

NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 8, Winter 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD MANAGER



Welcome to the Winter 2025 edition of our Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board Newsletter!

It's been a busy time across the region since our last published edition. You will see an array of activity has taken place, including another hugely successful National Safeguarding Week in November 2024. This issue also highlights news and updates on important areas of safeguarding policy, practice and training, as well as news and good practice highlights from teams and services from our partner agencies across the region.

We are always keen to promote stories and examples of the excellent work taking place across the region, so please do continue to send in any news or information you would like us to highlight to cysur@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Julie Breckon, Strategic Regional Safeguarding Manager for Children and Adults at Risk

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NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING WEEK 2024

National Safeguarding Week took place this year from 11th to 15th November 2024, with the theme of “The Right Help, at the Right Time”. Throughout the week, both in-person and online events were held, including conferences and webinars that sought to raise awareness and highlight issues currently affecting children and adults at risk. This year the regional programme was also supported by a local events day on Tuesday 12th November, which included a range of events facilitated by each of our partner agencies.

Regional Conference: Right Help at the Right Time The flagship event for the week was a Regional Conference: Right Help at the Right Time. This in-person event was hosted by Ceredigion Local Authority and held at the Medrus Conference Centre, Aberystwyth University. It included workshops that covered a variety of themes and offered a breadth of engaging content focusing on trauma-informed practice using virtual reality, the trauma recovery model: sequencing in practice, and developing services to meet families' needs.

Opening and closing addresses were delivered by Audrey Somerton-Edwards (Statutory Director of Social Services, Ceredigion County Council) and Michael Gray (CWMPAS Chair), who commended regional safeguarding practitioners on their excellent work and underscored the importance of coming together for National Safeguarding Week to collaborate on key safeguarding themes.



NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING WEEK 2024

Events throughout the week

Additional webinars were offered during the week, hosted by third-party partners and opened up to local authority employees across the Mid and West Wales region. These included:



Attendees at the regional conference hosted by Ceredigion County Council at Aberystwyth University

A Thematic Review of Safeguarding Adult

Reviews: This webinar drew on learning from 652 safeguarding adult reviews in England, identifying key insights about the review process.

Myth Busting In Information Sharing In Multi-Agency Safeguarding Work:

This session explored barriers to information sharing and what prevents professionals from passing on information.

The Right Help at the Right Time For Children, Young People and their Families:

An information sharing session previewing the new CYSUR Threshold and eligibility support document and upcoming multiagency safeguarding training.

Thematic Lessons from Child Practice Reviews, Research and Multi-Agency Inspection Reports in Wales:

This webinar presented key themes and messages from Child Practice Reviews and research by the National Independent Safeguarding Board.

Understanding Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus:

Hosted by SHINE Cymru, this event provided an introduction to these conditions and their impact on a child's life and health.

Safeguarding Transgender Young People from Exploitation:

Hosted by the Children's Society, this session explored societal barriers and specific risks faced by transgender children and young people.



Presenters at the regional conference hosted by Ceredigion County Council at Aberystwyth University

Listen up, Speak up Workshop: Hosted by NSPCC, this session highlighted free workshops to help attendees understand how to listen and speak up on behalf of children.

Talk PANTS Campaign: Also hosted by NSPCC, this session focused on having simple and age-appropriate conversations to help keep children safe from sexual abuse.

Learning Resources available online

To extend learning opportunities, a series of webpages were created for all events that ran throughout the week, used for sharing speaker presentations, training resources, videos, and links from the events. These will remain accessible from the National Safeguarding Week 2024 page and it is intended that these pages will continue to be a source of further guidance and support for learning in their respective subject areas. Access [this page here](#).

YOUTH CAFÉ INITIATIVE BY POWYS JUNIOR START WELL BOARD

The Youth Café is an initiative developed by the young people on the Powys Junior Start Well Board (JSWB) to create safe spaces and promote wellbeing for their peers. Recognising a lack of safe places for young people to go after school, the JSWB proposed the development of a youth café. This café aims to provide a secure environment, access to a youth worker if needed, Wi-Fi, and subsidised food to address the current cost of living challenges.

