



Message from Deborah Lightfoot, LSCB Chair

Welcome to the March issue of the LSCB newsletter. This month we are looking at Substance Misuse and Young People, which has been an issue in our local learning and improvement case reviews.

Substance Misuse and Young People

Public Health England estimates that drug and alcohol harm costs the UK **£36.4 billion every year** – including **£4 billion in NHS costs** alone – with each individual problematic drug user costing the state an estimated £827,000 over the course of their lifetime.

Each year during adolescence a young person doesn't drink alcohol, they are 10% less likely to misuse alcohol as an adult. Delaying the age when teenagers start to drink means their prospects are happier, wealthier and healthier. They are more likely to do well at school and to stay in education, improving their career options. Amongst the school age population, surveys of drug use prevalence have been undertaken in each of the four administrations of the United Kingdom. In England, drug use increased between 1998 and 2003 to a high of 22%, but decreased steadily to 12% in 2010, since when it has been stable. Cannabis continues to be the most commonly used drug throughout the UK with prevalence rates close to those of overall drug use. The use of other drugs is considerably lower.

Recent drug use was 13.3% amongst 16 to 34 year olds and 16.3% amongst 16 to 24 year olds. Recent use of any drug decreased with age; 12.8% of 25 to 29 year olds and 8.6% of 30 to 34 year olds reported recent drug use. After age 25, there was a fairly steady decline with age. Recent cannabis use was also much lower amongst 25 to 34 year olds (7.9% compared to 13.5% for 16 to 24 year olds). The difference between age groups is most pronounced amongst females where more than twice as many 16 to 24 year olds are recent cannabis users compared to 25 to 34 year olds (10.2% compared to 4.4%). Cocaine is the only individual drug where use is higher in the older age group.

Please find some helpful information below:

[**NSPCC: Parents who misuse substances: learning from case reviews**](#)

[**Talk to Frank Website**](#)

[**Mentor UK Website**](#)

[**Mentor Adepis: Risk and Protective Factors**](#)

The Home Office has commissioned research identifying the following as key factors associated with increased risk of taking any drug for 10 to 16 year olds:

- serious anti-social behaviour
- being in trouble at school (including truanting and exclusion)
- friends in trouble
- early smoking
- minor anti-social behaviour.

And key factors associated with increased risk of taking any drug for 17 to 24 year olds:

- anti-social behaviour
- early smoking
- being in trouble at school (including truanting and exclusion)
- behaving impulsively
- belonging to few or no groups

NEW Learning & Improvement Case Reviews

We have published a summary of the Westminster LSCB Serious Case Review regarding the [Southbank International School](#) on our website, which includes good safeguarding challenge questions for any organisation.

Another Local Safeguarding Children Board conducted a Serious Case Review into the death of a child, "Colin". Colin died following an incident, which took place while he was in the care of professionals during a planned school activity.

Learning can be downloaded [here](#).

NEW LSCB Guidance

This month we have published a guide, [LSCB Green Book](#) on safeguarding for voluntary, community and faith groups. It has a model safeguarding policy for organisations. Watch this space for a launch event.

Practitioners can now find our [Missing Children Handbook](#) on our website for guidance around children missing from home and care.

LSCB Training Resources

Kingston and Richmond LSCB Training can be accessed by visiting www.afccpdonline.co.uk. More information about training resources can be found on the Kingston and Richmond LSCB website under [LSCB Training](#).

Thank you to all agencies who have worked so hard locally to publicise
CSE Awareness Day on 18th March.

The DfE has launched a six month national campaign to publicise the reporting of child abuse
"Together we can tackle Child Abuse".

Local agencies can use their materials in their own setting with parents and families. [Find out more here](#).

LSCB Team Update

In the last weeks, the LSCB has been saying goodbye and thank you for all their hard work to two key staff members:

- **LSCB Coordinator for Richmond – Maha Gadher**
- **LSCB Coordinator for Kingston – Vivienne White**

And welcome to Sarah Bennett who continues as CDOP (Child Death Overview Panel) Coordinator for the boroughs and takes over as LSCB Coordinator for Richmond.

You can contact the LSCB with this email: lscb-support@achievingforchildren.org.uk

