



CROYDON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

JANUARY 2016

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The responsibility to keep children safe and well belongs to everyone. The local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do. The core objectives of the LSCB are:
- To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority within which it is established
 - To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose
 - To promote greater understanding of the need to safeguard children and promote their welfare.
- 1.3 A corner stone of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board's (CSCB) work is the provision of information to the public, potential and actual service users, staff working in partner agencies and others interested in children's welfare. We will seek to raise the visual public profile of the CSCB to improve accessibility to safeguarding services and raise awareness of key issues to promote the safety and wellbeing of children within our area.
- 1.4 Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015) does not set out any guidance for LSCBs on communicating and raising awareness. However, to fulfil its objectives and carry out its functions the LSCB needs to raise awareness in the wider community, including faith and minority communities and among statutory and independent agencies, including employers, about how everybody can contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- 1.5 The [LSCB Communications Toolkit](#)¹ published by the DfE in December 2010 gives guidance on how to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders and create a communications plan. This will be referred to by CSCB in the development of this Strategy.

¹ The LSCB Communications Toolkit is an online resource covering a) how to communicate effectively, b) guidance on creating a communications plan, c) case studies highlighting good practice, and d) information on further resources and publications.

2. Communication responsibilities of the CSCB

- 2.1 We want to ensure that the views of children and young people, and their parents and carers, contribute to developing best practice, and that frontline staff and managers are integral to informing learning and improvement.
- 2.2 The CSCB will aim to provide information that is accessible, of a high quality and that meets the needs of the public, service users, potential service users and staff working in partner agencies. This approach is based on the following principles:
- *Information is a service in its own right*
 - *Making services and information accessible to everyone*
 - *Communicating clearly and openly*
 - *Using plain English (e.g. avoiding jargon and explaining acronyms) or giving clear explanations where this is not possible*
 - *Promoting equality and valuing diversity is central to the provision of information*
 - *Keeping information up to date and accurate*
 - *Information may need to be delivered in the spoken word to be effective*
 - *Consultation is a key feature to continuous improvement.*
- 2.4 It is recognised that producing effective information requires careful planning and the following approach should be confirmed at an early stage:
- *Know who your audience is and what they want to see*
 - *Identify your key messages*
 - *Assess the method of production*
 - *Identify where the information is going to be distributed or how if it will be given direct to people*
 - *Understand how it will be used*
 - *Confirm what outcome you want*
 - *Assess when materials will need to be removed and information reviewed*
 - *Actively facilitate the possibilities for involving service users and staff*
 - *Ensure any service you are publicising, or signposting to, is aware of the publicity so they can prepare to meet increased demand.*

3. CSCB's target audience

- 3.1 The main target audiences under this strategy are:
- *Children and young people*
 - *Parents and carers*
 - *Professionals including the voluntary, community and faith organisations, and Board members (including Lay Members)*
 - *General public*

4. What will be communicated?

- 4.1 Key Messages:
- "Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility" (as stated on the home page of the CSCB website)
 - Our commitment to work together to give every child the best start, including an emphasis on early help

- Making sure everyone knows what to do if they are worried about a child
- The importance of reducing the risk of harm in specific circumstances, such as missing children and child sexual exploitation
- Learning from local and national Serious Case Reviews
- The main business priorities for the CSCB and why these are important.

4.2 We will also draw on our mission statement to inform our communications work:

“Croydon Safeguarding Children Board aims to safeguard children by promoting safe practice by all involved and early intervention, as far as is possible, with children/ young people and their parents and carers.

As a Board we will aim to act as a model for working in partnership by continually seeking the common ground between all concerned, predicated on the best safeguarding practice and making decisions on this shared information. This includes challenging actions or failure to act. It is our view that this represents the best way of keeping the focus on the welfare of children and young people of Croydon.”

5. The CSCB Annual Communications Plan

5.1 The CSCB through the Editorial Group will develop an annual plan through the following approach:

- *Identify and understand the wants and needs of the audience*
- *Outline the key messages we need to communicate*
- *Assess the most suitable format for this information*
- *Plan how this information will be distributed*
- *Identify where partner agencies will need to provide support to get the message far & wide.*
- *Decide how success will be evaluated*

5.2 The general methods of communication used by the CSCB will be the:

- *CSCB webpages*
- *CSCB newsletter*
- *Multi-agency training programme*
- *CSCB annual conference*
- *CSCB annual report*
- *Consultations – professionals, carers, families, children and young people*
- *Leaflets*
- *Posters*
- *Advertising and press releases in local papers and newsletters*
- *Emails and Email briefings*
- *Briefings, meetings, seminars and workshops*
- *Banners and stalls*

5.3 Key points of contacts may include:

- *Community events*
- *Libraries*
- *Community and faith centres*

- *Youth forums*
- *GP surgeries and other health clinics*
- *Social media*
- *Schools*
- *Early years provision*
- *Children's centres*
- *Sports centres*

5.4 Alternative formats may need to be used where people have specific communication needs.

6. Resourcing

6.1 The CSCB is funded through the partner agencies. The CSCB has an annual budget that includes ring-fenced sums for information and publicity. Additional funding may be sought from partner agencies for specific projects not identified in the annual CSCB Business Plan.

7. CSCB Annual Calendar of Events

7.1 Each year CSCB will agree a calendar of events, so the public and staff can be informed and consulted on child protection and selected safeguarding children issues. This will include standing items (e.g. quarterly newsletters, summary of Board meetings) and promotion of themed topics (e.g. raising awareness about national Safer Internet Day, Child Safety Week). The annual programme will be agreed by the CSCB Executive.

8. Responsibility for implementing, monitoring and reviewing this Strategy

8.1 All CSCB Sub Groups and working groups will develop targeted information and publicity in relation to specific work plans to implement the CSC Business Plan. Those groups should refer to this strategy.

8.2 The CSCB Editorial Group will be responsible for planning, monitoring and reviewing this strategy and the annual calendar of events, and will report to the CSCB Quality Assurance, Performance & Practice Sub Group (QAPP).

8.3 The communication strategy will be evaluated through a number of means, and feedback will be provided by the CSCB Board Manager and the CSCB Editorial Group Chair to the QAPP Sub Group. This may include all or some of the following:

- *Conference and training evaluation forms*
- *Attendance database for conference and training – including numbers and breakdown of agency attendance*
- *Annual training needs analysis*
- *Monitoring of LSCB website*
- *Monitoring of social media contacts*
- *Audit inspections and peer reviews*
- *Consultations with focus groups*