

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

**WEDNESDAY 31 MAY 2006**

**ROOM 21, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

<b>In attendance:</b>	John Devaney (Chair)	Eastern Health and Social Services Board
	Joan McGovern	Barnardos
	Anne Graham (for Debbie Mehaffey)	Women's Aid Federation
	Caroline Holloway	National Society for the Prevention and Cruelty to Children
	Alister Wallace (for Anne Marks)	Police Service of Northern Ireland
	Liz Shaw	Southern Health and Social Services Board
<b>Apologies:</b>	Pip Jaffa	Parents Advice Centre
	Dawn Shaw	National Children's Home
	Angela McLernon	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
	Master Hilary Wells	Northern Ireland Court Service
<b>Secretariat:</b>	Kevin Shiels	Domestic Violence Unit
	Marie Austin	Domestic Violence Unit

**1. Introductions and Apologies**

- 1.1 Mr Devaney welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Mr Alister Wallace and Ms Anne Graham.

**2. Appointment of Deputy Chair**

- 2.1 Mr Devaney invited members to consider the appointment of a Deputy Chair of the Sub-Group. Members agreed that all members of the Sub-Group should either self-nominate or nominate another member of the

Sub-Group as Deputy Chair. This matter will be considered at the next meeting.

**Action:** All members to either self-nominate or nominate another member of the Sub-Group as Deputy Chair. Returns to be sent by email to Ms Austin by 11 July 2006

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2006**

- 3.1 Members agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2006 without amendment.

### **4. Matters Arising**

#### **4.1 *Ways to access the views of children and young people affected by domestic violence***

It was agreed at the meeting held on 23 February 2006, that Mr Devaney, Ms Pauline Leeson (CiNI) and Ms Joan McGovern should meet with the NI Youth Forum in relation to the Participation Network Initiative, to ensure that domestic violence features in the project from the outset. Mr Devaney informed members that a Chair had not yet been appointed to the NI Youth Forum. However, a meeting would be arranged when the appointment had been made.

#### **4.2 *Ethnic minorities project***

Ms Graham informed members that the recruitment and selection process for the WAF ethnic minorities project was underway. Information on the project is attached at Annex 1. It is expected that the project will start in September 2006.

#### **4.3 *Letters to Justice Gillen and the Children's Commissioner***

Mr Devaney informed members that he had issued two reports - "Research in Practice" by Catherine Humphreys and Audrey Mullender and "Domestic Violence: A literature Review" by Mary Barnish to the Children's Commissioner and to Justice Gillen. A letter of thanks had been received from Justice Gillen who had found both reports instructive. No response had been received from the Children's Commissioner

#### **4.4 *Launch of Guidance for Employers on Developing a Workplace Policy on Domestic Violence and Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence***

- 4.4.1 Mr Shiels informed members that Minister David Hanson had launched the document "Developing a Workplace Policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse - Guidelines for Employers" at Hillsborough Castle on 22 May 2006. A copy of the guidelines was circulated at the meeting. Mr Shiels advised that approximately 4200 copies of the Guidelines would be issued to employers across Northern Ireland (those with more than 10 employees) to encourage them to adopt workplace policies. A short

survey questionnaire was enclosed with the guidance asking employers to indicate their position as one of the 3 following options:

- (a) they intended to introduce a policy;
- (b) they would consider introducing a policy; or
- (c) they had no plans to introduce a policy.

The results of the survey will be analysed and available for any further action agreed by the sub-group.

- 4.4.2 The UK Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence was also launched on the day. Mr Shiels asked that each member contact their own Human Resource Department to encourage them to join the Alliance. Further information on the Alliance can be found at: [www.corporateallianceuk.com](http://www.corporateallianceuk.com)

## **5. Domestic violence training for Trust staff**

- 5.1 Members were asked for their views on the revised draft form "Survey of Domestic Violence Training for Trust Staff". The following suggestions were made:

- Survey should also be issued to each of the four HSS Boards
- Ancillary staff should be included at Question 4

**Note:** The amended survey, along with a covering letter, was issued to the Chief Executive of each Board/Trust on 2 June 2006 for reply by 30 June 2006 and the information will be useful to the Training Working Group which is being established.

## **6. Domestic violence on the school curriculum**

- 6.1 Mr Devaney informed members that he, Mr Shiels and Ms Austin had met representatives from the Department of Education to discuss DE representation on the Regional Steering Group and Children and Young People Sub-Group. A copy of the note of the meeting was circulated and is attached at Annex 2. A representative from the Department of Education will not be available to attend meetings on a regular basis. However, the Department is committed to assist in the development of preventative measures in schools.

**Action:** Mr Shiels to contact Dorina Edgar (Department of Education Pupil Support Unit) regarding the inclusion of domestic violence in the revised DE Child Protection guidance (See 3.1 of note) and to arrange a meeting to discuss the proposed section on domestic violence.

