliver services and preventative activities, ensuring women and children affected by VAWG have a role in shaping local decisions and activities, analysing gaps in local services and developing solutions, ensuring application of learning and training from national reports and legislation, ensuring information sharing and resources where relevant and feasible, supporting positive relationships with stakeholder groups and supporting funding opportunities.

The list goes on but suffice to say it is broad and wide ranging, designed to support the EMPPC for core business within the wider Public Protection Framework.

It is a demanding portfolio in an area of business that each and every one of us has seen the devastating damage done to the lives of those around us who have or are, suffering such abuses in their lives. The VAWG DG are a thoroughly professional group of people from a wide variety of backgrounds both personally and professionally and the diversity of knowledge they bring is what pulls our strength together. The work done on funding and increasing and fostering positive working relationships has been a real highlight in recent years at a time when the financial strains have taken a hold on all areas of our joint business. The work done on prevention throughout the two Local Authorities from directed projects and National and Local campaigns has made us all proud to be part of the movement.

The VAWG Delivery Group will continue to grow and evolve and we have some exciting times ahead as the two Local Authorities look to evolve the strategic direction towards even better understanding of where we are in this modern world and how we meet our vision”

Read more [here](#) about the role of VAW Partnerships in delivering Equally Safe locally





We say farewell and thanks to Keith Mackay, DCI for Public Protection in Lothian and Scottish Borders Division, Police Scotland. We asked Keith to reflect on his time as chair of our Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Group for the past three years.

“As I step towards my retirement from the Police in the coming months and new challenges ahead I find myself reflecting on my career and the broad range of business areas I found myself working in and the challenges that came with them. In the last 26 years I have enjoyed being at the sharp end of policing mainly in the CID Departments working on investigations in to murders, serious violence, high value thefts and dishonesty and controlled drugs. The fast moving pace of targeting and locking up the ‘bad guys or girls’ was where I was normally to be found.



In 2019 my policing career took a turn in a different direction as I took on the role of Detective Inspector with oversight of Serious Domestic Abuse and Sexual Crimes. This opened my eyes in to a very different world of prevention and public protection and partnership working. An area of work which is very challenging but also very rewarding. Through this posting I had my first contact with the East and Midlothian Council, Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Group (VAWG) and the fantastic work done by this highly motivated group of people from across the Council partnership and 3rd sector.

At the end of 2019 I was promoted to Detective Chief Inspector for Public Protection with the portfolios for Domestic Abuse, Serious Sexual Offending and Sex Offender Management. One aspect of this role was to take on the post of Chair of the East and Midlothian VAWG which is a role that gave me great pride as I have found a real passion around this area of business attempting to make a real difference to the lives of people and work towards true prevention against Domestic Abuse and support to survivors of sexual offending.

The portfolio of the VAWG Delivery Group is a diverse one and can at times be demanding trying to gain agreement on strategic and operational direction and with the current financial climate the business around gaining and supporting funding is never anything but problematic. My personal reflection as I step aside is that I have seen a thoroughly professional group of people who make time in their already stretched workloads, showing real desire to serve the people of Mid and East Lothian and look towards true prevention, safeguarding and follow up support. It’s been a pleasure to be involved and I know the good work of this group will continue in the same vein and I wish them well for a successful future”.

Training update

On-line event to raise awareness of national Adult Protection Day 2023 – 20th February from 2 – 4pm

We hope you have seen our flyer for our Learning Event which is taking place on-line from 2-4pm. Click on the link below to join the event:

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

The focus for our Learning event is Self-neglect and Hoarding when we will hear about this subject from different perspectives, including an expert academic, Social Worker, local Liaison Officer from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and our ASP Lead Officer.



Have you been on our training?

Our training is free to staff and volunteers working in East Lothian and Midlothian. We advertise our courses and briefings via your learning and development teams, and on our website. Our briefings are a great way to get bite-sized learning without having to sit behind a screen for too long! Every quarter we run our 'core' training on Adult Protection, Child Protection, Public Protection and Violence Against Women and Girls – enabling staff to learn more about the issues, roles and responsibilities in these different areas of public protection.

Check out our [Training calendar](#) for our on-line and face-to-face training.