The JSWB conducted research and reached out to existing youth cafés for ideas. Based on their findings, they decided to pilot the youth café in Newtown. Funding was secured to employ a coordinator for six hours per week to conduct consultations and operate the café once a month.

The youth café has been running monthly and has attracted a regular group of young people. It offers a variety of activities, including enjoying coffee or milkshakes, having something to eat, socialising with friends, doing homework, playing board games, and participating in arts and crafts.

Recently, additional funding has been applied for to expand this provision and enhance the services offered.



CSA CENTRE'S DATA INSIGHTS HUB: A TOOL FOR UNDERSTANDING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The CSA Centre have recently launched their new Data Insights Hub, an innovative interactive online dashboard that provides instant access to both local and national data on child sexual abuse in England and Wales. The Data Insights Hub offers a comprehensive suite of features, including:

- **Interactive Maps and Charts:** Visualise official data from local authorities and police forces, alongside up-to-date estimates on the scale of child sexual abuse.
- **Prevalence and Identification Insights:** Gain valuable insights into the prevalence and identification of child sexual abuse.
- **Support Services Information:** Access information on the number of local support services available for children who have been abused and their families.

In addition to aiding decision-making, the Data Insights Hub can inform important decisions about the need for professional training and the scale and distribution of support service provision for victims and survivors. The Hub also holds a decade of official data on child sexual abuse, allowing users to track local trends over time.

The Data Insights Hub is free to use and revisit, and it will be updated annually alongside the CSA Centre's Trends in Official Data report. **Access the Data Insights Hub here:** [CSA Centre's Data Insights Hub](#)



The Data Insights Hub

Instant access to local and national data on child sexual abuse in England and Wales.

NEW SEARCHABLE DIRECTORY OF SUPPORT SERVICES

The CSA Centre is delighted to announce a new searchable directory of support services for anyone seeking help following child sexual abuse. This directory provides information on available support both locally and nationally.

The directory contains over 350 support services, bringing them together into one easy-to-navigate list, reducing the need to search multiple websites. Each support service listing includes contact details, such as website, helpline number, or email address, and information about the types of support offered, including in-person therapy, counselling, helplines, and online chats.

Accessing the directory is completely confidential—no sign-up is required, and no information is saved when you search for support. This resource is also valuable for professionals seeking suitable support for the children and adults they work with. The data will be updated regularly to ensure it remains current.

Find support services and get help today at: [CSA Centre Support Directory](#).

Get support

If you, or someone you know, has concerns of child sexual abuse there are places and people who can help. Find a local support service using the search bar below.

VAWDASV AWARD OF A NEW PERPETRATOR CONTRACT

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, on behalf of the Regional VAWDASV Partnership, recently undertook a procurement exercise to secure the future provision of the regional domestic abuse and stalking perpetrator programmes. The specification included provision for 1:1 support, group work, support for victims and families and specialist stalking perpetrator interventions. It also included the requirement to work alongside Dyfed Powys Police to develop the provision for out of court resolutions for domestic abuse, following the nationally recognised CARA model.

This award was conducted via an open market tender exercise and compliant evaluation process, including a presentation from the preferred bidder. This bidder consists of a consortium of providers, led by Threshold Domestic Abuse services, and supported by Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre, Calan DVS and Forensic Psychology Consultancy.

The contract will commence on 1st April 2025 for an initial period of three (3) years and commissioners will work alongside the providers in the implementation phase to ensure a seamless transition into a new contract.

PUBLISHED CHILD & ADULT PRACTICE REVIEWS



The prime purpose of practice reviews is to identify multi-agency learning and to make recommendations to improve safeguarding practice. Please find below a recently published practice review available on the Child Practice Review [page of our website](#).

CYSUR 6 2021 Extended Child Practice Review

This Child Practice Review relates to two children who were sexually abused in foster care. The learning is relevant to all multi-agency practitioners who work with and support Children Looked After. It will be of particular interest to Child Care Social Workers, Fostering Teams, Fostering Panels and IROs.

The report can be accessed [here](#), and will also be made available on the Published Child Practice Reviews webpage: <https://cysur.wales/child-practice-reviews/>

CHILDREN ON THE MARGINS REPORT

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is conducting an inquiry into children on the margins, focusing on missing children and those vulnerable to criminal exploitation. The Committee published its written report on 5 December. The report will be debated in Plenary during the spring term, with the date yet to be confirmed.