## **7. Children Order Advisory Committee – Best Practice Guidance**

- 7.1 Mr Devaney advised the group that the COAC Best Practice Guidance was currently being revised. Master Wells, Mr Devaney, Ms Maddie Bell (Barnardos) and a number of members of the legal profession are taking the matter forward. Ms Graham informed members that

Women's Aid Federation had submitted a response to the draft document circulated about 18 months ago and asked that Mr Devaney follow up on whether its comments had been taken into consideration. It was suggested that the Sub-Group should have sight of the final draft Guidance for comment.

**Note:** Master wells has informed Mr Devaney that the Women's Aid comments were made available to the Steering Committee. She has agreed to circulate them to the current Domestic Violence Sub-Group for consideration. Master Wells also agreed to forward the revised domestic violence section to the Children and Young People Sub-Group for consideration and comment.

## **8. Children's Safety Education Foundation and Salford City Council pilot - educational safety materials for schools and the community (document attached)**

- 8.1** Members considered 'Children's Safety Education Foundation and Salford City Council pilot - educational safety materials for schools and the community'. It was agreed that this document should be sent to Dorina Edgar for possible inclusion in the resource list for the revised DE Child Protection guidance

**Action:** DV Unit to send document to DE

## **9. Child contact centres**

- 9.1** Mr Shiels reported that the Children and Young People's Funding Package included £500k for the expansion of child contact centre services. The money is year 2 funding, so it will be available in 2007-08. Decisions have not been made as to how the funding will be rolled out. The Office of Law Reform (lead), DHSSPS and the Court Service are taking the matter forward. Existing centres will be contacted to ascertain what services are presently available and consideration will be given to the outcome of research into contact disputes.

**Action:** Mr Shiels agreed to ask Laura McPolin (OLR) to keep the sub-group informed of developments and, depending on progress, maybe to give a presentation to the Sub-Group at some future stage

## **10. Any other business**

- 10.1** Ms Holloway informed members that NSPCC Family Support Services have undertaken to develop 2 pilot projects addressing the specific needs of children and families in Northern Ireland who are affected by Domestic Violence. A briefing paper is attached at Annex 3.

- 10.2** Ms McGovern informed members that she had attended a photographic exhibition 'Behind Closed Doors' which depicts South Asian women's experience of domestic violence in the UK (part of the

Barnardos Phoenix Project). Ms McGovern asked that this exhibition be considered possibly at a future conference if deemed appropriate.

- 10.3 Mr Shiels reported that he, Catherine Reilly as chair of the Information Sub-Group and Sharon Harley had met with AV Browne to consider the development of a Domestic Violence media strategy over a two-year period 2006-2008. So far, the funding available for the media campaign for year 2006/07 is as follows:

*Northern Ireland Office - £50k*

*Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety - £30k*

*Police Service of Northern Ireland - £20k*

*Department of Social Development - £10k*

Mr Shiels advised that a new Scottish TV Ad, depicting psychological abuse, which was shown at the Raising the Standards Conference in February 2006, may be dubbed for use in Northern Ireland (subject to the approval of the Information Sub-Group).

- 10.4 Mr Shiels informed members that Ms Iris Robinson (DUP) had asked 4 Parliamentary Questions on domestic violence. Questions related to the number of deaths in Northern Ireland caused by domestic violence (broken down by gender); the amount of money spent on Refuges in Northern Ireland; and the number of incidents of domestic violence reported in Northern Ireland. The PSNI were unable to provide a gender breakdown of the number of incidents of domestic violence, as this type of breakdown is only available for the number of crimes recorded. The other question related to services available for male victims.

## **11. Date and venue for next meeting**

- 11.1 The date of the next meeting was scheduled for 13 September 2006 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 21, Parliament buildings.

# ANNEX 1

## Equality of Access project

### Aim

*To address the issue of marginalized women and children who face barriers e.g. language, disability, cultural, which block them from accessing Women's Aid services throughout Northern Ireland.*

### Purpose

*The main purpose of this project is to carry out research into marginalized communities in view of the increased number of minority ethnic living in Northern Ireland and draw up recommendations for improvements.*

### Need for project

*This need was clearly shown by our research carried out by 1998 'Violence on the Edge.' The majority of recommendations were put in place at the time, however this research is dated and there is now a need to review and update it and also to expand the remit to look at barriers such as disability. Section 75 clearly supports this equality of service initiative.*

Measurable objective	Target
<b>1. To assess the current position of marginalized groups in Northern Ireland affected by domestic violence.</b>	<b>Research marginalized areas of interest.</b>
<b>2. Specific recommendations to improve equality of access</b>	<b>To include appropriate agencies in research process.</b>
<b>3. Improve equality of access</b>	<b>To produce material in multi-format e.g. brail / different languages.</b>
<b>4. Improve multi-agency approach and equality of access</b>	<b>To improve communication and understanding of domestic violence with multi-agency working with relevant agencies.</b>

## **Activity of project**

1. *To review existing relevant research both internally and externally to Women's Aid*
2. *To formulate process of research.*
3. *Carry out research*
4. *Put recommendations in place and formulate strategic plans.*
5. *Ensure good partner working, created during research process is formulated and maintained.*
6. *Based on recommendations adopt materials to increase equality of access.*
7. *Review success and evaluate project highlighting next steps.*
8. *Exit strategy*

## ANNEX 2

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 6 APRIL 2006 IN ROOM 703 RATHGAEL HOUSE

Present:

Eddie Rooney (DE)  
Jill Fitzgerald (DE)  
Lorraine Finlay (DE)  
Betty Robinson (ETI)  
John Devaney (EHSSB)  
Kevin Shiels (DHSSPS)  
Marie Austin (DHSSPS)

In Attendance:

Debbie Gowan (DE)

#### 1. **Purpose of Meeting**

1.1 The meeting was arranged at DHSSPS's request to discuss:

DE representation on the Regional Steering Group on Domestic Violence.