Adult Support and Protection

Adult Protection and Substance Dependency

Being dependent on substances can create serious physical and mental harm. The impact on health may leave some adults unable to protect themselves from harm. The 2022 Code of Practice for the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) 2007 Act tells us to shift from the view that dependency causes self-neglect, to one that understands that dependency as an outward symptom or sign of deeper challenges. We need to be aware that issues like trauma, low mood, anxiety etc. may be driving the harmful dependency; that is, using substances to bury thoughts and feelings that the adult is struggling to cope with. Not everyone who uses substances will meet Adult Protection criteria for being an adult at risk of harm. However, the long-term and cumulative nature of their problems may include periods when the person might not be regarded as being able to take an authentic decision affecting their health and well being and they then may become more vulnerable to harm than others without such issues.

if you are concerned that someone who has a substance dependency is an adult is at risk of harm, you should make a referral under Adult Support and Protection to Social Work. Click on the link below for more information on how to do this.

[East Lothian: Report an ASP concern](#) [Midlothian: Report an ASP concern](#)

Revision to the East Lothian and Midlothian Adult Support and Protection Procedures

We have recently been updating our Adult Support and Protection Procedures, and are now beginning a short period of consultation before we publish them. They have been updated to reflect the changes in the ASP Code of Practice which was published last year.

They are being circulated via our Public Protection Committee and senior managers please participate when your manager asks you to comment on them as part of the consultation.



Procedures

Adult Support and Protection



LEARN



about Adult Support and Protection Case Conferences

If an adult is at risk of harm, there may need to be an Adult Support and Protection (ASP) Case Conference to share information relevant to concerns about harm and discuss how to manage the risk. If you are working with the adult, you might be invited to participate in an ASPCC. Iriss (the Institute for Research in Social Studies) has developed an online learning resource about multi agency ASP case conferences to help professionals become aware of the purpose of the meeting, different roles and how adults can be supported. Better understanding your and others' roles at these meetings can help inform a more effective plan to manage risk. This is a great course to help build confidence and improve practice in ASP case conferences – all aimed at keeping the adult safer. It is easy to register by clicking on this [link](#).



Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects how people communicate and interact with the world. It is mainly characterised by its unique social interactions, non-standard ways of learning, keen interests in specific subjects, inclination to routines, and particular ways of processing sensory information. More than one in 100 people are on the autism spectrum. Whilst many people with autism live enjoyable, safe lives, with little support, others may need help from a parent, carer or health and social care services every day. To help support those with autism it is important to understand their specific communication needs and there is no better way to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day than learn more about communicating effectively with someone with autism.

Communication can be challenging for those trying to help people with autism. Concerns about risk of harm need to be explored with the adult, and their views sought. For instance, an autistic person can find it difficult to filter out the less important information. Too much information can lead to 'overload', where no further information can be processed. So, one way to deal with this is - when asking about harm, say less and say it slowly. It may also be necessary to involve a professional with specialised training. Click on the link for [Tips for communicating effectively with someone with autism](#)

Adult Support and Protection



Online safety and wellbeing of adults at risk of harm

Iriss

Iriss has produced an e-learning module called [Online safety and wellbeing of adults at risk of harm](#).

Adults with health issues like low mood or who have a learning disability can sometimes be vulnerable to on-line harm. Perpetrators pretend to like or befriend the adult to lure them into lowering their guard. The types of harm can include:

- Accessing or becoming exposed to inappropriate content;
- Being exposed to radical views and far-right extremism;
- Being groomed to be sexually exploited;
- Potential scamming – fraud and embezzlement; and
- Being threatened or insulted.

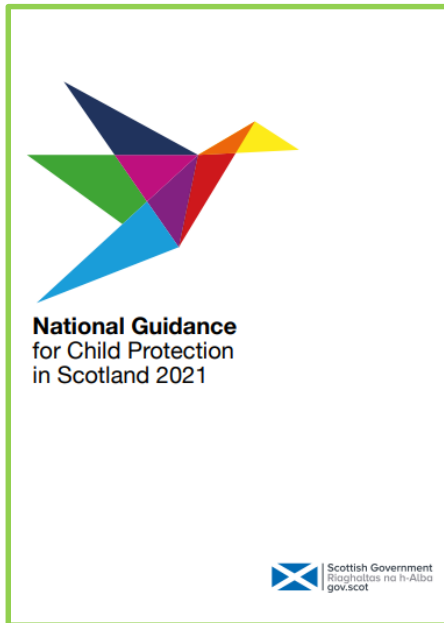
Online harm is often a hidden issue because the person either does not realise something is happening, or they are too embarrassed to talk about it. Victims of on-line harm can be left humiliated and distressed, impacting a person's psychological well-being. This module helps raise awareness of how to spot if someone is being affected and how to help reduce the risks. There are also some prompt questions to help practitioners to reflect on how best to approach and discuss online behaviour and risks with the people they are supporting.