This inquiry builds on the Committee's previous report on radical change for care experienced children. Evidence indicates that care experienced children make up almost 40% of children who go missing in Wales. Other groups at risk of being 'criminalised' include unaccompanied asylum seeker children, children facing challenges within the education system, and black and minority ethnic children and young people.

The inquiry will examine the nature and scale of the issue, including regional variations, and assess the impact of care experience and out-of-area placements on at-risk groups. It will address issues such as information sharing and data collection, and evaluate the effectiveness of devolved policy and practice responses, including Welsh Government oversight and alignment with relevant strategies. Additionally, the inquiry will investigate the interface between devolved and non-devolved policies, such as criminal and youth justice.

For more details, you can read the full report here: [Children on the Margins Report](#). The full report is [available here](#).



THE WOMEN'S HEALTH PLAN FOR WALES

The first Women's Health Plan for Wales was launched in December, outlining a 10-year vision to improve healthcare services for women. Research indicates that while women live longer than men, they experience fewer years free from disability, wait longer for pain relief, and often have their symptoms dismissed.

Created by the National Strategic Clinical Network for Women's Health, the plan aims to close the gender health gap by providing better health services for women, ensuring they are listened to, and their health needs are understood. Based on feedback from around 4,000 women across Wales, the plan includes nearly 60 actions across eight priority areas to improve healthcare for women throughout their lifetime.

The plan covers:

- ⇒ Menstrual Health
- ⇒ Endometriosis and Adenomyosis
- ⇒ Contraception, Post-Natal Contraception, and Abortion Care
- ⇒ Preconception Health
- ⇒ Pelvic Health and Incontinence
- ⇒ Menopause
- ⇒ Violence against Women and Girls
- ⇒ Ageing Well and Long-Term Conditions Across the Life Course

The governance and implementation of the plan will be overseen by the Executive, with annual reports provided to the Welsh Government on behalf of NHS Wales.

For more details, you can read or download the plan here: [The Women's Health Plan for Wales](#)



NEW REGIONAL VAWDASV PARTNERSHIP PODCAST SERIES

The regional work of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse, and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) partnership is crucial in raising awareness, providing support, and driving change to protect and empower victims and survivors. Rolling out this work, their new podcast series features a range of guests who bring diverse perspectives on the importance of Community Ambassadors within a domestic abuse setting.

Please find below the links to their new regional VAWDASV Partnership Podcast Series. Episode 1, the Community Ambassador podcast, which is now available to download. This offers first-hand experiences from Ambassadors and ways you can get involved.

You can access the podcast at the following places:



⇒ [Spotify](#)

⇒ [Apple](#)

⇒ [Pocket Casts](#)

⇒ [Podcast Addict](#)

⇒ [Deezer](#)

⇒ [Player FM](#)

(Click the links to follow)

A second podcast episode on “Post Separation Abuse” will be added to the series in late January.

SAFER SLEEP WEEK: 10TH - 16TH MARCH 2025

Safer Sleep Week, organised by The Lullaby Trust, will take place from 10th to 16th March 2025. This national awareness campaign aims to raise awareness of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and provide simple advice to reduce the risk of it occurring.

During Safer Sleep Week, The Lullaby Trust will focus on what baby sleep should look like and when parents might want to seek advice. They will also debunk common myths about baby sleep and offer support for parents feeling sleep-deprived.

How to Get Involved

Anyone can get involved by displaying Safer Sleep Week posters to raise awareness, registering to fundraise and receive support from The Lullaby Trust, liking, sharing, and posting about #SaferSleepWeek on social media to help reach more families with life-saving advice.

For professionals, a variety of resources are available to help keep babies safe and empower families with trusted information. This includes a seven minute briefing, guides and NHS advice. Please visit our website for more: [Safer Sleep](#)



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru

Mid and West Wales
Fire and Rescue Service



ALL OUR FIRE STATIONS ARE A

SAFE HAVEN

Any member of the public

Including children and young people
can go to a fire station if they feel unsafe
in any situation.