RSG wishes to seek assistance with developing domestic violence preventative measures in schools.

#### 2. **DE Representation**

2.1 Eddie confirmed that DE has a responsibility to highlight domestic violence issues in schools and is committed to doing so. However, DE has difficulty providing a representative for every group that asks and has assigned a new post to prioritise and co-ordinate health issues.

2.2 It was agreed that DE staff could attend meetings at critical stages, eg to report on progress by 31 December 2006. John agreed it was better to have the work progressed rather than have regular attendance at meetings.

#### 3. **Guidance on Domestic Violence**

##### 3.1 **Written Guidance for Schools**

- The re-write of DE Circular 1999/10 'Pastoral Care: Child Protection' will include information for school staff on dealing with children affected by domestic violence, although it may not be a separate entity.
- The revision work will be a phased/section approach and will be available on the Department's website for ease of access, use and

revision by end-December 2006. The website will have links to relevant sites. Jill will arrange for Dorina Edgar, Pupil Support Unit (PSU), to contact John.

**Action: Jill**

- There may be a need to provide specific guidance for teachers similar in format to the Welsh publication 'Good Practice on Domestic Abuse'. This will be considered by PSU.

**Action: PSU**

### **3.2 Training for Teachers**

- A means of promoting domestic violence awareness among teachers is through new enhanced child protection training being developed by the Education and Library Boards. This training will cascade to teachers through schools' Designated Teachers and the Board's Designated Officers. The current training of Designated Officers will need to be expanded to include domestic violence. DE agreed to explore this.

**Action: PSU**

- John stressed the importance of training providers having local knowledge/expertise and suggested the Women's Aid Federation should be consulted.

### **3.3 Counselling for Pupils**

- It was agreed that any school referral system and effective pupil counselling should provide for domestic violence issues. Those delivering the service should have specific skills in this area.
- Increased resources for counselling provision will be available under the Children and Young People's Package.

### **3.4 The Curriculum**

- CCEA is developing a new Personal Development Programme for schools and is currently working to develop guidance for Years 1 and 5. Year 1 is complete and Year 5 is due to be completed in June 2006.
- The guidance will be submitted to DE for approval. Lorraine will ensure that a copy is forwarded to the Steering Group.

**Action: Lorraine**

## **5. Other Points Discussed**

### **5.1 The Youth Sector**

- There are benefits in incorporating domestic violence issues in youth sector education programmes.

### **5.2 Questionnaire**

- The Steering Group's proposal to issue a questionnaire to all schools about teacher training on domestic violence was agreed, subject to agreement on the content.
- Eddie cautioned that the outcome of the exercise should be clear and the questionnaire carefully worded.
- Kevin agreed to email the questionnaire to Betty for consideration.

**Action Betty/Kevin**

**Debbie Gowan  
12 April 2006**

## ANNEX 3

### **NSPCC Briefing on Piloting Services to Children and Families Affected By Domestic Violence / Abuse.**

NSPCC's Family Support Services within the N.I. Division have recorded increasing numbers of referrals for services specific to the impact of Domestic Abuse/Violence. As a result of this the service has examined how best to respond to the growing demand. In the first instance Caroline Holloway and Sharon Breslin Children's Services Managers with NSPCC spent time with dedicated Domestic Abuse Teams in Leeds and York, researching the services on offer

On the basis of the information and learning we have undertaken to develop 2 pilot projects within the Division, addressing the specific needs of children and families impacted upon by Domestic Violence. The pilots will be in the Foyle Team and the Clanna Family Support Team Belfast. In preparation for the pilots the NSPCC have employed Helen Jones from the Cardiff Domestic Abuse service to train all staff involved in the use of the service model.

#### **Foyle Family Support Domestic Abuse Service Pilot – contact (Sharon Breslin)**

Following consultation with the Trust and in collaboration with Women's Aid (Derry) the Foyle team will pilot a dedicated Domestic Violence Service in partnership with Women's Aid. This has involved developing a number of group work models and individual treatment packages for children and families who have been impacted upon by DVA.

#### **Clanna Family Support Service (Belfast) contact (Caroline Holloway)**

In consultation with the local Trust and a number of other agencies we propose to pilot a parent and child group work intervention as part of the overall package of family support services, we are exploring partnership arrangements with interested parties to provide the service.

In the interests of developing best practice models we intend to have the interventions robustly evaluated. The overall aim is to find a range of interventions, which can be rolled out with N.I. as good practice models.