The module includes links to other useful resources, including:

[Keeping safe online – a guide for people with learning disabilities](#)



Child Protection

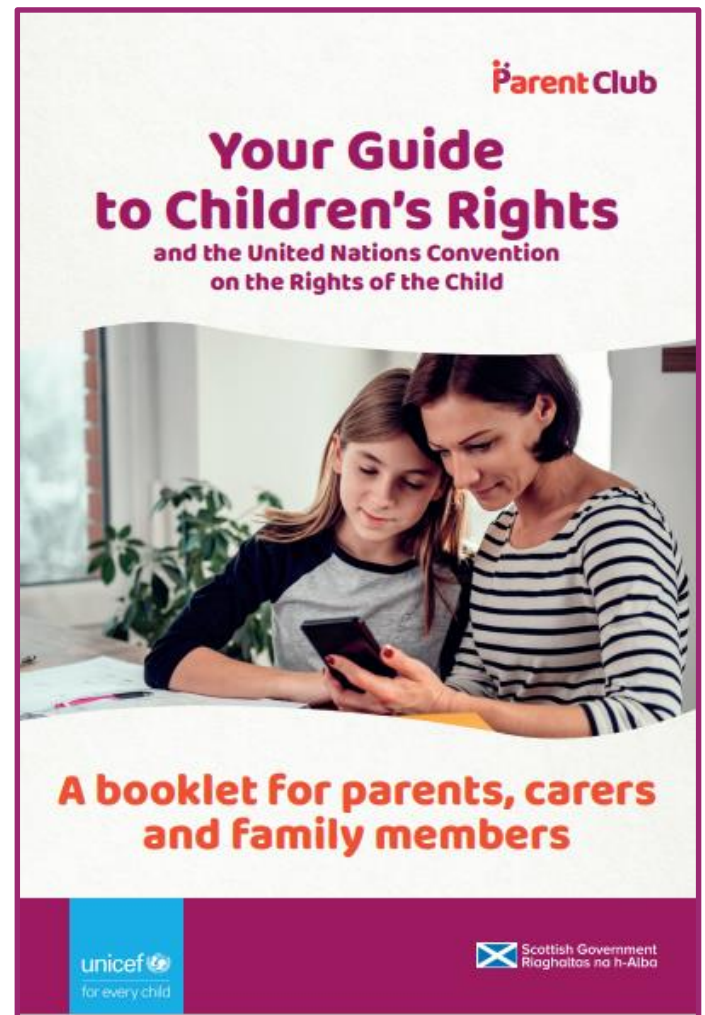


The National Child Protection Guidance Implementation Group meets quarterly to provide strategic oversight and support on some of the more 'gritty issues' that have emerged when local areas have been working on the development of local procedures to support the implementation of the 2021 guidance.

CELCIS is leading the work to develop a child protection resource for children, young people and families which is due to be published in the near future.

A national Learning and Development Co-ordinator has been appointed with a key role in supporting local areas to consider workforce learning to implement changes in line with the national guidance.

Locally, we have been working in partnership with City of Edinburgh, West Lothian and Scottish Borders to develop shared CP Procedures. The Oversight Group, which includes senior leaders from each of the local areas/Chairs of Committees, has met to approve the draft of these procedures and we will now undertake a period of consultation with staff – look out for this coming shortly!



The Scottish Government and Parent Club have launched a new booklet about Children's Rights for parents, carers and family members. It helps explain what children's rights are and introduces the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in a really accessible way. It is a great resource for all of us.

Click on the link to download [Your Guide to Children's Rights](#)

Child Protection



Do you work with a child or young person who is experiencing an eating disorder?

