



# **Safeguarding children & young people in homeless settings**

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# Welcome

## Today's session we will cover:

1. What is Safeguarding?
2. Understanding abuse and harm
3. Holistic Safeguarding
4. Worker and young person welfare
5. Using Homeless Link guidance



# What is Safeguarding?

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome

[Working together to safeguard children \(2018\)](#)



# Safeguarding legislation & Guidance

Safeguarding is relevant to everyone.

- [Children Act 1989, 2004,](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(WT18\)](#)
- [NSPCC](#)

Housing and homelessness services:  
relevant agencies with safeguarding  
children's responsibilities



# Understanding abuse and harm

Homelessness is recognised as a risk factor for vulnerability to abuse.

Young people's experiences of harm and responses to harm will **intersect** with their experiences of **oppression, disadvantage, access to social capital and opportunity**.

Risks experienced by adolescents are **complex and wide-ranging**

[https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/  
www.beds.ac.uk/media/86735/uob-rip-cse-guidancefeb2017.pdf](https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/www.beds.ac.uk/media/86735/uob-rip-cse-guidancefeb2017.pdf)

Risks young people face are often situated **outside of the home** environment, often in public places

[www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk)

# Homeless Link Guidance considers...

Organisational roles, policies and processes

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Managers' responsibilities

Individual's practice and role in safeguarding

Local Safeguarding Children's Partnerships  
and multi-agency working



# Holistic Safeguarding

Organisational structures addressing

- All staff training: knowledge of forms of abuse, intersections between abuse and discrimination, procedures, ethics, pathways
- Clear referral routes into early help and crisis intervention
- Trauma informed practices



# Trauma informed practice

- Institutional context
- Contextual impacts
- Individual child and family trauma: individual trajectories (A.C.E??)
- Vicarious trauma experienced by practitioners and practitioner support

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-definition-of-trauma-informed-practice/working-definition-of-trauma-informed-practice>





# Worker and young person welfare

- Child/young person at the centre,
  - Confidentiality limits and professionalism
  - Identification verses disclosure
- <https://research-portal.uea.ac.uk/en/publications/recognition-telling-and-getting-help-with-abuse-and-neglect-young>
- Emotional awareness, understanding triggers and impacts
  - Designated safeguarding leads or champions



# Using the guidance

- Create one for your organisation/apply this one
- Ensure senior managers/trustees/grant givers are aware of focus on safeguarding children
- Check your holistic, trauma informed approach is embedded within your a /agency
- Ensure your referral routes are clear and informed by local provision
- Check access to LSCP training ([www.theasp.org.uk](http://www.theasp.org.uk))
- Consider appointing a designated safeguarding children lead or champion.

# Using the guidance

- Reflect on your knowledge about children and young people's experiences of abuse
- Knowledge gaps?
- Are you confident about your organisational safeguarding policies?
- Professional curiosity, active listening, trauma informed support
- Safeguarding is not your responsibility alone- work with colleagues within and outside your organisation

<https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/keeping-young-people-safe/>



**Thanks!**



Cumbria County Council

Young People's  
Positive Housing  
Pathway

# Our ambitions for young people in this service:



- Young people receive the right help at the right time.
- Young people receive a service that is personalised to their needs, from a service offer, which is consistent across the county.
- Young people who access our services go on to experience a bright and fulfilling future, free from the risk of homelessness.

Our ambition for this service is that, from the first point of contact with a young person, who is experiencing homelessness/at risk of homelessness, everyone working in this service area, sees the potential in that young person and plays their part in shifting that young person from a point of crisis, to give them hope for the future.

# PHP in a Nutshell



## 2. Targeted Prevention & Early Help:

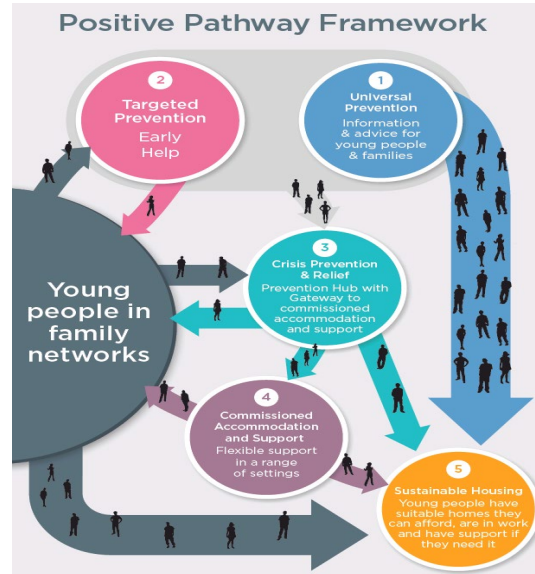
- Housing Support for YP Leaflet – 16-17 YO who are homeless/at risk of homelessness
- Youth Homeless & Housing Officers: Officers are a point of contact for YP, their parents/carers and professionals to get advice and discuss options. Contact details can be found [here](#).

