Message from John Myles, CPC Independent Chair

Earlier this year the CPC agreed to move the publication of its Improvement Plan to the autumn. The next plan will cover the period 2014-2016 and because of the shift in the publication date the CPC members have had an opportunity to consider additional information from the annual statistics and self-evaluation programme while considering our new priorities.

As a partnership we need to continue our improvement of our practice in terms of information sharing, decision making, risk assessment, planning and recording practice. We will also need to embrace the priorities in our plan:

• Our ability to self-reflect in support of continuous improvement
• Improvement to the wellbeing of children through early and proportionate intervention
• The long term wellbeing of children within key vulnerable groups
• Our understanding and response to child sexual abuse and exploitation
• Grow the competence and capability of all staff within the child protection community

I look forward to the continued support of practitioners and staff throughout the partnership in progressing these priorities, which will ensure we maintain our delivery through continuous improvement. The plan will be published in the coming weeks.
Early Learning and Childcare

Following changes to legislation in June 2014, the Scottish Government have amended the legal requirement for Fife Council to deliver Early Learning and Childcare places for 2 year olds from ‘workless households’ from 1 August 2014 to 31 October 2014. The Act increases the level and flexibility of free early learning and childcare from 475 hours a year to a minimum of 600 hours for:

- All 3 and 4 year olds
- 2 year olds who are (or have been at any time since turning 2) looked after or subject to a kinship care order
- 2 year olds who live in workless households.

This duty commenced on 1 August 2014. By August 2015, eligibility will be further extended to include 2 year olds who are currently eligible for free school meals. Within Fife Council we are ready to deliver these places from August 2014 for eligible children, which will give us capacity to ensure that systems are working effectively before any legal requirement is introduced.

Services will be delivered in the 15 existing under 3s nurseries as well as an additional 9 venues which have been identified. The additional services are being established in:-St. Andrews Nursery, Auchtermuchty Nursery, Valley Nursery, Rimbleton Nursery, South Parks Nursery, Denend Nursery, Cowdenbeath Nursery, Burntisland Nursery, and Torryburn Nursery.

Application forms are available from all nurseries. These will be considered and allocated at local area panels which will take place a least each term to offer places for the following term. An exception to this process is the first term, where local panels have been arranged in August to allocate applications received for the Autumn term 2014. Implementation of this aspect in Fife is well underway.

Carrie Lindsay (Area Education Officer, Fife Council) Chair of Early Years Strategy Group for the children’s partnership.

Early Years Website

www.fifedirect.org.uk/earlyyears is the new Fife Families website with sections on pregnancy and babies; toddlers and nurseries; school; parents & carers; take time (Fife’s campaign to inspire and encourage parents to give their child the best start in life) and ‘Your Area’ which includes search facilities for local childcare, and what’s on near you. Have a look and see what you think!

Weapon of Choice

The Weapon of Choice project was created to graphically demonstrate the invisible damage that can be done by verbal abuse. The project is being promoted by Fife Child Protection Committee & the Adult Protection Committee and aims to provoke a conversation about the problems of domestic violence, child abuse, and bullying. The posters will feature in the foyer of The Rothes Halls, Glenrothes as part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival from 26 September to 21 November.

Weapon of Choice was created by commercial photographer Rich Johnson of Spectacle Photo in America. Many of the participants had personal experiences that contributed to their willingness to give their time and their image to the project. All minors were represented by a legal guardian.

Find out more information at: hurtwords.com
Parental drug and alcohol misuse

Parental drug and alcohol misuse can have a serious impact on all aspects of children and young people’s lives. However, children and families can demonstrate many strengths in managing difficult circumstances and some children are not adversely affected in the long term. Children can have considerable knowledge about parental alcohol and drug misuse from a young age; talking about parental alcohol and/or drug misuse can be incredibly difficult due to family loyalty and the fear of separation. There are a number of excellent websites that can be used by children, families and practitioners for further information, training materials and general support:

