09:00 Registration, refreshments and exhibition

09:30 Welcome
  • Peter Wanless, chief executive, NSPCC

09:45 Keynote: A fine balance: how can we best walk the tightrope between support and protection?
  Isabelle Trowler will look at how we can best combine the strengths of child protection practice alongside the strengths of family and community. She will focus on drawing together the great commonalities (and potential pitfalls) of contemporary child protection practice, explore the key points of vulnerability for children, and take the opportunity to set a vision for practice fit for the 21st century, within a frame of hope and determination.
  • Isabelle Trowler, chief social worker for children and families

10:05 It takes a village to raise a child, but is the village equipped?
  Dr Carmen Chan will provide an overview of the science and psychology of developmental trauma, and will explore the impact of trauma on children’s brains, bodies and behaviour. The session will also introduce the key concepts of trauma-informed care, and how teams can effectively promote trauma-informed approaches within their practice to support healthy child development.
  • Dr Carmen Chan, clinical psychologist and service lead, Horizon

10:40 The child I’ll never forget
  This forum will bring together speakers from education, health and law to share their personal stories, so that together we can explore the emotional impact of working in child protection, its meaningfulness and its challenges.

11:25 Morning refreshments and exhibition

11:55 Breakout sessions

Breakout 1: Infant mental health and the impact on child development
  Brain development is most rapid in the womb and in the early years of life. Millions of neural connections are made; building the brain architecture upon which future development will rest. Relationships are fundamental to healthy development, and this begins before birth. If a child’s emotional environment feels unsafe, they may learn to ‘miscue’ their feelings, and unmet needs can lead to significant problems later on. In this session delegates will learn about the latest evidence in the field of infant mental health and how it is being used in practice in both antenatal education and clinical settings.
  • Chair: Dr Camila Rosan, head of early years, Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families
  • Dr Karen Bateson, parent head of clinical strategy and development, Parent Infant Partnership
  • Dr Nicola Cosgrave, clinical director - London Infant and Family Team, South London and Maudsley NHS foundation trust
  • Mojisola Oderinwale, Baby Steps facilitator, Lambeth Early Action Partnership
Breakout 2: On the frontline – what trauma-informed approaches look like in practice

Hear from change-makers from the worlds of education, policing, children's residential care, and local authority frontline support who are challenging the status quo. Panellists will explore how trauma-informed care starts with an awareness that any individual may have a history of trauma, and discuss how this awareness can inform how services and systems are configured and how we communicate with and support service users. They will reflect on their own experiences of embedding trauma-informed approaches, and share ideas for delegates to consider applying in their own practice.

• Chair: Shelley Shaw, development and impact manager, Plymouth Together for Childhood, NSPCC
• Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang, director, Lighthouse
• Meera Bhayani, team leader, Family Support - North Locality
• Shaun Kelly, partnership lead, Early Action Together, South Wales Police
• Leanne Forde-Nassey, head teacher, The Key Education Centre

Breakout 3: Preventing and responding to peer-on-peer sexual abuse in schools

Schools may be involved at many stages in recognising and managing cases of peer-on-peer sexual abuse from prevention to early response, and then through referral into the multi-agency and on to support for young people and their families. While schools are often at the forefront of sexual harm prevention, multi-agency partnerships around schools can both contribute to and enable this approach. This session explores what is being done in schools in Birmingham and what is available nationally to help schools respond to this issue.

• Chair: Pat Branigan, development and impact manager, NSPCC
• Sarah Bloomer, director of safeguarding, Academy Transformation Trust
• Katy Tomkinson, social worker, Together for Childhood, Stoke-on-Trent team, NSPCC
• Antionette Jackson, designated safeguarding lead, Bristnall Hall Academy

Breakout 4: Are you listening? Responding to disclosures of abuse and neglect (repeated)

What stops children and young people from disclosing abuse and neglect? How can adults be better equipped to respond to disclosures? Join this interactive session and learn about the latest research on children's disclosure journeys. Delegates will contribute to discussions about the challenges that adults face in responding to children’s disclosures and leave with top tips designed to help adults feel more confident when managing disclosures.

• Dr Debra Allnock, senior research fellow, University of Bedfordshire
• Dr Sarah Witcombe-Hayes, senior policy researcher, NSPCC Wales
Breakout 5: Collective responsibility – addressing domestic abuse case study
This case study explores a child’s experience of growing up in a household with domestic abuse, and how it impacts on their physical and emotional wellbeing. Delegates will be asked to explore how children experience domestic abuse, the complexities of the relationship towards their abusive and non-abusive parent and what impact the process of disclosure of abuse can have.

