

Covid-19 Children and Families Collective Leadership Group - Main Outcomes from Action Plan over February – April 2021

| Workstream | Main Outcomes |
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| Access to Services | <p>This workstream clarified and promoted the services and support available locally and nationally for families during the pandemic. This included obtaining information from all 30 Children’s Services Planning (CSP) Partnerships on routes of accessing support and their effectiveness. The responses detailed an extensive range of locally available support being provided through named persons, universal services, and across local partnership agencies and organisations. There were similarly extensive mechanisms being used to promote and market information to children, families and the general public. The workstream enhanced this support and strengthened the links between local and national services by producing key messages for national helplines; a regional directory shared with national helplines and Children’s Services Planning Partnerships; and sharing examples of good practice.</p> |
| Child Protection Awareness | <p>Complementary communications campaigns run by Scottish Government, CPC Scotland and Police Scotland.</p> <p>Scottish Government: <i>SG reran messaging from its 2016 CSEthesigns awareness raising campaign from 3 – 24 March 2021 through social media channels including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, aimed at parents of 11-17 year olds.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The digital and social media adverts were seen 8.4 million times. • Campaign resulted in a 75% increase in traffic to CSEthesigns.scot with 21,100 site visits by 18,425 users. • The Campaign evaluation report that messaging were communicated successfully with 82% of surveyed campaign recognisers reporting that they took action as a result. • 94% could identify at least one sign of CSE. 84% agreed on the importance of talking to children about CSE. • Views were split on whether CSE is a major problem in Scotland. The majority agreed that children had been more at risk during the pandemic. 67% indicated that they should find out more about CSE. • There is a need to combat persisting myths such as CSE mainly affecting children in care or children with difficult family backgrounds – as indicated by a third of survey respondents. <p>CPC Scotland: <i>Keeping Kids Safe Online campaign ran from 29 March – 7 April 2021 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram aimed at parents and carers to be actively interested in their children’s online activity.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five individual part-animated boosted posts on Facebook reached a total of 237,071 viewers and saw a total of 3,256 clicks on the link to the campaign webpage. • The campaign increased traffic to CPC Scotland’s website by 2,700 users. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reach of campaign content on social media channels include 180,000 views on Facebook, 226,000 on Twitter and Instagram posts seen 6,000 times. • The success in reach and increased traffic to webpages demonstrates the CPC Scotland campaign having delivered extraordinary value for money, considering the very limited budget and short lead-in time. • CPC Scotland proposes that an increased budget and longer lead-in time would enable them to create a new online abuse awareness campaign directed specifically at children and young people. <p>Police Scotland: <i>Phase 4 of Police Scotland's perpetrator-focused campaign launched on 8th July 2021 running for four weeks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated reach of 10 million impressions • Impact evaluation currently underway by Stop It Now! Scotland |
| Workforce Resilience | <p>The workstream helped to maintain sufficient staffing capacity for the provision of support to children and families. This included monitoring and supporting national recruitment initiatives including the SSSC national recruitment portal and temporary social work register and undertaking work with CSP Partnerships to identify and promote mutual aid arrangements in each local authority area. The workstream supported the resilience and wellbeing of staff by ensuring that national wellbeing resources such as the promise website and the workforce specialist service were being accessed and information disseminated effectively locally through networks, information bulletins and digital platforms. Additional initiatives developed locally included coaching and mentoring schemes, peer support and mental health first aiders.</p> |
| Domestic Abuse | <p>A key focus of this work was to improve access to services for victims of abuse. A multi-agency sub-group has now met on three occasions to discuss, identify and take forward actions. The group heard of several improvements in multi-agency working during lockdown, for example, an initiative undertaken by Safe and Together and Dundee VAW partnership with housing association maintenance teams to enable them to identify the signs of domestic abuse when they carry out work in homes and ensure they know how to handle such suspicions. However the group also acknowledged that there were systemic issues that hampered access to services for victims for domestic abuse, which could not be resolved in the short term.</p> |
| Respite Care | <p>We are very aware that the pandemic has had a profound impact on disabled children and young people and their families. The purpose of the group was to explore how to further mitigate the impact of the current situation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring respite care/short breaks, continue as long as it is safe to do so • joining up with work on Additional Support for Learning and Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools <p>A range of guidance has been reviewed to ensure clarity. This included support for continuity in learning; reducing the risks in schools; residential childcare; and information and guidance for social, community and residential care</p> |

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| | <p>settings. Collaboration took place with the workstream on access to services to help disabled children and their families obtain information on the support available. This included developing greater awareness of national helplines and other services, and ensuring that services were also pro-active in reaching out to those who may need assistance by, for example, reinforcing and promoting that GIRFEC support has not stopped during the pandemic.</p> <p>The group has explored some of the challenges faced by families and those providing respite/short breaks over the last year. The workstream intends to write out to CSWOs and providers to gather further data to ascertain the level of current respite/short break support being provided to families across the 32 local authority areas, in order to better understand the current challenges and share examples of creative practice. It is the intention to review this data to inform any future considerations and actions required.</p> |
| Early Years/Under Fives | <p>Work took place across early learning and childcare, health and other services to address immediate health and wellbeing needs including supporting the home learning environment, parent information and the importance of play. The need to maintain universal and targeted health services for children in local planning for Covid-19 response was highlighted. This included emphasising the importance of community based children's services including health visiting, Family Nurse Partnership, children's AHP services and school nursing in limiting immediate societal harms and the wider, longer term impacts of the pandemic on children's health and wellbeing.</p> |
| Care Leavers | <p>Work focused on improving access to information on the support available to care leavers; raising awareness of corporate parenting responsibilities particularly amongst FE and HE institutions; and providing a greater role for the Care Inspectorate in care leaver transitions including pathway planning, Continuing Care and Aftercare support.</p> |
| Children's Hearings System | <p>This workstream is being taken forward by the Children's Hearings Covid Recovery Group (CHCRG). A Multi-agency Recovery Plan was adopted at the end of November 2020 for 'steady state' system recovery by late 2021. The plan was revised in March to take account of post-Christmas virus suppression measures and impacts on face-to-face hearings, and planning assumptions; better understanding the latent demand (i.e. nature, size and distribution of cases) and the need to extend emergency legislation (c/f Child Assessment Orders) to end September 2021. A very successful recruitment campaign for panel members was held in the early part of the year with over 1,900 applications for 700 vacancies.</p> |
| Substance Misuse and Mental Health | <p>There was a focus on developing priorities for joint working including greater development of a whole family approach within drug services. This will be considered within the RRR (Rights, Respect and Recovery) framework within Drugs Policy. Leadership Group held a deep dive session on mental health services in February including how best to deliver multi-agency working in practice through whole systems approaches using GIRFEC and statutory Children's Services Plans. The Minister for Mental Health announced in March 2021 that the Mental</p> |

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| interface with adult services | Health Recovery and Renewal Fund will provide significant investment for an expansion of community support services. This will build on the children and young people's services currently being rolled out across Scotland and the introduction of adult support services. |
| Involvement and Feedback from children & young people | A series of focus groups with vulnerable children, young people and parents/carers were held over February and March to obtain direct feedback on their lived experience of the pandemic and a clearer understanding of their needs. A high level report of the outcome of the groups was provided to Leadership Group in April and the final report is due to be published in July. |