

VIOLENCE REDUCTION

Good Practice Case Studies

LB Waltham Forest
Critical incident/
Urgent Response

As part of its public health approach to tackling gang-related violence and exploitation, Waltham Forest has developed multi-agency protocols to ensure vulnerable children, young adults, and parents receive the support they need within 48 hours of a serious violent incident occurring.



The problem

In 2018, London South Bank University (LBSU) published the report, “From Postcodes to Profit” (Whittaker et al 2018). The study highlighted the changing nature of gangs over the past decade and how their composition is more fluid and driven by the desire to profit from the sale of drugs rather than the traditional area-based allegiances of the past. An earlier study completed by Professor John Pitts 10 years ago (Pitts, 2007) had established a clear baseline for understanding the complex nature of gangs and their activities.

Vulnerable young people continue to grow up in the deprived corners of the borough and for some the temptation of making money through drugs appears more attractive than legitimate opportunities.

The Serious Case Review of Child C highlighted gaps where opportunities were missed to try and engage a young person. The importance of maximizing the potential of reachable moments in working with children is beginning to be recognized however there is no satisfactory approach to covering the whole country when the child is exposed to “county lines” style operations and is found a distance away from their home.

Proposed solution

The Urgent Response and Critical Incidents Protocol outline the responses to such incidents, and the need to work with key partners to achieve this.

As part of the public health approach to tackling gang-related violence and exploitation Waltham Forest is committed to delivering this approach through our already agreed Think Family 2020 strategic framework, which seeks to build

Partners involved

LB Waltham Forest

Community Safety Team

MOPAC

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community capacity and resilience, intervening early to prevent the escalation of difficulties and to provide evidence-based help for those in acute need, using a whole family approach.

Approach

Once a serious violence incident has occurred, as defined by MOPAC, there is a need to ensure an urgent co-ordination of support following on from the incident.

- a) Ensuring that any response to an incident is managed in a coordinated fashion – via Daily Risk Management meeting (DRM), including police, health, community groups to work in collaboration with a clear roles and responsibility for each agency.
- b) Contact points – Where the young person is in hospital/police custody, within 48 hours, contact to be made with relevant professionals for an update and any safeguarding concerns, working to gain consent where safe to do so
- c) Building a relationship with the young person and assessing needs and a holistic wrap around support to be put in place, working alongside relevant partner agencies. Ensuring that a multi-agency plan is in place. These are critical points in a child/ young person's life and can provide an opportunity to effectively intervene to divert a child from behaviour that may pose a risk of future harm.
- d) Reachable moment – is crucial to delivering a service and engaging with vulnerable children and young people. Time is critical to building a trusted relationship, which is why the response within 48 hours of a critical incident.
- e) Professional curiosity – to look at wider network and map any other young people known/identified/associated and liaising with partner agencies around any safeguarding work of network.
- f) Intelligence & analytical products – providing time sensitive reports, to aid risk assessments, safeguarding planning and decision making.
- g) Assessing tension and creating a Community Impact Assessment – with the police, community, and voluntary groups, including faith groups, specialist