### YP in family networks:

- Housing Intervention Support Workers (support from HISWs is allocated via the Gateway Group)
- Mediation – Nightstop
- Family Group Conferencing

## 4. Commissioned accommodation and Support:

- Referral into the Pathway & discussion at multi-agency Gateway Group can offer:
  - Housing Intervention Support Workers
  - Access to our commissioned accommodations (provided by Riverside and Project John) is via a referral to the Gateway Group
- Gateway Group tracker to record data and outcomes
- EHM PHP Module: shared recording system.



## 1. Universal Prevention:

- [www.cumbria.gov.uk/yphousing](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/yphousing) website providing information targeted at 3 core groups: young people; parents/carers and professionals
- Youth Homeless & Housing Officers: Officers are a point of contact for YP, their parents/carers and professionals to get advice and discuss options. Contact details can be found [here](#).
- “Tackling Homelessness” lesson plans – accredited by PSHE Association and available free of charge on their website
- Joint Protocol for Homeless 16/17 Year Olds

## 3. Crisis Prevention & Relief:

- Gateway Group
- Gateway Group Terms of Reference
- Urgent Referrals Procedure
- FCS 16-17 YO/FCS 18-24 YO (link to page [here](#))
- Social Work Updated Guidance
- Social Work – Housing S17/S20 conversations
- Housing Support for YP Leaflet – 16-17 YO who are homeless/at risk of homelessness (link in box 2)
- HISWs (support from HISWs is allocated via the Gateway Group)
- Nightstop & referral forms. Referral to Nightstop is via First Contact Script (link to page [here](#))

## 5. Sustainable Housing:

- Housing Intervention Support Workers
- Links with Districts
- Riverside have their own internal move-on pathway
- Developing links with other providers

# Section 17/Section 20 Discussions



An email is sent to all Social Workers who are allocated a Child & Family Assessment for a 16/17 Year Old who is homeless/at risk of homelessness, which includes:

Both the recent monitoring visit by Ofsted and the full inspection in 2017, flagged that young people who present as homeless aged 16-17yrs require a social work assessment. The Protocol and Ofsted feedback are clear that assessments on these young people need to:

- include full consideration of their history;
- evidence consideration of how the young person's support needs will be met with due consideration being given to S17 and S20;
- evidence the young person's wishes with regards to S20.

A document is attached which explains how to have these S17/S20 discussions with YP and a link to the mandatory E-Learning is included

**E-learning Youth Homelessness**



Microsoft Word



# The Gateway Group



## PROGRESS REVIEW

Of individual young people on regular basis to support their journey through the Pathway



## PURPOSE

Solution focused, multi agency discussions based around the needs of the young person and the sustainability of the support

## APPLICATIONS

Single point of access  
Consistent across Cumbria

## MEMBERSHIP

Multi agency  
Core members+  
Conference call

## FREQUENCY

Fortnightly  
By exception as required

In PHP Year 1, we held 27 Gateway Group Meetings, discussing 263 YP

In PHP Year 2, we held 30 Gateway Group Meetings, discussing 244 YP

# Gateway Group Process



YP referred into PHP applying for supported accommodation

YHHO processes referral, send to supported accommodation provider and refers to next available Gateway Group

If possible, provider completes Pre-Gateway Group discussion with YP to identify support needs and records on PHP system in SoS format. Worry statements and Wellbeing goals flow from Pre-GG Conversation and questions scaled accordingly

Gateway Group meeting takes place with Core Members and any other involved professionals invited to ensure the fullest picture of the YP and their circumstances. This ensures all safeguarding issues are discussed and any risks mitigated.

Actions agreed & distributed in SoS format within 2 days of GG meeting

# Pre-GG Conversation and GtKY



What are we worried about?	What's working well?	What needs to happen?
<p>YPs relationship with her mum and dad has completely broken down and she feels isolated from her sister who lives with their parents. She is a Care Leaver from out of area and is in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>YP uses cannabis daily as a coping mechanism. YP stated she does not pay for her cannabis, this is given to her by friends-possibility of grooming or exploitative behaviour.</p>	<p>YP has a national insurance number and is receipt of UC. She is registered with a local doctor.</p> <p>YP is under the leaving care team and will remain with them until 25 if she chooses to. She engages well with them.</p> <p>YP spent a short amount of time in supported living in Derby where she developed a wide range of independent living skills.</p>	<p>YP to provide contact details for 2 references.</p> <p>YP to continue to engage with Riverside staff and uphold a good relationship with staff at temporary accommodation</p> <p>Stable housing to be found for YP.</p>

	Worry Statements	Wellbeing Goals
4.3 Drugs/ Alcohol	We are worried that YP uses cannabis daily, and states she doesn't pay for this as her friends give her it for free. YP says she feels she could stop smoking cannabis whenever she wants, and that it doesn't impact on her health or finances, however we are worried she may be being exploited by older men and what impact this will have on her physical and emotional health.	Sam from the leaving care team is currently doing work with YP around grooming and exploitative behaviour. YP engages well with these sessions and knows the risks around accepting drugs YP could benefit with sessions surrounding health and wellbeing with cannabis use to fully understand the risks. If the YP continues to engage with support, her physical/mental health will improve.
4.3 Emotional Wellbeing	We are worried that this YP has no relationship with her parents and she misses her sister, which may impact her mental health and relationships, long-term.	YP and Sam are working on building relationships, in the hope she can see her sister in the future. If YP can build up these relationships, she may be able to live a happier, more fulfilling life.