**If crews are out and you need
immediate help, please ring 999**

We're always open and we're always here for you.

www.mawwfire.gov.uk

BRIEFING: AGEISM AND THE ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE



Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru Older People's Commissioner for Wales

The independent Older People's Commissioner for Wales is dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights of older people living in Wales. A key priority for the Commissioner is to stop the abuse of older people in all its forms.

This briefing has been informed by discussions with a small group of colleagues from academia and the specialist third sector. It begins with a short overview of the abuse of older people, followed by a section on 'ageism' that explores what is meant by ageism and examines the ways it is manifested within society.

The briefing then examines the links between ageism and the abuse of older people and considers the role of ageism in shaping organisational responses to that abuse.

Within the final sections, there are some reflective questions to encourage practitioners and organisations to think more deeply about some of the issues raised. Additionally, some helpful resources and further reading are included to encourage reflection upon the issues in more detail.

For more information, you can access the full briefing here: [Ageism and the Abuse of Older People](#).

NEW COURSE ON COERCIVE CONTROL LAUNCHED BY PEMBROKESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



To celebrate National Safeguarding Week, Pembrokeshire County Council has launched a brand-new course as part of their safeguarding suite on Coercive Control.

The course has several learning objectives, including:

- Understanding what coercive control is
- Recognising the signs of coercive abuse
- Knowing what actions to take to safeguard victims
- Learning about the support available

The course is open to all Pembrokeshire County Council employees and will take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

For more information about this course, please contact pod@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

POWYS CHILD EXPLOITATION TEAM'S NEW STRATEGIC MULTI-AGENCY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Powys Child Exploitation Team has been finalising a new strategic multi-agency implementation plan aimed at preventing, protecting, and supporting children at heightened risk of exploitation. This plan builds upon existing successful initiatives while encouraging creative approaches to deliver for children, young people, and families in Powys.

A key focus within the prevent agenda is internet safety. Recently, the team facilitated an internet safety stall at the Newtown Food Festival, engaging with over 80 people. Additionally, an in-house stall at County Hall was set up to engage with staff and members who may also be parents. Collaborating with schools in Machynlleth and Ystradgynlais, the team worked with Stop It Now Wales to facilitate two internet safety and digital resilience evening sessions for parents and community members.

The quarterly Community of Practice sessions continue to be well attended by agencies across Powys. The most recent session had 58 attendees and was led by Nina Maxwell from CASCADE, who introduced the Complex Safeguarding Wales toolkit based on findings from a two-year Health and Care Research project. The session also included contributions from Action for Children, providing expert advice on how to talk to young people about exploitation and share information without increasing risk to them.



SAFEGUARDING LINC: ENHANCING PROTECTION FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Safeguarding Linc is a new project sponsored by the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board. This initiative aims to integrate data from Carmarthenshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council, Dyfed Powys Police, and Hywel Dda University Health Board to enhance and support the protection of vulnerable children.

A grant of £99k has been secured from the Welsh Local Government Association to develop a prototype system that integrates markers from different organisations. This system is designed to complement professional decision-making and support earlier interventions for children on the Child Protection Register or subject to a Section 47 discussion. An integrated tool or system like this does not currently exist in the UK.

Key project steps include:

- Identifying and agreeing on an initial set of markers from each organisation
- Developing information governance principles
- Matching data across systems
- Developing a regional cloud-based solution for data hosting and management
- Creating a data visualisation tool
- Working with two social services teams (one in Carmarthen and one in Pembrokeshire) to test the system and embed it in practice

Public sector partners will collaborate on this important initiative, with Senior Responsible Officers (SROs) and data leads based within each organisation.

HOMICIDE TIMELINE TRAINING

The regional VAWDASV team are delighted to announce that they have secured an additional half-day session of Professor Jane Monckton-Smith's excellent Homicide Timeline training. This session will be delivered across the region via MS Teams.

Date and Time:

19th March 2025, 10am-2pm

The session will be delivered in a webinar style. Invitations for all sessions will be emailed out upon receiving expressions of interest which can be emailed to Natalie Hancock at NHancock@carmarthenshire.gov.uk.

