



Norfolk Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

# WELCOME

TO THE 2022 CHILDREN & YOUNG  
PEOPLE'S SECOND ANNUAL  
REPORT FOR THE NORFOLK  
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN  
PARTNERSHIP (NSCP)

## ABOUT US

Members of Norfolk In Care Council produced this report because we have first hand experience of safeguarding, and can help the partners understand what we need and value.

**We want to feel...**

INSPIRED & INSPIRATIONAL

HAPPY & HEALTHY

COMFORTABLE

RESPECTED

SUPPORTED

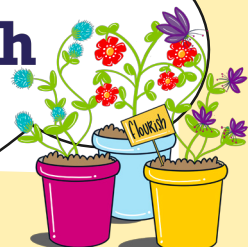
VALUED

LOVED

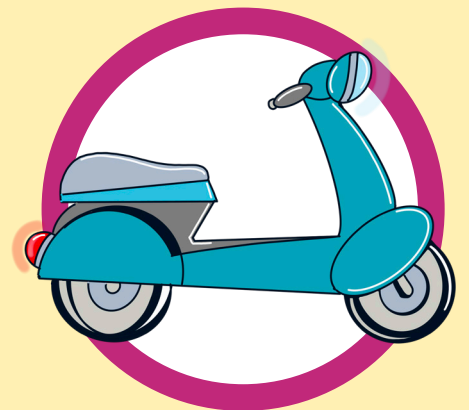
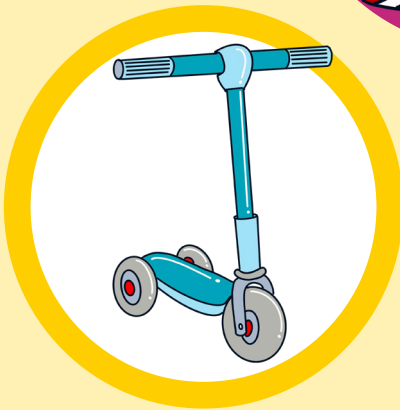
SAFE



  
**flourish**



As we are all looked after children, we chose not to use our photographs because we don't want people to identify us as vulnerable. We are strong and resilient and there is so much more to us than one label can summarise. We have asked the illustrator to represent us as icons that best represent us as individuals so we can put our stamp on this report. We hope you enjoy reading it and can learn from it.



# GOVERNANCE: HOW DOES THE NSCP WORK?

Arrangements to keep us safe are the responsibility of the Local Authority (Children's Services), Police and Health. Health has changed a bit this last year and there is now an Integrated Care Board and a new Chief Executive Officer called Tracey Bleakley – not to be confused with the BBC character, Tracy Beaker! You can see the named officers in the photo gallery below.



Sara Tough



Tom McCabe



Tracey Bleakley



Rebecca Hulme



Nick Davison



Paul Sanford



These named partners work with a lot of other people to safeguard children. All the things we enjoy such as school, clubs or just walking our dogs in the park involve adults who are responsible for helping us to stay safe. It is important that these adults feel included in the partnership arrangements.

# JUST LISTEN!

## KEY MESSAGES



### Our key messages for leadership:

“ We need to feel listened to. We need clear explanations & a chance to respond. You can use tools and language to help us calm down so we can stay engaged & included. We value adults who communicate with us clearly. ”

“ Understand our anxiety & trauma in more depth to support our emotional health & well being – this allows us to feel nurtured & build attachment which is what we need. ”

“ Find a way to make care leavers feel more supported so we don't feel as if we are left on our own – appreciate our independence but also support & nurture us at the same time. ”

“ I want adults to help me to make good choices & to have a better life in the future. ”

“ It is important that the people who are in charge of services & can make the big decisions pay attention & listen to what we have to say. ”

“ Consistency & stability is important to us. Sometimes we are worried about what happens next, & if you help us build resilience, we will be better at managing change when it happens. ”

“ We want to say thank you to everyone who has helped us, or even tried to. Some of us aren't used to being loved so it can be difficult to remember to say thank you, but it feels good when we do. Professionals who give support to others need praise & respect. ”







The responsible partners rely on lots of working groups to help make things better and this includes Local Safeguarding Children Groups. These local groups make sure that the work of the NSCP is discussed locally and we understand how safeguarding looks and feels in all parts of this big county.