Click on the link to read more and find out how to make a referral to the [New eating disorder service - CAPS](https://www.capsadvocacy.org) ([capsadvocacy.org](https://www.capsadvocacy.org))

The infographic features the CAPS Independent Advocacy logo at the top. It contains several call-to-action elements: a mobile phone icon with the text 'Call the Children and Young People's Advocacy Team: 0131 273 5236', an email icon with 'Email us: ypadvocacy@capsadvocacy.org', a building icon with 'Our office: CAPS Independent Advocacy, Old Stables, Eskmills Park, Station Road, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ', and a laptop icon with 'Find out more about CAPS Independent Advocacy: www.capsadvocacy.org'. A central graphic shows a blue brain with a speech bubble containing the text 'Then you can have an Advocacy Worker to support you'. To the right, a large orange circle with a blue scribble and arrows is surrounded by question marks and a speech bubble that says 'You can have an advocacy worker by your side'. Below this is another speech bubble: 'We only work for you'. At the bottom, it states 'CAPS Independent Advocacy is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Scottish Charity number: SC021772.' and 'Last revised Nov 2022'.

research in practice



Research in Practice brings together academic research, practice expertise and the experiences of people accessing services to develop a range of resources and learning opportunities. They have published a new podcast series which explores the journey of Leeds City Council in developing services that successfully support men. It explores:

- The journey that Leeds City Council has taken to improve their support to fathers, including commissioning specific services for fathers;
- The development of the Caring Dads programme in Leeds;
- An overview of the Caring Dads programme, and the skills used by the team to support the fathers working with the programme; and
- How Social Workers may be able to work more effectively with fathers.

In the podcast, you can hear directly from someone about his experience of attending the Caring Dads programme and from one of the facilitators. Click here to listen to [Caring Dads](#)

Stop It Now!

UK & IRELAND

**Helping prevent
child sexual abuse**

Click here to watch this short video
[Learning from Risk of Online Sexual Abuse \(ROSA\) Project](#)

Around one third of child sexual abuse is carried out by under-18s and online harm is a growing problem as young people's use of technology has increased. To tackle this issue, the Risk of Sexual Abuse (ROSA) project was funded by The RS Macdonald Charitable Trust and ran for three years in Glasgow. During which time the project worked with 67 young people between the ages of 10 and 18 who had exhibited technology-assisted harmful sexual behaviour. These young people were supported to make better choices in relation to their online behaviour and used learning from the project to develop prevention resources in a local high school.

[ROSA Conference: Tackling Technology Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviour – watch the presentations here!](#)

Stop It Now! Scotland hosted a conference to explore current research and best practice around protecting children and young people from harm. Each presentation lasts around 20 minutes long. Click on the links below to view them.

Dr Clare Allely – Reader in Forensic Psychology, University of Salford - [Young people with autistic spectrum disorders who display technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour](#)

Dr Emily Setty – Dept of Criminology, University of Surrey - [Self produced sexual images sharing between adolescents](#)

Dr Jenny Lloyd – Assistant Professor, University of Durham - [Whole school approaches to prevention of technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour](#)

David Russell – Community Safety and Justice Manager, Midlothian Council - [Supporting young gay & bisexual males: online harm & technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour](#)

Laura Nott – Senior Practitioner (Schools), The Lucy Faithfull Foundation [Future directions in preventing technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour](#)

The NSPCC has published a briefing on case reviews published between 2021 and 2022, where neglect was a key factor. Within these case reviews, children died or suffered significant harm (chronic neglect over a long time period co-existing with physical, emotional and sexual abuse, death or significant harm from physical or sexual abuse where neglect was a feature or preceded the abuse. Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) related to unsafe sleeping practices, accidents, suicide or self-harm as a result of the effect of long-term neglect on mental health and neglect of a child's medical needs).

“Neglect consists in persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm. Neglect can arise in the context of systemic stresses such as poverty, and is an indicator of both support and protection needs”.