- The STARS service run by The Children’s Society includes web based support for children and resources for practitioners to work directly with children and young people: www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk
- Alcohol Focus Scotland provides a useful forum Scottish Network of Alcohol Practitioners for the Young
- The SNAPY website includes details of local services and resources: www.snapy.org.uk
- Alcohol Concern has developed a web-based resource for practitioners working with children and their families negatively affected by alcohol use: www.alcoholandfamilies.org.uk
- Supporting Young Carers: A resource for schools. This includes a chapter of supporting pupils with parental affected by parental substance misuse: http://professionals.carers.org/young-carers/articles/schools-resource-pack,6282,PR.html

Information from Briefing by Louise Hill on WithScotland website.

Children’s Services Plan 14-17

The Children’s Services Plan aims to improve the life chances of young people in greatest need and at greatest risk, thereby reducing inequality. The 2014-17 plan builds on the success achieved so far and on the achievements gained through the Getting it Right initiative. These have included a reduction in the number of children placed on the Child Protection Register for more than a year, a reduction in the pregnancy rate among 16 year olds and a reduction in the number of children referred to the Children’s Reporter.

The responsibility for the Children’s Services Plan is held collectively by the by the Children in Fife Group – a partnership of Fife Council, the voluntary sector, Police Scotland, Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration and NHS Fife.

The overall mission of the children’s partnership continues to be to safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of all children and young people in Fife. This means seeking to secure that each child is safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Such wellbeing is an entitlement for all children and young people, but also a prerequisite to each individual young person achieving positive future life chances. Poor outcomes and life chances for children and young people are associated strongly with social disadvantage. Each of the priority outcomes targeted in the plan is concerned with breaking cycles of disadvantage and therefore working with families and communities to improve the circumstances of children and families experiencing poverty.

The plan gives emphasis to targeted prevention and early, least intrusive intervention, with a focus on young people in greatest need and at greatest risk. Improvements will include the legislative requirements of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 which will be introduced progressively during the period of the plan. Details of how to access the Plan will be made available, following its publication.
The children's partnership in Fife welcomes the introduction of the new Act and, in particular, the way in which it makes the promotion of wellbeing central to its reforms. The Act received Royal Assent on 27th March this year and introduces 4 main legislative changes, as follows.

**Early learning and childcare** (see article on Page 2)

**Getting It Right for Every Child**

To improve the way services work to support children, young people and families. The children's partnership (Getting it Right Working Group) in Fife anticipated the introduction of duties to provide a Named Person and a Child’s Plan by beginning to implement these across the partnership in 2011. The Child’s Plan is based on the 8 nationally agreed well-being indicators- Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included (known as the SHANARRI framework).

Implementation has since been supported progressively by training and multi-agency practice development sessions organised on an area basis by the Getting it Right area groups and has been evaluated in terms of practitioner confidence, by the Getting it Right Working Group. Confidence has grown markedly in carrying out the role of Named Person and in the child’s planning process. This work has been developed jointly with the Child Protection Committee. Further developments of the Child’s Plan in Fife will take account of national guidance to accompany the Act, once it is developed (expected in summer 2015).

**Children’s rights and children’s services planning**

In Fife we have an established children’s services planning process through the Children in Fife Group and Getting it Right Working Group. We have had a Children’s Services Plan (CSP) since 2000. An edition for the period 2014-17 has been approved by the Fife Partnership Board; this CSP is designed to meet all of the requirements of the new legislation. We will report on our actions to meet the requirements relating to children’s rights within the reporting framework for the CSP on a 3 year cycle.

**Provisions to support those in care and care-leavers**

The Act introduces a number of changes to the range of duties and powers that affect those in care and care-leavers. Regulations are being drawn up at national level at the moment to:

- specify the groups of young people between 16 and 26, who will be eligible for continuing care from corporate parents
- describe those care-leavers who are eligible for aftercare; define aftercare ‘eligible needs’
- specify an upper age limit for eligibility for continuing care
- specify a period the expiry of which will be the end of the local authority’s duty to provide continuing care
- and make provision about when or how a local authority is to consider that either providing or continuing to provide the care would significantly adversely affect the welfare of the person.