# DATA – NUMBERS WE CAN COUNT ON!



This year the NSCP made sure we had good data so that we can really understand the statistics, patterns and trends in safeguarding. They did this by hiring a Senior Data Analyst who worked hard to develop a data dashboard. This works like a car's dashboard, telling you what's running normally and where your engine might be overheating. The Analyst also now reports regularly to the strategic partners and is currently working on gathering more information about the NSCP priorities.

This work has helped us to understand what an average week looks like for the partners responsible for keeping children safe. A week in Norfolk:





This section outlines the scale and nature of both the children and young people it supports, and the services and support it provides in a week. Looking at the most recent year's data (2021 for most indicators), it summarises key volumes of activity through key partners and pathways. It tells us that in an average week:

### Within Health services around:



- 360 children aged 0-4 year olds are seen in A&E departments & 12 are admitted to hospital with injuries.
- 3 under-18s are admitted to hospital with mental health problems, 8 are admitted because of self-harm, & 10 are seen in hospital by specialist children's mental health teams.

Resulting in around 19 referrals to children's social care from health services.

### The Police:



- 'Stop & search' around 16 children & arrest around 15.
- Record around 130 crimes against children, & around 120 crimes by children.
- Record around 180 domestic abuse incidents with a child present.
- Screen around 16 children for exploitation.

Resulting in around 37 referrals to children's social care from the police.

### The Council:



- Receives around 620 contacts from members of the public about children's services, and around 725 contacts from professionals worried about the wellbeing of a child or young person.
- Undertakes around 109 social work assessments.

In addition around 16 referrals from schools, & around 41 from other routes.

Culminating in around 112 referrals in total to Children's Social Care each week.

### These referrals can prompt child protection interventions meaning that each week around:

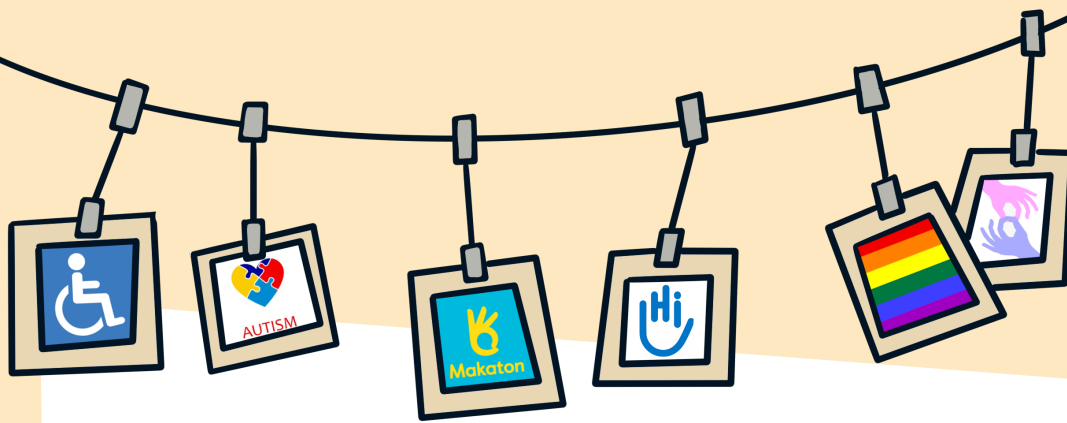
- 46 'Section 47' enquiries are concluded, investigating whether action needs to be taken to safeguard a child suspected at being at risk of harm.
- 10 'Initial Child Protection Conferences' are undertaken, where investigations conclude that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
- 11 children start to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the first time.