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021

Learning highlighted the need for all professionals around the child and family (including adult services) to:

- Be aware of children who are more vulnerable to neglect (new-born babies and premature babies, children with disabilities or children with complex health needs
- Develop understanding of the long-term impact of neglect on a teenager’s emotional wellbeing and potential risk of self-harm or suicide);
- Respond to missed appointments – understanding the significance of children not being brought to appointments. Pay attention to untreated health conditions, accidents and injuries;
- Understand the child/young person’s lived experience, remain child-focused and keep focus on the need to improve outcomes for the child/young person;
- Build up a picture of cumulative experiences of neglect and assess parental capacity to change. In doing so, retain professional curiosity and respectful uncertainty ;
- Engage families, provide timely and holistic early help; and
- Undertake robust and comprehensive multi-agency assessments.

Want to know more? Click here [to read the briefing](#)



B B C

NEWS

County lines: 'I was 11 and in a drugs gang - why did nobody save me?'

Every week, children criss-cross the UK on buses and trains, ferrying drugs as part of county lines operations. This practice is not as widespread in Scotland, but there is now evidence of children and young people being sent to Scotland to deal drugs for organised criminal groups. BBC News spent months with one organisation battling to help children who are in danger, hearing young people's stories of abuse and their families' heartbreak, and learning what it takes for them to break free.

County lines is the name given to drug dealing where organised criminal groups (OCGs) use dedicated mobile phone lines to move and supply drugs, usually from cities into smaller towns and rural areas. They exploit vulnerable people, including children and those with mental health or addiction issues, by recruiting them to distribute the drugs, often referred to as 'drug running'.

Signs to look out for:

- repeatedly going missing from school or home and being found in other areas
- having money, new clothes or electronic devices and they can't explain how they paid for them
- getting high numbers of texts or phone calls, being secretive about who they're speaking to
- decline in school or work performance
- significant changes in emotional or physical well-being

Want to read more?

Click on the links here to read:

[Nicole's story](#) on BBC News;

More about how experts are warning that criminals are using [burgers and warm coats](#) to recruit hungry, cold children into 'county lines' gangs in towns and cities across the UK; and

[NSPCC learning on protecting children from county lines](#)



Violence Against Women and Girls

16 days campaign to end Violence Against Women and Girls 2022

For our 2022 programme we ran **24 events**, reaching more than **1,300 people**, and many more through our collective media campaign – this does not include other initiatives that took place in local services and communities.

Our focus was to ‘bring men and boys on board to end VAWG’. Our launch event on Friday 25th November, entitled **What next? Time to get our men and boys involved** was attended by 74 people across East Lothian and Midlothian – staff, volunteers, local Councillors – and it was great to see so many people who used the 16 days background on the MS Teams call – a really powerful message to us all!

We’re in this together....the voice of boys in sexual harassment – Dr Sophie King-Hill

was our keynote speaker at our launch event and with a rise in reports of sexual harassment and ‘rape culture’ Sophie spoke about her new research project, which focuses on those who are ‘the blamed’. She is exploring the lack of boys’ perspective and voice, perceptions of masculinity and the issues around the disproportionate number of boys who carry out sexual harassment and girls. Her early findings include:

- The need to engage boys and young men in their experience of sexual harassment – Sophie says that ‘one of the voices that has been lost in this debate is that of boys – we need to listen to young people and use what they say to inform work in this area’;
- The contradiction between two visions of how they should behave and appear;
- The need for good relationships and sex education;
- Blame is detrimental to the issue; and
- Boys want to talk.

Read more from Sophie here [‘We’re In This Together’ – Sexual harassment in schools: a boys’ voice – Social Sciences](#)

Hear more from Sophie here [Stop Talking about the Weather and Start Talking about Sex | Sophie King-Hill | TEDxSevenoaks - YouTube](#)



Violence Against Women and Girls

WHOSE BLAME IS IT ANYWAY?

a dramatic presentation on
VICTIM BLAMING



As part of 16 days, Women's Aid East and Midlothian hosted a presentation written and performed by survivors of domestic abuse in collaboration with Breeze Productions. The content explored what victim blaming looks and feels like and prompts the audience to consider a different way of viewing women's experiences and the impact of domestic abuse. The group was keen to highlight that the responsibility for abuse lies with perpetrators and our interventions must be shaped by holding abusers to account. WAEMML plans to use key messages from this event for future campaigns.

Here's the rightly proud drama group! They got some great feedback which you can read below.



