

**MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUB-GROUP OF THE
REGIONAL STEERING GROUP ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH 2008
2.00pm, HILTON HOTEL, BELFAST**

Present: Liz Shaw (Chair) Southern Health and Social Services Board
Joan McGovern Barnardos
Debbie Mehaffy NI Women's Aid Federation
Pip Jaffa Parents' Advice Centre
Sharon Breslin NSPCC
Angela McLernon DHSSPS

Secretariat: Paul Cassidy Domestic Violence Unit

1. Introductions and Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Hilary Wells, Office of Care & Protection, and Dawn Shaw, NCH.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2008

2.1 The minutes of the meeting on 13 February 2008 were agreed.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 *DENI Representation*

It was agreed that a DENI representative would be invited to the next meeting.

3.2 *Barnardos Risk Assessment Model*

The Chair reported that the Barnardos Risk Assessment model was being used in all Board areas except for the Western Board. It was suggested that Western Board was content that UNOCINI could be used to assess risk. However, it was generally accepted that UNOCINI could not be used alone, as it is not DV specific, and that an additional risk assessment tool, such as the Barnardos model, was required.

3.3 It was agreed that the Chair would write to the Western Board to clarify the position. The lack of engagement of the Western Board would also be raised with RSG.

3.3 It was also reported that the London Safeguarding Board was adopting the Barnardos model for use in London.

4 Action Plan

4.1 The Chair had drawn up an action plan for the Sub-Group based on the main RSG Action Plan and previous discussions. The Plan identified 7 issues for consideration by the Group which were discussed and agreed as follows:

Ensure the voice of children and young people affected by DV is heard.

- a. Agreed.
- b. This had been achieved. However, it should remain an issue for consideration to check what actions had been taken by the Commissioner regarding children and DV. It was noted that the Commissioner's Business Plan had been issued for consultation. This should be checked for mention of DV. If there is no mention, the Group should identify 2 or 3 issues to raise with the Commissioner. Consideration could also be given to a joint press statement, maybe in September.
- c. Agreed. Contact will be made with the NI Youth Forum to establish a meeting in June.

Establish links with the Children's Services Planning DV Sub-Groups etc..

It was agreed that an action should be added about scoping services currently available and identifying unmet need.

Ensure appropriate support is available for those working with children affected by DV

Agreed. Liz, Joan and Pip will meet at Barnardos on 30 May 2008 to consider producing an NI version of the Cafcass guidance on DV.

Development of Contact Services

Agreed. Action on this is ongoing. The Chair has written to Muriel Orr re absence of suitable contact services for children and young people who have been subject to domestic violence.

Changes to the education curriculum etc...

- a. Agreed. DENI representative will be asked to attend the next meeting.
- b. Agreed. Action is ongoing as Chair of RSG and senior officials at DENI meet regularly to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Agencies and those with whom they work have workplace policies on DV.

Agreed.

Ensure information re DV and how to access support and guidance is available on agency Websites

Agreed.

- 4.3 It was further agreed that an action be included about establishing the effectiveness of current models of service delivery within relevant agencies.
- 4.4 It was noted that there is little information available in relation to children with whom agencies are involved where DV is an issue. The point was made that without accurate quantitative information, it is difficult to plan services. It was suggested that a "24 snapshot" involving all agencies at LDVP level would be a useful tool. It was also suggested that this would be a useful area for a piece of research. The possibility of a snapshot will be investigated with LDVPs and, if possible, will be undertaken in October 2008. Enquiries can be made of OFMDFM (equality unit) and NISRA re the possibility of running a snapshot.

5. AOB

5.1 There was no other business.

6. Dates of next meeting

6.1 The next meeting will be on Wednesday 11 June 2008 at 2.00pm, venue to be confirmed.