All of this means that **at any time** in Norfolk there are around:

1,080  
looked-after  
children

450  
children with a child  
protection plan

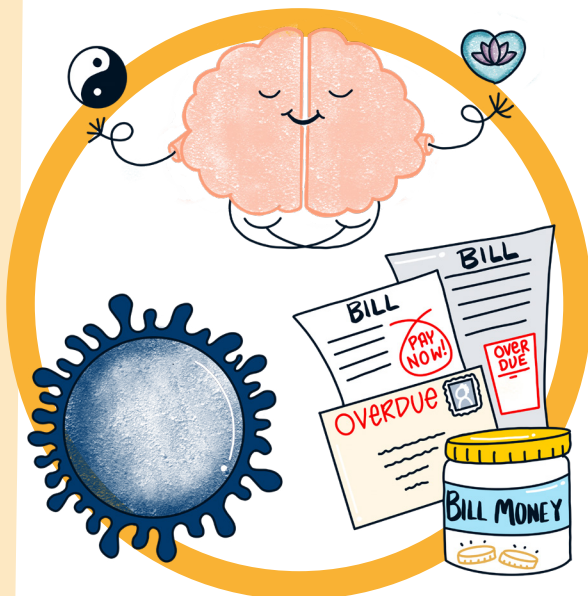
220  
children receiving Youth  
Offending Team interventions



The Analyst also provided some useful local information on three things that have affected children and young people across England in the last 12 months:

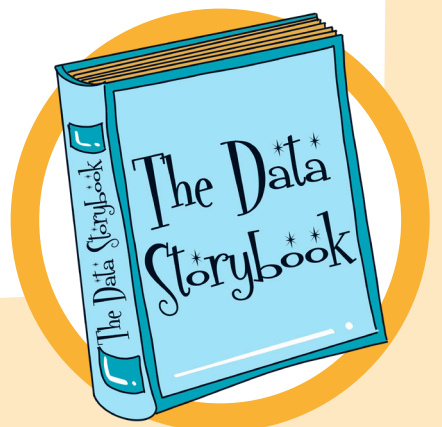
**Covid – you can't avoid it!** The NSCP kept careful track of how people reported concerns about children and what happened to them. A lot of children found lockdowns boring, lonely and/or scary. We are glad things are starting to get back to normal

Mental health problems have got worse as a result of Covid, both for children as well as adults. We thought about how much bad news there is in the world and how that makes us feel down. Even though we are encouraged to talk about our mental health, it is not always easy. Some of us are too scared to speak about our mental health, so please listen, help us out, and do something when we speak to you. The data tells us that hospital admissions for children with mental health conditions was higher than the England average.



Money worries also affect Norfolk families and we know that it can be worse in some places depending on how much opportunity there is in a local area. Where you live matters, for example, there are places in Great Yarmouth and Norwich where people are more disadvantaged and this can affect children's life chances. The NSCP will keep a close eye on this as we go into winter 2022 and monitor the impact of the cost of living crisis.

Data is now being used to tell us the story behind Norfolk's safeguarding and child protection activity. This has been an exciting development and it will help the partners plan and make decisions on how to spend money.





# INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY: TAKING A CLOSER LOOK



Independent scrutiny means that the NSCP can check how well the partnership is doing to keep children safe. Scrutiny is a tool to help people to improve as it is a way to understand what the problems are.

Norfolk is lucky because the NSCP invests a lot in scrutiny and we have three independent people called scrutineers working to look at safeguarding and tell us what is good and bad. These three people are Chris Robson, Sian Griffiths and Natasha Rennolds and they keep an eye on different parts of the system. They are independent because they do not work directly for any of the partners so they can be fair and, if necessary, critical. They can also help to explain why things aren't going well and suggest solutions.