I've seen the term victim blaming before but that has really helped me see what that term actually means. Things really need to change

A really powerful message presented in such a creative way – very thought provoking

That was just amazing, the message was very clear and relatable I have seen myself on the side of being blamed but also it highlighted I too victim blame at times without even realising it

Violence Against Women and Girls

Your Vision: Support for Young Women in East Lothian

Understanding experiences of unhealthy relationships and sexual assault and how services can be more supportive.

During 16 days we saw the launch of the 'Your Vision' report, with an on-line event attended by 76 staff and volunteers from across East Lothian and Midlothian. This project, funded by East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership, was commissioned to hear from young women in East Lothian about the supports they need.

The report provides substantial evidence that abuse within intimate partner relationships and instances of sexual assault are as prevalent in East Lothian as they are in the rest of Scotland.

Read what young women say they need from services [here](#).

The report concludes: "Offering support that meets the needs of each individual and having choice is incredibly important to young women. They want to feel understood by workers and to be supported by people they relate to; they want to understand what is on offer from different services and what to expect when they contact a service. It seems that young women need validation that they are deserving of support before reaching out. This speaks to the need for better education about relationships and sexual assault in formal education settings".

The report highlights what needs to change to better support young women:

- Raising awareness of what supports are available and who they are for;
- Widening education about abuse and sexual assault to reach those who do not go to school or who have missed formal education; and
- For services to have adequate funding and resource to deliver supports in line with what young people need.

Women's Aid East and Midlothian and Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre are working on changes to their services to better reach young women and the Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Group is also looking at how to take forward the research findings. **How can you take forward the findings of this research in your organisation?** Let us know your plans at emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk

Building on our 16 days theme.....



Watch this one hour panel event which is part of a series of events to explore gender-based approaches to safety. This discusses how men fit into the conversation, how they can be allies to groups more vulnerable than themselves, holding fellow men accountable for inappropriate behaviour, and re-imagining healthy modes of masculine expression. Click here to watch [So What? ... But What If?](#)

Police Scotland's latest Campaign '[Is that me?](#)' calls on men to reflect, take action and stop domestic abuse before it starts. The campaign targets young men, aged 18 – 25 years, and highlights behaviours that in new relationships are abusive and might be indicative of future, escalating abuse. Watch the campaign video [here](#)

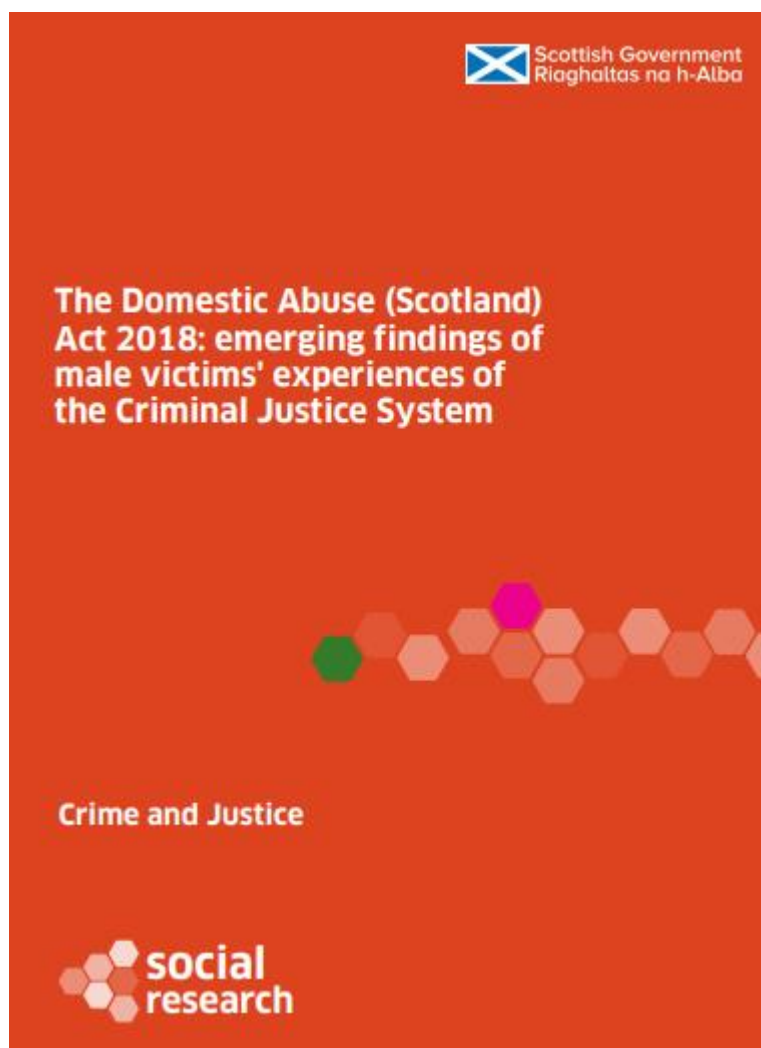
A graphic for a training program with a background of blueberries. It consists of three teal-colored rectangular boxes stacked vertically, containing white text.