About Professor Jane Monckton-Smith

Professor Jane Monckton-Smith is a Professor of Public Protection at the University of Gloucestershire. She is an internationally renowned expert in the fields of coercive control, stalking, and domestic homicide. Her pioneering research has significantly contributed to understanding and preventing interpersonal violence. Professor Monckton-Smith has closely analysed over 400 murders and works with professionals to review homicides and provide training.

POVERTY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES: NEW RESEARCH BY NSPCC AND UNICEF UK

Opening Doors:

Access to early childhood services for families impacted by poverty in the UK

December 2024



UNITED KINGDOM
unicef
for every child

NSPCC

The NSPCC and UNICEF UK have recently published a significant report exploring the challenges low-income families face in accessing early childhood services across the UK. This comprehensive research is based on an evidence review, interviews with professionals, and insights from a focus group and online survey involving parents and carers.

Findings show that families living on low incomes experience barriers preventing them from accessing and positively experiencing early childhood services at an interpersonal, service and systemic level.

The report outlines several key recommendations for the UK Government to address these challenges:

- **Child Poverty Strategy:** Develop a UK-wide Child Poverty Strategy with measurable goals to improve access to early childhood services for low-income families.
- **Rebuild and Reform:** Design and implement a clear plan to rebuild and reform early childhood services to ensure they are accessible and effective.
- **Gateway to Support:** Position early childhood services as a gateway to broader support and advice for families experiencing poverty.

These recommendations aim to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for low-income families, ensuring that all children have the opportunity to benefit from early childhood services.

For more detailed insights and to read the full report, visit: NSPCC and UNICEF UK Report. Read [the report here](#).

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM) UK

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) UK is running a project to support and develop the capacities of UK support providers in the voluntary return and reintegration of survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking.

They are inviting a wide range of support providers, including NGOs and government agencies working with survivors, to participate and share their experiences and highlight key challenges through interviews, surveys, and focus groups. Based on this research, IOM will provide training and guidance on identified areas of need and detailed information on reintegration services available in Albania, Brazil, China, India, and Pakistan.

For more information, please contact Laura at lschack@iom.int.

HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION SHARING IN SAFEGUARDING

During a recent webinar on the importance of information sharing, 'Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners' was highlighted by the presenter as a valuable resource. This guide, published by the Department for Education, provides essential advice and best practices for professionals involved in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

The document covers key principles of information sharing, including when and how to share information effectively while maintaining confidentiality and data protection standards. It supports practitioners in making informed decisions that prioritise the safety and well-being of those at risk.

This advice is crucial for anyone working in safeguarding roles, including social workers, healthcare professionals, educators, and law enforcement officers. By following the guidelines, practitioners can ensure they are sharing information responsibly and effectively to protect those at risk.

To access the full document, visit [Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners](#).



Information Sharing

Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers

May 2024

HELP OLDER PEOPLE ACROSS WALES TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD



As the Older People's Commissioner for Wales develops her Strategy and Work Programme, she is keen to hear from as many older people as possible from across Wales to help shape the action she delivers.

She wants to reach out as widely as possible to capture the voices and experiences of older people from a wide range of backgrounds and communities. To achieve this, she has created a short questionnaire and hopes local practitioners can help by sharing it with the older people you work with or support, encouraging them to get in touch and have their say.

If you would like any hard copies of the questionnaire to distribute to older people, which can be returned via freepost, please [contact her office](#). The questionnaire can also be completed online here: www.olderpeople.wales/haveyoursay. Older people who wish to share their views and ideas over the phone can also contact her team on 03442 640 670.

In addition to hearing from older people across Wales, she also wants to hear from the organisations and stakeholders that work with and support them about the kinds of issues they are seeing and where action is needed to deliver improvements for older people.

UPCOMING AWARENESS DAYS

Please find upcoming awareness day dates for your diaries. Remember to follow us on social media for links and resources that support each of these days.

March

1st March	Self-Harm Awareness Day
8th March	International Women's Day
11th -17th March	Safer Sleep Week
15th March	Young Carers Action Day
18th March	National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day
18th March	World Social Work Day

April

2nd April	World Autism Day
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May

12th -18th May	Mental Health Awareness Week
12th -18th May	Hoarding Awareness Week
25th May	International Missing Children Day

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