## Independent Scrutiny Team



Chris Robson



Sian Griffiths



Natasha Rennolds

This year they took a closer look at the NSCP governance arrangements and children and young people's mental health. We think that one of the things the scrutineers should look at is whether different professionals get on and know what each other does so they work together well. It would be helpful to us if they did, but that is not always our experience and it is really difficult if the social workers, carers and other professionals disagree. Next year the scrutineers will think about ways they can involve us with scrutiny.

Audit is another way of checking on how well partners are working together and this year the partners audited some child exploitation cases. The audit found that we need to get better at including all possible partners when assessing risk and pay more attention to the child's peer group. Professionals also need to be more thoughtful about the language they use when talking about children who are, or are at risk of becoming, exploited, to ensure that these young people are recognised as victims.





The NSCP continues to require all partners to complete a safeguarding self-assessment called Section 11. Schools and Early Years settings do a different type of self assessment, but for all the other partners this is an opportunity for them to take stock of what they do well and what they need to work on. Importantly, it is also an opportunity for them to ask for help or suggest ways that they can work better with other agencies.

Scrutiny for the NSCP also happens through inspections that report back to the government. The one most people have heard of is Ofsted which is short for the Office of Standards in Education, although they also inspect social services. We joked that Ofsted are the 'big bad bosses' because if they make a poor judgement it means that people are bad at their jobs. However, it is really important that they check on Local Authorities to make sure that they are getting it right for children. Norfolk Children's Services didn't have a full inspection this year, but Ofsted have regular conversations with social care and, overall, they are confident that the council is getting it right. These conversations are helpful as they give the Director of Children's Services useful feedback and help identify any areas of improvement.





# WHAT ARE THE NSCP PRIORITIES?

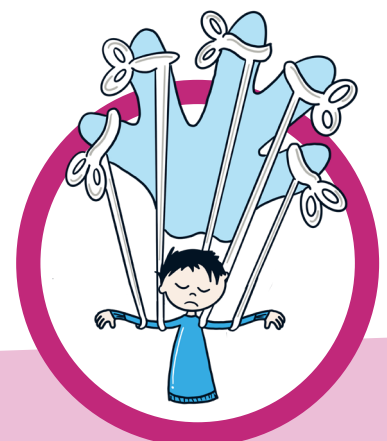
A priority is when something is important and we know we need to work on this first. The NSCP has three priorities and have written strategies, or plans, to make this work happen. The priorities have been carried over from last year and are:

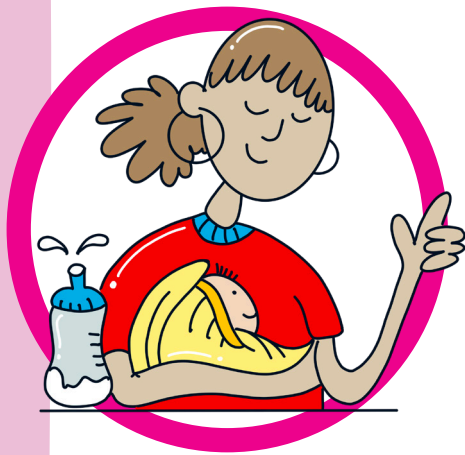


**1. NEGLECT:** this is when children and young people don't get attention and/or the things they need like food, warmth, love, health care and so on. Most parents or carers try to provide these things most of the time but if they don't it's for many different reasons. A lot of the neglectful parents might love their children, but they just aren't very good at meeting their needs. This makes them feel bad and ashamed and scared to ask for help. The professionals working with these families may feel sorry for the parents and forget to think about what

is life like for the child or children. The NSCP has been working to develop tools to help both parents/carers and professionals to focus on ensuring neglected children are better loved and looked after. For example, there are some animations now that remind people why prioritising their child's needs is the best thing for the family.