**UNDER PRESSURE training
for professionals working
with young people**



This training programme aims to support professionals working with young people to open discussions with them about some of the challenges and pressures they may be facing including: risks of grooming and sexual exploitation, negotiating online safety, engaging in healthy consent-based relationships, and dealing with the pressures to conform to idealised models of 'how to be' men and women. This one day free course can be accessed [here](#) Watch the introductory video [here](#).

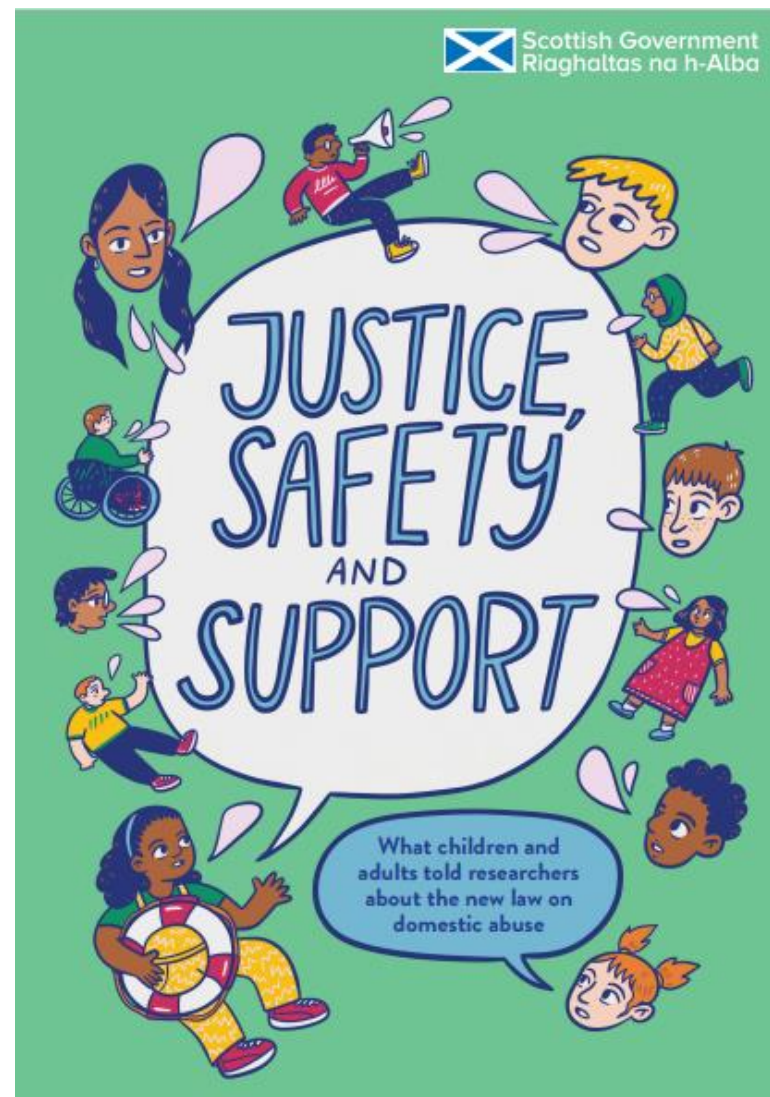
Violence Against Women and Girls



This report presents the findings from a survey which aimed to capture the views and experiences of male adult victims to improve understanding of the operation of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2013 in its first three years of implementation. Although a small scale study of 18 males, a striking finding was that 11 of the 18 respondents had identified as victims of domestic abuse were reported by their partner/ex-partner as perpetrators. The report concluded “In terms of suggestions for improvements, survey respondents emphasised the need to listen to and believe male victims of domestic abuse, including improving police and criminal justice agency training to recognise this and the role men play in parenting and children’s lives”. Read the report [here](#)