Regulations are being drawn up to specify kinship care assistance to be provided to eligible kinship carers.

These changes will be implemented from April 2015 and will be led and managed in Fife by Dougie Dunlop, Head of Service.

**The provision of school meals**

A further notable reform relates to the introduction of free school meals for all children in Primary 1-3 from January 2015. Work is underway within Fife Council to meet this new duty.
GIRFEC Practice Development
by Bernadette Duddy—Integration Manager (East Area) Fife Council Education Service

Four GIRFEC Practice Development sessions, led by local GIR Groups, were held throughout June 2014 with around 200 practitioners, representing a wide range of Council, NHS and Voluntary Sector agencies attending the 4 sessions. The programme for the sessions incorporated the latest updates relating to the current children’s services planning structure for Fife as well as implications relating to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Practitioners were also provided with updated information relating to the new Child Assessment Pathway (CAP) as it begins to roll out across the authority.

Evaluations of the sessions highlights an increasing level of awareness and understanding of key children’s services developments as well as local and national policies relating to children’s services work. Participants clearly benefited from the multi agency nature of the events, with quotes from participants including:
“Good opportunity to share with other agencies and gain information about the new Child Assessment Pathway”
“Informative session which brought me up to date with recent changes in policies and procedures”
“The sessions has made me think more about liaising with school nurses”
The GIRFEC/CP Practice Development group in collaboration with GIR Local Groups, plan to offer further sessions toward the end of the year.

Private Space Violence
Fife Child Protection Committee will be working in partnership with the Community Safety Partnership, Fife Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership and the Scottish Business Resilience Centre to progress awareness of private space violence within local businesses.

The project aims to raise awareness with local businesses on how to identify and report risks regarding child or adult protection, or domestic abuse. A paper outlining work to date has been presented to the Community Safety Partnership Prevention and Early Intervention Task Group, and more details will follow in the next edition of this newsletter.

Wellbeing website for young Scots
A new Scottish Government website promotes what schools and others are doing to promote, support and safeguard the rights and wellbeing of children and young people. The website gives advice about what the adults in someone’s life need to do to help, if a young person needs some more support at some point.
Visit: www.wellbeingforyoungscots.org

Children’s Advocacy
www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/families/advocacy
is a new guide for anyone who advocates for a child or young person. Advocacy is about supporting a child to express their own needs and views and to make informed decisions on matters which influence their lives. Advocates do not make choices for children. Instead, they support children and young people to make their own choices. Advocacy will most often be required where a child is engaging with a service (e.g. health, education, police, social work etc.)

The guide includes details of what good children’s advocacy looks like, practical advice, a list of domestic laws which promote and protect a child’s right to be hear, and an example of a tool for explaining advocacy to children and young people.
Pupils at Sinclairtown Primary School, Kirkcaldy, have launched a new online safety resource for schools across Scotland.

Go Safe Scotland – developed by staff within Fife Community Safety Partnership and their counterparts across Scotland – provides teaching staff with a variety of activities to promote safety and is designed for all children in nursery and primary school.

Digital safety is the latest section to be completed, highlighting how to use social media safely, tackling online bullying, and keeping personal details private and secure.

Go Safe Scotland’s digital safety section is now live and can be accessed at www.gosafescotland.com

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STAR Toolkit

Childnet launched a new online safety resource that offers practical advice and teaching activities to help secondary schools explore internet safety with young people with autism spectrum disorders. The STAR Toolkit aims to increase the online safety knowledge of educators and empower them to support their learners to use the internet safely and positively.

To find out more and download the resource, visit: www.childnet.com

Cyberbullying

RespectMe—Scotland’s anti-bullying service have created information about cyberbullying. Their guide ‘Cyberbullying—are you switched on?’ guides you through an introduction of commonly used technology, how you can discuss responsible use with children and young people and what you can do if a child or young person is being bullied or is bullying others. Their guide ‘Cyberbullying—what you need to know’ provides information for children and young people.