**2. EXPLOITATION:** We know that some young people are taken advantage of and manipulated by people who want to use them for their own self benefit. This is called being exploited and usually happens to teenagers who are looking for love outside of the family home. The NSCP has done a lot of work to make sure we know who these vulnerable children and young people are and worked with schools to raise awareness of the risks and issues. More work needs to be done to help professionals develop skills in this area so the child or young person's history is better understood.





**3. PROTECTING BABIES:** babies are some of the most vulnerable people in society because they can't articulate in words what is wrong; they are very small and are dependent on adults to take care of them. The NSCP knows that having a newborn baby can be stressful, particularly if a parent has no experience or support. The Healthy Child Programme has its own website called Just One Norfolk which has lots of information for parents and professionals to help them manage stress and warn them about risks to very young babies, including

how to sleep safely. A lot of work has been done to make sure that babies don't suffer injuries caused by parents who can't handle the stress. This is true of mothers and fathers and we need to understand more about fathers and men who take care of children....

“

These are the right priorities as they cover all ages. Whatever the focus, trust is really important, it can take time but it's really important. Be consistent with us and help us to understand what's happening.

”





# NSCP PROJECTS

The NSCP is involved in lots of different projects which aim to protect children from harm. Here are a few examples:



**1. INCLUSIVE FATHERS:** Looking after babies and children is difficult and fathers need support as well as mothers. Good dads need to love and be loved and this includes spending more time with children for the children's benefit and their own. We know that talking to and about dads can be very difficult – more difficult than talking to or about mums, but we also know we need to get better at this. For this reason, the NSCP started a project in April 2022 and will be spending the next three years trying to improve in this area.

**2. COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS:** in last year's annual report we talked about the different campaigns launched during Covid to help children and families get through the pandemic. Some of these campaigns won national awards! The NSCP is keeping up the momentum and now has a dedicated communications officer working on campaigns linked to the priorities.



**3. JOINT AGENCY GROUP SUPERVISION (OR JAGS):** earlier in this report we mentioned how difficult it is for us if professionals disagree. It is confusing, can lead to arguments and sometimes it means we have to keep telling our story because people are so busy talking to each other they are not listening to us! JAGS have been put in place to give professionals an opportunity to think about how they feel about our cases and what help they need to work together better to meet our needs. We feel happy and settled when people who look after us work together. Professionals need to communicate properly to keep us safe and it makes us sad if they don't.



# RAPID REVIEWS AND SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE REVIEWS

**HEALTH WARNING – SENSITIVE SUBJECT:**  
some children will find this upsetting.

Sometimes individual children might be seriously harmed, or even die, and there are concerns about the way partners worked together. When this happens there is a Rapid Review, which is when all the partners have to report on what they did to help the child before they were hurt. This needs to be done quickly – in 15 working days – and helps the NSCP to draw out immediate learning. Sometimes, not all of the questions are answered in a Rapid Review so the NSCP commissions a Safeguarding Practice Review, which is a more detailed report which is published on the NSCP website.



This review process is a really useful way to learn about why things went wrong and they are used to protect children in similar situations from harm in the future.

There is a National Panel who look at all the Rapid Reviews in England and if they are worried about a pattern of abuse or individual cases, they might do a National Safeguarding Practice Review. This year they published two: one about babies who were hurt by men, called The Myth of Invisible Men, which helped us plan for our Inclusive Fathers Project; the other was a review into the murders of two children which made national headlines this year.

Between July 2021 and June 2022, the NSCP:

- Published 1 Safeguarding Practice Review
- Completed 4 Rapid Reviews
- Started two more Safeguarding Practice Reviews
- Looked at another 4 cases that were worrying



If the NSCP doesn't go ahead with a Review it's because there is already a plan in place to address the concerns. The two cases that were started this year had a few things in common: there were elements of neglect, parents who drank too much or took drugs, and how the cases were missed because of Covid.

The NSCP has learned a lot from the cases we review, for example, the importance of being curious about the child and talking to children and families to understand why they were struggling. The National Panel reckons Norfolk is doing a good job with its Rapid Reviews.