This research involved the interview of 22 children and adults across Scotland to find out how speaking to the Police and going to court had been for them. It says “The new law has done lots of good for children and adults who have experienced domestic abuse. People are talking about domestic abuse in a way that’s not just about physical violence any more: it covers all the ways someone can make you feel sad and scared, sometimes over a long period of time. But, there are lots of things about it that aren’t working as well as they should be, including for children. Children’s experiences of domestic abuse need to be taken as seriously as adults’ but people in this research felt the law still doesn’t properly recognise how it affects children”. Read the report [here](#)





Spotlight on Learning Reviews

What is a Learning Review?

Learning from cases where a child or adult has died, been significantly harmed or put at risk of harm is an essential element of improving how agencies work together to appropriately support and intervene to protect children and adults. The overall purpose of a Learning Review is to bring together agencies, individuals and families to jointly learn from what has happened in order to improve systems and practice in the future.

The Scottish Government has published broadly similar sets of guidance for undertaking Learning Reviews in relation to [Child Protection](#) and [Adult Support and Protection](#). We are now using these in East Lothian and Midlothian. Click on those links to read more.

Creating the preconditions for learning

Looking at cases when something has gone wrong can be challenging. Reviewing complex situations can raise anxiety for individuals and organisations – but we know that this does not support open and effective learning. We know that blame and criticism can create defensiveness, which in turn blocks learning. Learning Reviews are not investigations or an enquiry into why a child died or was harmed. Rather, they:

- Are an opportunity for critical reflection to gain greater understanding of complex situations;
- Go beyond individual professional practice to explore what factors in the systems, processes and culture of the organisations contributed to the outcome for the child or adult;
- Focus on understanding how people see things at the time, why things happened as they did and the operating context; and
- Will include an analysis of effective practice as well as what went wrong.



What are the key features of a Learning Review?

A Review Team comes together to review and assess the information and clarify what needs further exploration. Key elements of the process are a Practitioners' event and a Managers' event, which draw out the learning rather than an 'expert' Review Group identifying the learning.

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What is the key features of a Learning Review

- ✓ Inclusiveness, collective learning and staff engagement
- ✓ Support for staff is critical and should be integral to the review process so that they can participate fully in the process, reflect on practice, share knowledge and contribute to the learning as it emerges. It is essential that the Review Team and senior leaders in organisations create and support an positive shared learning culture at all stages
- ✓ A systems approach – it explores the interaction of the individual with the wider context, exploring cultural and organisational barriers, in order to understand why things developed in the way they did
- ✓ Proportionality and flexibility – it is really important to keep the process simple, notwithstanding the situations that are under review will inevitably be complex and diverse
- ✓ Timing and timeliness – it is important to avoid drift and delay in the review process, including the dissemination of the learning. A decision to consider whether to hold a Learning Review should ideally be taken within around six weeks of the initial notification. The recommended timescale for completion of a Learning Review is six to nine months. Whilst other processes, such as criminal proceedings or a Fatal Accident Inquiry, may also be running, the national guidance provides information on liaison with Police Scotland and the Crown Office to ensure that a Learning Review does not prejudice or put in jeopardy any other proceedings.

Sharing the learning from a Learning Review

We should not shy away from sharing the learning locally and nationally. It is important that we do so in a sensitive way that does not identify any individual child, adult or staff member. The new guidance encourages us to share the learning without the need to ‘tell the story’ of what happened. Locally, we will do this through the use of ‘7-minute briefings’, and incorporate the messages and learning into training and briefings.

Contact us

Our Lead Officers support the work of the EMPPC and you can contact them for more information about anything in this newsletter, or about their role:

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Do you have any suggestions for a future article in our newsletter? If so, please get in touch with us at emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk

Our Vision for Public Protection

Everyone has a right to be safe and protected from harm and abuse. We will protect our children, young people and adults in East Lothian and Midlothian by working together and upholding our values.

Our core values of respect, integrity and commitment underpin our work in supporting and protecting all people who may be at risk of harm in our communities.