What are we worried about?	What's working well?	What needs to happen?
<p>YP's relationship with father has broken down due to father's mental health difficulties. YP is homeless as a result.</p> <p>YP states he has been sofa-surfing for nearly three weeks and has not eaten much.</p> <p>YP has no income.</p>	<p>YP has been allocated a SW following Hub referral from College.</p> <p>YP has been referred to Nightstop and has been accepted.</p> <p>YP has a bank account and NINO.</p> <p>YP has a positive relationship with college tutor and wants to return to college.</p>	<p>Nightstop to arrange Food Bank parcel when YP arrives at Crashpad tonight.</p> <p>SW to support YP in applying for UC and to apply for S17 money to financially support YP until UC in payment.</p> <p>College to attend meeting with YP and SW to plan a gradual return to college.</p> <p>Riverside to progress GtKY.</p>

Police TYS Social Workers Youth Substance Misuse Homestays CAMHS DWP  
HAWCs YOS Probation Homestays Women's Community Matters Autism Nurse  
College/School Community Mental Health Leaving Care/PAs Carlisle Key TYS  
Cumbria Youth Alliance Occupational Therapists Focus Families Family Action

# Sustaining Tenancies & Eviction Prevention (STEP) Procedure



The STEP Procedure comes into force when a YP within PHP supported accommodation (Project John or Riverside) is at risk of losing their tenancy. We aim to prevent vulnerable YP losing their tenancies or becoming at risk of homelessness again. Provider completes STEP referral and YP is referred into next available GG with all involved professionals invited.

## PHP Year 1 (2020-2021)

47 STEP discussions took place within the GG meetings. Five of these YP were served notice...

Carlisle – YP was supported to return home.

Eden – One YP managed to turn things around, remain in service and had a successful move-on to non-supported. The other YP was supported into S20 accommodation.

Barrow – both YP who were served notice were held in service until appropriate alternative placements were sought and approved.

## PHP Year 2 (2021-2022)

There were 28 STEP discussions. Three of these YP were served notice and we were unable to hold YP within service, despite efforts to support the YP to sustain their tenancy.

# Service Outcomes



- Consistent approach to scaling
- Snapshot/Positive Move on questionnaires
  - Random dip sample of files
- Expectation of provider to be involved in discussions from day 1 and annual service development day
- Expectation of provider to flag concerns at an early stage & vehicle to monitor this
- Focus on exploring a return home & how best to facilitate this

# What not worked as well



- IT – PHP EHM developed to support contract outcomes & SoS way of working
- Contract monitoring aspect of SoS measures

**YP**

10 - I understand the things that can happen because of my drugs and alcohol use and I can make good choices. I know what I can do or who I can see if I need any help with drugs and alcohol so that I stay safe and have somewhere safe to live.

0 – I don’t understand why anybody is worried about my drug and alcohol use. I don’t think I need any help with it. I don’t want to change and don’t see how my choices will affect my housing and safety.

**Professional**

10 – We know the YP understands why they need to reduce their drug and alcohol use. They are making good choices and using the right help and support to make sure any drug or alcohol use does not put them at risk and does not mean that they will become homeless.

0 – We are very worried because the YP does not understand that their drug and alcohol use is harmful, they don’t feel they need any help or support, they don’t want to change and don’t see how their choices affect their housing and safety.

Drugs & Alcohol				Overall YP and Prof Average	
Prof		YP and Prof			
First Plan	Latest Review	First Plan	Latest Review	First Plan	Latest Review
6.0	7.0	6.0	7.0	6.0	7.0
6	7	6	7	6.0	7.0
6.0	7.0	6.0	7.0	6.0	7.0



# What has worked well?

- “The Gateway Group works very well in terms of holding everyone to account. It has a clear pathway that is focused on finding solutions for each case and shares out the work across all professionals evenly.”
- “Partnership working is really proactive and efficient. Agencies being accountable for specific actions is effective.”

# What our young people say...

All the support I have received including help with my daughter, cooking and how well myself and my support worker worked together. I felt listened to.

**What has  
been the best  
bit?**

Being able to trust my support worker.  
Being able to have support whenever I need it and not just at appointments.  
Fixing the damage I caused to my bedroom wall and completing my development plan.

Being young, I was unaware of most things. She has helped me with everything and been patient. She is the only time with adults I haven't felt like a burden and always put my needs first. She gives amazing advice and support at all hours. I know I can text she will get back to me when she can. She has helped me through all my problems and referrals to better my mental health as well as housing. I really don't know what I would have done or survived with her. She saved my life in a way.

# Questions?