For further information visit: www.respectme.org.uk

Well Versed

The Well Versed project invited young people to share peer to peer tips, techniques and secrets for navigating the online world safely. The result is an e-safety film created by teenagers who love, live and breathe the internet.


Social Networking

The UK Safer Internet Centre have e-safety guides showing how to manage the key safety features on social networks and online services including Facebook, Twitter, Club Penguin and Moshi Monsters, Tumblr, Ask.fm and many more. You can find out more about these and take a look at the guides here:

Child Protection and Disability Toolkit

The Child Protection and Disability Toolkit has been produced in partnership by WithScotland and the Scottish Government’s Ministerial Working Group on Child Protection and Disability. Designed for practitioners and managers in child and family and disability services, it includes information on research, a set of training resources designed to help professionals understand the issues and good practice guidance to supplement the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland. It also contains ‘myth busters’, case studies and a DVD in which disabled parents share their experiences.

For details visit: http://withscotland.org/resources/child-protection-and-disability-toolkit

National Child Protection Guidance

The Scottish Government has published ‘National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014’. The document, an updated version of the national guidance first published in 2010, provides a national framework for agencies and practitioners to understand and agree processes for working together to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children. It sets out expectations for strategic planning of services and highlights key responsibilities for organisations. It also includes guidance for practitioners on specific areas of practice, including Child Sexual Exploitation and Internet Safety.


‘Additional Notes for Practitioners: Protecting Disabled Children from Abuse and Neglect’ has been published to supplement the guidance.

Female Genital Mutilation

Education Scotland working with partners and Education Authority staff have produced a short supported PowerPoint presentation, which authorities and headteachers can use to raise awareness of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in schools and early years settings. The resource is not a substitute for the recently refreshed National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland. FGM is a form of child abuse against girls, and therefore must be dealt with as part of existing child protection policies and procedures.


If you know someone who has been a victim, encourage them to speak to their GP or the NSPCC FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550 or fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk for more help.
Visit: nspcc.org.uk to watch a video where survivors, community leaders and health professionals talk about their experiences of FGM.

Forced Marriage: The Bigger Picture

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, which criminalises forced marriage, comes into force in Scotland this September. ‘The Bigger Picture’ conference will look at the impact criminalisation of forced marriage will have in terms of practice for front line organisations. Attention will be paid to current challenges organisations are faced with when supporting victims, as well as issues faced by those affected by forced marriage, and the support available to them. Chaired by Louise Johnson of Scottish Women’s Aid, speakers will include: Janet McDermott (Imkaan), Marie Jenkinson (Forced Marriage Unit), Police Scotland, Shakti Women’s Aid and others.
September 25th from 9.30– 4.30 at Norton Park Conference Centre, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh. To book call: 0131 475 2399 or email: info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk. The cost is Voluntary: £30, Statutory: £50
**Underwear Rule**

A new version of the NSPCC’s successful campaign the Underwear Rule helps parents teach children with a learning disability about sexual abuse. The popular guide is now accessible for both parents and children with a learning disability.

With more people than ever before contacting the NSPCC helpline (0808 800 5000) about sexual abuse and research indicating that disabled children are three times more vulnerable - both the NSPCC and Mencap are encouraging parents to talk PANTS with their children to help keep them safe.

All the guides can be found at: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/help-and-advice/for-parents/keeping-your-child-safe/the-underwear-rule/the-underwear-rule_wda97016.html

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**Supporting young people’s mental health**

More than ninety percent of youth workers have dealt with stress or anxiety-related issues and more than seventy-five percent with eating disorders, self-harm issues or depression in the last six months.

16-25 is a critical age for the onset of mental health problems and the Mental Health Foundation have launched the first in a series of guides to help youth workers better support young people.

‘How to promote mental wellbeing in youth work practice’ aims to help embed effective mental wellbeing improvement practices in youth organisations and has been produced as part of the Right Here programme. It can be downloaded at: http://mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/mental-wellbeing-in-youth-work-practice/

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**Equally Safe**

The Equally Safe strategy sets out the Government’s vision for tackling all forms of violence against women and girls.

