

Commitment to Family Friendly Practice



By signing up to our Commitment, together we can stand for, and promote positive, equal relationships with families affected by child exploitation.

This commitment has been written by parents and carers working in partnership with Pace whose children have been affected by online abuse, sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation.

Develop a consistent approach & shared understanding



- Recognise that families are affected by child exploitation from outside of the home and are the victims of crime, unless there are clear indicators that the family is involved in the abuse.
- Recognise that contextual and relationship-based safeguarding models better respond to the needs of families affected by child exploitation, rather than traditional child protection models focused on intra-familial abuse.
- Recognise that exploited children are subject to controlling pressures placed on them by their abusers which may impact their ability to exercise 'choice.'
- Recognise that the whole family is being negatively affected by the abuse and is dealing with challenging and traumatic events.
- Offer support, understanding and guidance even when the family may make seemingly irrational decisions, acknowledging that parents do have the safety of their child as their main focus, unless it is proven otherwise.
- To understand that you can provide better outcomes for families by adopting a non-judgemental, sensitive, respectful, inclusive and supportive partnership with parents.
- Respond resiliently to the family's emotional state which may include detachment, anger, frustration, desperation and hopelessness.
- Recognise that by allowing parents to vocalise their distress and share their emotions that they feel less alone and better able to deal with the difficulties they are facing.
- Seek regular supervision and support.
- Support and maintain the parent and child relationship as a safeguarding response and to present a united front with parents in order to undermine the abusers' position that the parents are 'the enemy'.

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Build professional & family partnerships



- Clearly outline, understand and respect one another's specialist roles, expertise and responsibility amongst the safeguarding team and within the family.
- Be able to defer to the specialism of the particular agency and the insight of the family when considering safeguarding.
- Ensure that the family is signposted to relevant information and appropriate support.
- Minimise changes to the family's allocated workers and where there are team changes, to ensure a timely hand-over.
- Work in partnership with parents. This involves:
 - Taking parents concerns seriously.
 - Ensuring parents have the information needed to make decisions.
 - Involving the family in meetings and decisions-making.
 - Keeping parents regularly updated.
 - Involving parents and children in long-term planning.
 - Acknowledging and recording the family's views.
 - Being receptive to parents challenging decisions and actions which may put a child at further risk of harm.

Record & share information professionally



- Sensitive and professionally document the interactions with the family by avoiding victim blaming and derogatory language.
- Record facts, provide sources for information (where it is safe to do so) and include the family's views. If including subjective opinions, this is clearly stated.
- Be clear to parents (and if it is safe to do so, the child) about how information will be shared, with whom and any actions that will be taken as a result.
- Ensure that information is gathered and shared in order to support disruption and prosecution of those involved in the abuse of children.
- Nominate a key person to maintain a chronology of incidents, concerns, information and intelligence which this person shares with the key members of the safeguarding team in a timely way.
- Recognise that there may be significant barriers and risks associated to the family making disclosures due to the control methods of exploiters, which may be compounded by additional issues.
- Whilst gathering information and intelligence and carrying out interviews, seek agreement from the team about the risks involved and ways to minimise risks.

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Be accountable



- Recognise that early intervention and disruption is key in the prevention of ongoing abuse with a long-term impact.
- Act with a sense of urgency when receiving information indicating significant risk.
- Clearly outline, allocate and agree tasks to be undertaken and take responsibility for ensuring action is taken.
- Review safety plans, the effectiveness of action and be prepared to adapt when the plans are ineffective.