• Kate Maher, senior policy advisor, Action for Children

12:55 Lunch and exhibition

13:55 “Can I go out and play?” Using risky play and child-led learning to transform wellbeing, safeguarding and academic outcomes
At Hanover Primary School a more child-centred approach is being taken to teaching the youngest children. Jack Sloan, headteacher, will argue that whilst the world around our children has changed beyond all compare, a combination of government policy, the pressure of high-stakes testing and a reluctance to heed international research has meant schools have not readily adapted to these changes. This disconnect puts enormous strain on children, and can lead to social and emotional issues later in life. Jack will share the journey the school has been on, and the profoundly positive impact it is having on pupils’ wellbeing, safeguarding and academic outcomes.

• Jack Sloan, head teacher, Hanover Primary School

14:10 Breakout sessions

Breakout 1: Walk in our shoes – children and young people talk about their experiences of navigating the care system
This highly interactive training session led by young people in care, will help practitioners develop insight into the lived experiences of children and young people as they navigate the care system and provide them with practical skills to support them through this journey. There are a range of activities that mean that you’ll have to get up, move around and participate. It’s an opportunity worth taking!

• Care experienced young people, London Borough of Hillingdon’s Children in Care Council

• Helen Smith, principal social worker for children and corporate parenting manager, London Borough of Hillingdon

Breakout 2: Artificial intelligence and machine learning to predict children at risk
New frontiers are opening up in the way we use big data and machine learning, and the applications are vast. Could this same technology be used in the field of children’s social care? Could it assist hard-pressed practitioners in their work of identifying families where early help is needed? Could machines do as good a job as humans? And can we do it ethically? This session will explore the use of machine learning in children’s social care, and will be an opportunity to debate the opportunities and challenges posed by this technology.

• Michael Sanders, executive director, What Works Centre for Children’s Social Care

• Rohan Grove, director of behavioural insights, Competition and Markets Authority
Conference agenda day 1*

Breakout 3: I am me - how children's individual characteristics and identities influence their behaviour online
This session will explore how children's identities and individual characteristics influence their behaviour online. Focusing on LGBTQ+, special educational needs and disability (SEND) and faith children, professionals working in these areas will reflect on the risks and opportunities faced by these different groups, as well as offering practical advice on keeping them safe.

- Charlotte Aynsley, director, E-safety Training and Consultancy
- Catherine Bewley, head of sexual violence and young people’s services, Galop
- Sarah Webb, LGBT+ young people’s specialist advocate, Galop
- Elizabeth Thomas, young people’s co-ordinator, RESPOND
- Shaukat Warraich, CEO, Faith Associates

Breakout 4: Are you listening? Responding to disclosures of abuse and neglect (repeated)
What stops children and young people from disclosing abuse and neglect? How can adults be better equipped to respond to disclosures? Join this interactive session and learn about the latest research on children’s disclosure journeys. Delegates will contribute to discussions about the challenges that adults face in responding to children’s disclosures and leave with top tips designed to help adults feel more confident when managing disclosures.

- Dr Debra Allnock, senior research fellow, University of Bedfordshire
- Dr Sarah Witcombe-Hayes, senior policy researcher, NSPCC Wales

Breakout 5: Collective responsibility - the impact of neglect on brain development case study
This case study will explore how emotional and physical neglect can impact on an infant’s brain development. Delegates will be asked to identify and explore how to identify signs of neglect in pre-verbal infants and what long-term effects this could have on their wellbeing. It will also explore ways in which professionals can intervene with families where neglect is taking place and develop best practice on how to support children who are experiencing this.

15:10 Afternoon refreshments and exhibition
15:50 Digital intimacies: What increasing visibility online means for young people’s privacy, relationships, and safety
The digital age has made new forms of connection possible, enabling ‘digital intimacies’ including the many practices of communicating, producing and sharing intimate content. This session will introduce the concept of digital intimacies – recognising the complexities of digital/online cultures and offline experiences, their risks and rewards for young people – and will explore how youth practice and education might respond to teens’ increasing visibility online, and what all this means for traditional ideas of privacy, intimate relationships and keeping children safe online.

- Clarissa Smith, professor of sexual cultures at the University of Sunderland
- Alice Hoyle, relationships, sex and health education advisory teacher

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Registered charity England and Wales 216401 and Scotland SC037717. J20191456
16:30 Rethinking adolescent safeguarding
This session will explore key messages from recent research around adolescent safeguarding. Dez Holmes will argue that the emergence of complex, contemporary harms facing young people requires a safeguarding response which is explicitly contextual, developmental and relational. She will highlight the interdependency of protection and participation in keeping teenagers safe, and will ask why parents are not routinely treated as partners in safeguarding.

• Dez Holmes, director, Research in Practice

17:00 Closing comments
• Helen Westerman, service head, local campaigns, NSPCC

17:15 Drinks reception

18:15 Conference end

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Conference agenda day 2

08:00 Registration and exhibition

08:30 Breakfast session – Mental health in pregnancy and the first year: A fair start for every family
Up to one in five mums and one in ten dads are affected by perinatal mental health problems. This panel will discuss the impact of perinatal mental health problems on parents and babies, and why it’s important that parents can access the right support at the right time to give their babies the best start in life.