The overall aim of the strategy is to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls, creating a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from such abuse and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.

For more information visit: http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Making-Scotland-Equally-Safe-e2f.aspx

The strategy can be found at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00454152.pdf

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**Supporting children with complex health needs**

Children and young people with complex health needs often require more support to lead fulfilling lives. However, services which are meant to support these young people are often hard to access and navigate for families.

The Mental Health Foundation have produced a booklet and some fact sheets for families to help inform them about the support available to them, plus a summary briefing for policy makers to help them think about how to improve services for these children and young people and their families. Whilst some details are related to England and Wales, they contain invaluable information, and can be downloaded at: http://www.fpld.org.uk/our-work/changing-service-delivery/an-ordinary-life/
Early learning and childcare

New content is now available on Early Learning and Childcare section of NHS Health Scotland’s Maternal and Early Years website. The resources, designed to support professionals working in early learning environments and childcare support, are available in 0-3 years, 3-5 years and 5-8 years categories.

Children in care

The number of children in care in Scotland increased by 49% between 2001 and 2011, according to a study commissioned by Parenting across Scotland. Produced as part of a project being developed by the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, the report looks at the changing shape of families in Scotland and suggests that in 2001 there were 10,900 youngsters in care, a figure which increased every year to 16,230 in 2011. The study also states that the proportion of people providing unpaid care to family members or friends remained stable, although the number of hours increased.

Youth Homelessness Enquiry

Further responses to a call for evidence on youth homelessness have been published. The Scottish Parliament’s Equal Opportunities Committee, exploring the success of efforts to tackle youth homelessness since a previous inquiry into the subject, has received submissions from a range of organisations, including the Care Inspectorate, a number of local authorities, CELCIS and Who Cares? Scotland.
http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/76729.aspx

Call for volunteers

NSPCC Scotland has called for volunteers to help deliver its ChildLine Schools Service. The service involves trained volunteers visiting primary schools to help children’s understanding of abuse and how they can stay safe. By using assemblies and workshops delivered by trained volunteers ChildLine helps children recognise situations where they may need help and tells them how to access support.
Visit: www.nspcc.org.uk

GIRFEC Conference

This year’s GIRFEC Conference will take place on Tuesday 4 November. The 4th annual event will focus on the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and its implications for services. WithScotland has issued a call for submissions for posters related to wellbeing, to be presented at the event. A follow-on conference is to take place in early 2015, specifically aimed at strategic managers.
http://withscotland.org/withscotland-events/4th-annual-girfec-conference
Children can’t always tell someone if they are being abused or neglected.
But you can.

If you are worried about a child or need advice call Fife Council Social Work on:
01383 441 177 (office hours)
Social Work Emergency Out of Hours
03451 550 099
Police 101

Deaf BSL users/hard of hearing people can use the Council SMS text service:
07781 480 185
(but must register first. Details at: fifedirect.org.uk/adultprotection)

childprotectionscotland.org

Increasing emotional abuse of Scottish children

THE NSPCC has reported a significant rise in the number of cases of serious emotional abuse against young people in Scotland. Last year the charity referred nearly 80 per cent more cases to local authorities in Scotland compared to the previous 12 months. 320 people contacted the charity’s helpline in 2013/14 and 217 of the cases merited alerting police or social work services.

The NSPCC said emotional abuse can take many forms, including pushing children too hard, inflicting degrading punishments and exposing them to drug and alcohol abuse.

Matt Forde from NSPCC Scotland said: “Emotional abuse can cause real harm to children and it’s encouraging that more people are becoming aware of it. This isn’t about parents who don’t buy their children the latest gadgets or trainers. This is about parents who consistently deny their children love and affection.

“Abuse is not just physical but emotional, and people need to be alive to whether children’s emotional needs are being met. Failure to do so can have lifelong consequences.”

Source: The Scotsman

Anyone who has concerns about a child in Fife can contact Police on 101 or Social Work on 01383 44 11 77.