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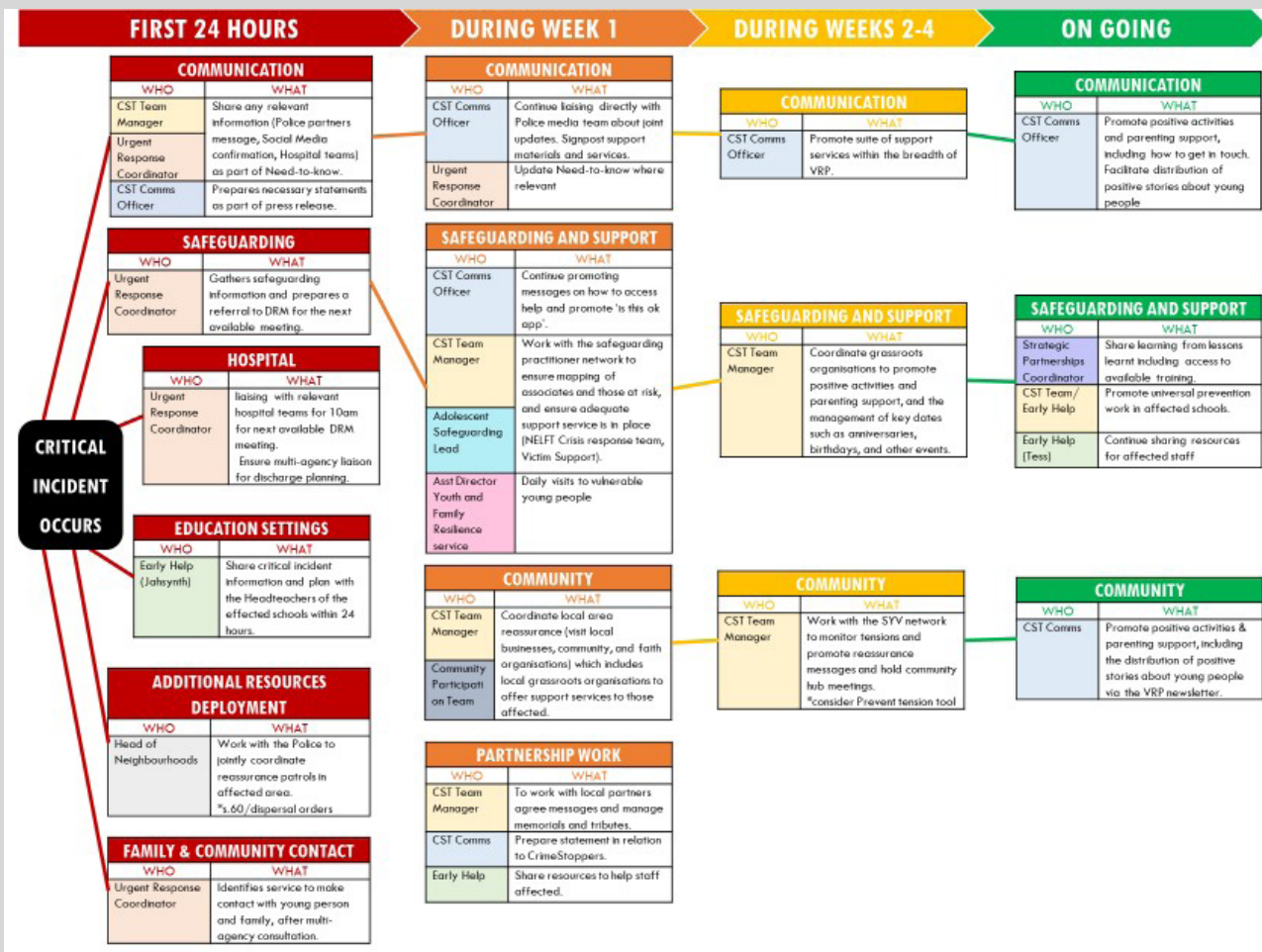
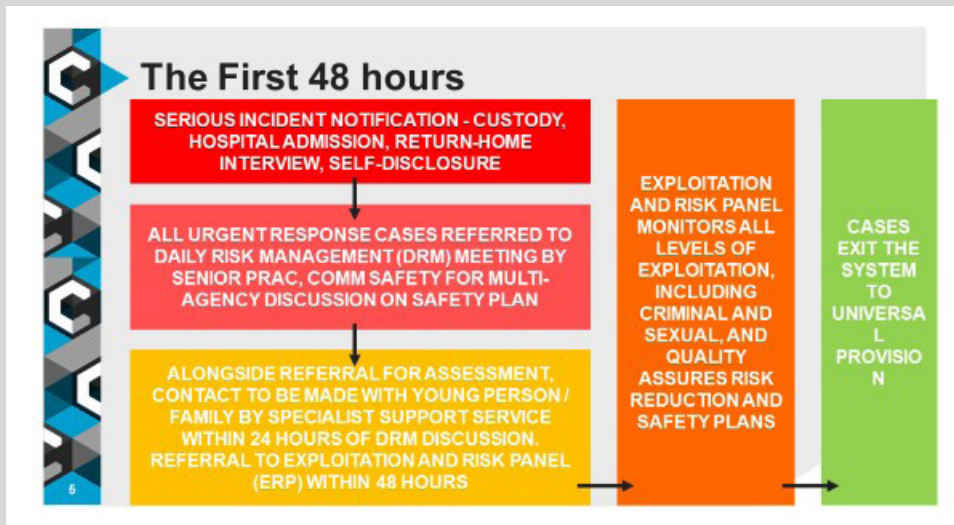
Waltham Forest

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Desired outcomes

The outcomes would be to ensure vulnerable children, young adults, and parents receive the support required, at the most critical time of need, either in a hospital, custody or community setting, and for innovative methods are researched and deployed to maximise engagement with children and young people. For Children and young people to receive intervention packages from the right service and agencies in the reachable moment identified.

For practitioners to respond with urgency and confidence to safeguarding concerns, and all front-line staff can effectively identify, and support families affected by serious youth violence, using innovative methods to maximise engagement with families.

For lessons to be documented, problems researched, and solutions identified, and systems are subject to continuous improvements.

From April 2020 until December 2020, 113 cases were identified as needing an Urgent Response by the Community Safety Team

Current picture

From April 2020 until December 2020, 113 cases were identified as needing an Urgent Response by the Community Safety Team. The cohort mainly included young people who were arrested and in custody, having being arrested for Possession with Intent to Supply (PWITS), possession of a firearm or bladed article; young people who have presented to A&E following incidents of serious youth violence; young people returning home from missing episodes/ indicators around County Lines Exploitation, or young people who have made a disclosure to professionals regarding risk or concerns.

All the cases identified were referred to MASH and the majority referred to the Daily Risk Management meeting (DRM), and referred to specialist support services, with the majority of the cases attempts made to contact the young person/family within 24/48 hours. The aim is for contact to be made on 100% of cases.

New services/pathways have been created to increase the opportunities for reachable moments in Whipp's Cross and the Royal London Hospital where children attend with violence related injuries.

Joined Operation Harbinger (Golden Hour), where within 1 hour of a child being booked in at the custody suite Police contact MASH/EDT so information can be shared which could create a reachable moment.

Created an all-age Multi-agency Exploitation and Risk Panel by merging three existing panels that had oversight of children going missing and children suspected of or being sexually/criminally exploited. The panel quality assures risk plans and safeguarding, and helps identify peer groups and networks, as well as locations that maybe coming to notice where young people are being exploited.



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Next steps

- Multi agency audits are completed
- Gaps and areas of improvement are identified.
- Tool kits, briefings and policies to improve practice in response to audit findings are produced
- Training will continue to be offered to practitioners working across the borough

Contact



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Reduction