09:20 Welcome

• Helen Westerman, service head, local campaigns, NSPCC

09:30 Keynote: A victim centric approach: reducing the availability of child sexual abuse material and supporting survivors
Lianna will inform delegates of the work of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P), who assist in the location of missing and sexually exploited children and provide education programmes on child personal safety. Lianna will showcase Project Arachnid, a ground-breaking tool that detects and requests the removal of child sexual abuse images on the Internet, and the Phoenix 11, a group of survivors who work to increase public awareness about the widespread issue of online child sexual abuse material and the lifelong impacts of its distribution on the Internet. Critical information about C3P’s child rights and protection framework will also be shared.

• Lianna McDonald, executive director of Canadian Centre for Child Protection

10:05 Championing change: Recognising and responding to the impact of domestic abuse on children
In this session, Dame Vera Baird will explore the impact of domestic abuse on children, and what professionals and policy makers can do to ensure that they are more effectively protected and supported to recover. She will also look at how society can shift cultural understandings of domestic abuse beyond identifying children as ‘witnesses’ and what needs to therefore shift in the response from public services and in the policy landscape. And, finally, Dame Vera Baird will highlight what work can be done on a local level to ensure these shifts take place.

• Dame Vera Baird, the victims’ commissioner for England and Wales

10:30 Morning refreshments and exhibition

11:00 Breakout sessions

Breakout 1: Poverty – can we ensure everyone has a hopeful childhood?
Across the UK, 1 in 3 children are living in poverty, making it harder for parents to meet their children’s needs. This session will look at poverty in the context of the current system of support available to families and consider how we move towards policy and practice development that is optimistic, non-stigmatising and solution-focussed for children and communities.

• Chair: Carla Malseed, local campaigns manager - Scotland, NSPCC
• David Bradley, England development manager - UK Cost of the School Day, CPAG
• Peter Kelly, director, The Poverty Alliance

Conference agenda day 2*

Breakout 2: What schools and community groups can learn from each other in relation to contextual safeguarding
This session introduces contextual safeguarding as an approach that can be used by education and community organisations alike, and considers practical applications developed by partner organisations in Hackney. Introducing some of the resources available from the Contextual Safeguarding Network, it invites delegates to think about how the approach might be relevant to their work.

- James Sykes, education safeguarding consultant – schools, safeguarding in education team, Hackney Learning Trust

Breakout 3: Building the skills to recognise and respond to suicidal behaviour
Suicide is the leading cause of death in young people, with over 200 school children being lost to suicide each year. In an open, collaborative session, panel members will share their practice expertise and knowledge of the latest research findings on the prevalence and risk factors for suicide in young people. The session will also provide delegates with practical advice on how to recognise and respond to suicidal behaviour, how to have open and supportive conversations with young people about suicide, and how to promote young peoples’ positive mental health.

- Mairead Monds, Childline service manager, NSPCC
- Sean Graham, suicide prevention advisor, Papyrus UK
- Charlotte Highcock, Hopeline UK manager, Papyrus UK

Breakout 4: Are you listening? Responding to disclosures of abuse and neglect (repeated)
What stops children and young people from disclosing abuse and neglect? How can adults be better equipped to respond to disclosures? Join this interactive session and learn about the latest research on children’s disclosure journeys. Delegates will contribute to discussions about the challenges that adults face in responding to children’s disclosures and leave with top tips designed to help adults feel more confident when managing disclosures.

- Dr Debra Allnock, senior research fellow, University of Bedfordshire
- Dr Sarah Witcombe-Hayes, senior policy researcher, NSPCC Wales

Breakout 5: Collective responsibility – sending ‘nudes’ case study
Self Generated Indecent Images: This case study explores a young person’s experiences in sending a naked image of themselves and how it impacted them in all areas of life. Delegates will be asked to explore how young people view the online world, the pressures they may face around sexting and sending images and will develop best practice on how to support young people online.

12:00 Lunch and exhibition
13:00 Keynote: Implications for practice from the issues raised in the triennial analysis of serious case reviews
Professor Marian Brandon will present the key findings from the latest triennial analysis of serious case reviews, providing an overview of the issues facing some of our most vulnerable children and young people and highlighting the complexities and challenges of children’s and families’ lives.

- Marian Brandon, professor of social work and director of the Centre for Research on children and Families at the University of East Anglia and Lead researcher on the triennial analysis of serious case reviews 2014-2017

13:20 Real life story - David Tait
Sulphur and White is a biopic of David Tait, a survivor of sexual abuse. David who is an ambassador for the NSPCC will be sharing his story. The film is described by The Guardian as an "unflinching real-life story of a man left alienated from society as a result of a childhood ordeal".

- Interviewee: David Tait MBE, CEO, World Gold Council

14:05 Closing comments
- Helen Westerman, service head, local campaigns, NSPCC

14:20 Conference end

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