“

We noted that this was a clear Rapid Review (RR) that had a good grip of the issues. We would like to commend you for how the shared learning has been disseminated and previous review actions tracked.

”



Norfolk Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

# TRAINING: IT'S ALL IN THE SKILL!

It is important that people working to keep children and young people safe have the right skills so they know how to look after us and support our needs. We will say it again: you need to listen to us, communicate, and focus on building trusting relationships. These principles must be in any training provided.



It's important that professionals from different backgrounds have opportunities to train together. This is called multi-agency training and is useful because they can get a better understanding of other people's perspectives, their jobs and how they can work together. They learn from each other and training provides clear messages about the different roles people have, whether they are teachers, social workers, police officers, health professionals or any of the other jobs people have when they come in contact with children.

From our perspective, this is really important because the people who work with us to keep us safe need to know what to do. It goes back to consistency: if people get the same training it is easier to ensure that the quality of the learning. They can be a better person at their job and learn different skills. They might even make new friends!

In this year, the NSCP provided 131 learning opportunities covering a lot of different topics. 559 people signed up for the 35 multi-agency training courses, but 114 people didn't attend even though they booked on. This worried us because they are missing out on learning.



The NSCP's training offer was nominated for two national awards. Even though they didn't win it was encouraging that the training was recognised. The reason they were nominated was because of all the extra things they do to make sure the training is high quality and consistent, for example, putting on best practice events for trainers. Next year, they will be developing the learning offer more so that they can reach even more people.

The NSCP is pretty special because in addition to the training the Business Unit provides, there is also a Safer programme, which helps the voluntary sector and other partners develop their skills. Safer also helps them make sure their policies and safeguarding guidance is up to date. Safer has 581 members, which is 89 more than last year! Safer is looking for more members so they can help people from all the smaller organisations and get better at keeping children safe.





# IN CONCLUSION

We hope that you have noticed all the great things the NSCP has done this year and that it has achieved a lot. With safeguarding there is always a lot more to be done as children grow up and society changes. We don't know what lies ahead of us, but there are certain things that the NSCP wants to get better at. This includes:

- Independent scrutiny on initial assessment of need and risk to children as well as local initiatives, such as our approach to Family Networking.
- Utilising the performance intelligence, data and qualitative feedback to ensure we are targeting our resources correctly and addressing any gaps.
- Developing our learning offer and measuring the impact of training on practice.
- Continuing to promote and support the FLOURISH agenda.  
Increasing the number of multi-agency audits completed.
- Reviewing our Threshold Guide and ensuring all multi-agency policies adhere to national policy change.
- Disseminating and implementing learning from local and national Safeguarding Practice Reviews.
- Working directly with the children, young people and families of Norfolk to ensure that their voices are heard and they contribute directly to strengthening the safeguarding system.
- Promoting equality and inclusion and celebrating diversity in Norfolk.

“ We hope that we, the children and young people of Norfolk, are fully involved in supporting the NSCP achieve its future goals. ”



# FURTHER INFO

The full version of the annual report can be found on the NSCP website:

[www.norfolklscb.org](http://www.norfolklscb.org)

There are loads of resources on there for professionals as well as children and families!

If you are worried about a child you can call Norfolk's Children Advice and Duty Service (CADS) or the NSPCC's Childline to help you.

Their phone numbers are:

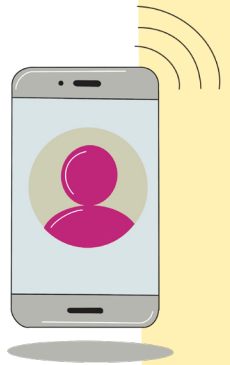
CADS: 0344 800 8020

Childline: 0800 1111

Or you can always phone the NSCP Business Unit on:

01603 223409

and they can signpost you to the best person!



Norfolk Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

Children's Advice and  
Duty Service (CADS)

NSPCC

