

# SAFEGUARDING ADOLESCENTS GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE:

For all those working with adults, children and families



Strategic Partnership Boards  
SAFETY SAFEGUARDING WELLBEING

Jenny  
aged  
22

## ABOUT JENNY

- 22 years old, white British
- Diagnosed with a learning disability and has an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- Lives in supported living accommodation placement
- Long history of Children's Social Care (CSC) involvement with Jenny's family with previous familial concerns for her centred around neglect and domestic abuse

## CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING CONCERNs

- Police were alerted to a sex offender making telephone contact with Jenny at age 15 which she denied when asked about it
- At age 16, Jenny reported an older boy following her after school whom she was unable to describe.
- Some time later as she approached 17, Jenny started returning home from school much later than expected. She told her parents that she had made friends with some 'boys' in the park near her house and was hanging out with them.
- It later came out that these were actually men aged between 20-30 years who were asking to meet her in the park for sex. She later spoke about how on one occasion, one of these men got naked and asked her to touch him. She ran away.
- This came out because Jenny wrote down some thoughts about how she was feeling, that came to the attention of the School Welfare Officer.

In this note, she talked about being sexually active but also expressed fear about boys following her and also about the 'friends' asking her for sex. She also talked about how she was worried that she might one day be raped.

## LEARNING POINTS AND AREAS TO CONSIDER

### BE CURIOUS

Jenny didn't directly disclose what she was going through. It often takes a professional being curious to uncover safeguarding concerns. Being aware of the signs of exploitation is also really important.

### MULTI-AGENCY

Working together with other agencies is really important and effective multi-agency meetings are crucial

### SEND

Some adolescents with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) may be at additional risk out of the family home or professional setting due to their specific needs and abilities.

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Building trust with young people is key. It takes persistence and sometimes relies on that 'reachable moment'

## WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS THIS MADE TO JENNY?

Jenny is well on her way to living independently which includes building her understanding about what healthy relationships are.

She has regular reviews as part of the work done by the SEND team to ensure that she is well equipped to live a safe and healthy life as an adult and has everything in place to support her needs.

## OUTCOME

- The sex offender was found to be in breach of his order and remanded
- Police arrested two of the men in the park for whom there were warrants out
- Jenny was initially reluctant to engage with Nia but her allocated worker was persistent and managed to build trust and a good relationship with her
- As Jenny approached 18 years old she was transferred from CSC to the SEND Team where the following was put in place:
  - Care Act Advocate allocated
  - Placed in supported living accommodation
  - Provided with a personal assistant to support with identifying different types of risk and exploitation to build her independence and resilience

## MULITI AGENCY INTERVENTIONS / SUPPORT

- School contacted MASH
- Multi-agency planning meeting resulted in parents agreeing to collect Jenny from school.
- This led to a referral to the multi-agency Exploitation Risk Panel (ERP) because of the increasing concerns around child sexual exploitation (CSE). The following interventions were put in to place for Jenny:
  - Placed on Child in Need Plan
  - Referred to Nia for support around CSE
  - Joint police / ASB teams deployed to the local park to tackle / disrupt the men gathering in the park due to other reported concerns for other young women
  - Signposting to Sexual Health Outreach Service

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SAFETY SAFEGUARDING WELLBEING

Kal  
aged  
13

## ABOUT KAL

- 13 years old, Asian British
- Lives at home with parents, paternal grandmother and 3 younger siblings, all under the age of 5 years who demand lots of attention
- Parents both work long hours and grandmother is often the main care giver. Kal spent a lot of unsupervised
- Family have had no prior involvement with Children's Social Care (CSC)
- Kal has always been quite shy and seems lacking in self-esteem – does not have many friends

## CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING CONCERNs

- Kal recently arrived at school very intoxicated
- When probed, he got very upset. He shared that he had been feeling bad, low in mood and had even attempted suicide
- Upon further questioning, he disclosed he had befriended some older boys during the Covid-19 lockdown who then got him to sell drugs.
- He said that when he tried to stop they made threats to him and his family. They told him that he 'owed' them and he believed them.
- His parents and grandmother had noticed a significant change in his behaviour during lockdown. His school re-opening is what allowed this issue to be picked up

- It turned out that on one occasion, whilst off school, he tried to phone the police to report criminal activity that he was going to be carrying out in the hope that he would be caught and could tell someone what was happening to him. He was too afraid to go through with it.

## WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS THIS MADE TO KAL AND OTHERS?

What's important about what happened to Kal is that his behaviour i.e. turning up to school intoxicated was seen as a concern and safeguarding issue in the first instance. This was a reachable moment and he was definitely treated as a child first.

Being caught by the police could have been another opportunity for a reachable moment had that happened.

Kal was able to help identify other young people exploited during lockdown and ensure safeguarding services were in place.

## MULITI AGENCY INTERVENTIONS / SUPPORT

- School contacted MASH straight away
- The family were allocated to a Social Worker, CAMHS, Adolescent Support Team (AST) and CGL within 48 hours
- A Child Criminal Exploitation strategy meeting was scheduled and a robust plan put in place to support the family.
- To limit the amount of times Kal would need to repeat his story he worked closely with his allocated Adolescent Support Worker on a weekly basis at school, alongside the CAMHS intervention.
- CGL supported the Adolescent Support Worker to deliver substance misuse sessions by providing resources and tools.
- The Social Worker coordinated overall support to the family and worked closely with the parents and siblings with safety planning and ongoing support.
- A National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral was made and the outcome was positive reasonable grounds for Modern Slavery.

## OUTCOME

Kal and his family worked really well with all the support and his case was stepped down to universal services. Despite the initial distress, his parents reported an overall positive experience and shared how impressed they were with the different teams' ability to personalise services to their needs. Kal has reported improved mental health and was supported to access positive activities which he remains engaged in.

## LEARNING POINTS AND AREAS TO CONSIDER

### REACHABLE MOMENTS

There are times when children are reaching out to get help. This doesn't mean that they will directly ask for help. Reachable moments present ideal opportunities for children to get help.

### BE CURIOUS

Asking the right questions is key to reachable moments as well as wider safeguarding. [Consider the warning sings for CCE and CSE](#)

### MULTI-AGENCY

Working together with other agencies is really important and effective multi-agency working can make all the difference

### CHILD FIRST

This is a crucial part of adolescents safeguarding, especially for those who may seem older, or who regularly need support or interventions. See the child, not the behaviour.



# SAFEGUARDING ADOLESCENTS GOOD PRACTICE: Warning signs for CCE and CSE

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