SBNI Child Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy and Framework 2020 - 2023

Date	July 2020 - Revised July 2021 v3.0

Date for Review	Every three years subject to SBNI Priorities

Purpose	To contribute to the improvement of child protection and safeguarding training and education in Northern Ireland by setting out the key minimum learning outcomes to equip staff and volunteers in organisations, with the skills, knowledge and competence to promote the safety and well-being of children and young people, within the remit of their roles and responsibilities.

| Signature:

Ms Bernie McNally	SBNI Independent Chair

Introduction

Foreword

As Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) I welcome the opportunity to present the revised 'SBNI Child Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy 2020-2023'.

The Learning and Development Strategy 2020-2023 is informed by the SBNI's Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and its associated vision statement, function and values. It contributes to the delivery of the SBNI's Business Plan priority 1:'providing leadership and setting direction'; complements the guidance in Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI' version 2.0 August 2017[1] and reflects developments in practice that practitioners are required to be aware of.

Similar to the previous strategy and framework (2015-2018) it builds upon existing safeguarding training, sets minimum training standards and provides a graduated framework on four levels, for agencies to use when planning and delivering safeguarding training in Northern Ireland. It also seeks to encourage inter-agency and multi-disciplinary training and education over the next three years.

The challenge for SBNI member agencies will be to ensure that the strategy and framework is implemented and that training organised, procured or sought is effective and is measured against the standards set out in the framework. Additionally, technology is broadening the methods through which knowledge and skills can be enhanced, indeed at time of writing the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly curtailed face to face training, and although that method of knowledge transfer will return in time, there can be creative methods used to deliver and engage the workforce beyond traditional 'classroom' type settings. The challenge however is

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[1] Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young people version 2.0 August 2017, DoH
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to ensure the quality of the training, its' effectiveness and considering the nature of the training, to ensure that there is some degree of psychological safety for participants. We understand that our workforces, who may have experienced adversity in their past or current lives, or indeed trauma, may find that their ability to learn is impacted upon. This can affect how they learn, their ability to apply their learning, to learn from mistakes and their confidence. As organisations we are increasing our understanding that we need to support our staff in order that they do their work- whatever level that is or whatever role they have- most effectively. Therefore organisational responsibility for staff and their learning goes beyond simply providing a learning experience.

This framework will serve to guide the continuing development of our workforces in order to ensure that safeguarding children and young people is of the highest standard possible.

Bernie McNally OBE

Independent Chair of SBNI

July 2020.

Introduction

The statutory objective of the Safeguarding Board of Northern Ireland (SBNI) is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland by coordinating the work and ensuring the effectiveness of each person or body represented on the Board. Under section 3(1) of the Safeguarding Board (NI) Act 2011 the SBNI must put in place arrangements for the on-going development and review of policies and procedures relating to the training of those working with children and young people, or their families.

This Learning and Development Framework provides an update for child protection and safeguarding training which takes account of single and multi-agency training, including its planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation. It takes account of the Department of Health Guidance to the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (December 2012, revised May 2014) which recommends a training framework with different levels of training commensurate with the level and nature of contact with children and young people.

Aim

To contribute to the improvement of child protection and safeguarding in Northern Ireland by setting out the key minimum learning outcomes to equip staff and volunteers with the skills, knowledge and competence to promote the safety and well-being of children and young people, within the remit of their roles and responsibilities.

Objectives

1. "Identify opportunities for developing and enhancing multi-disciplinary/multi-agency safeguarding education and training strategies across all sectors in relation to Children's Services".

2. Improve the competence of staff and volunteers involved in child protection and safeguarding.

3. Provide minimum learning outcomes which should be achieved by staff/volunteers in any learning and development activity.

4. Identify different levels of training commensurate with the level and nature of contact with children and young people, which take account of uni and multi-agency planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation.

5. Inform commissioners, those developing and providing education and training programmes, plus organisations and individuals to ensure that relevant, consistent and quality assured programmes are in place, accessible and delivered at the right level.
Include SBNI strategic priorities and current strategic directions on process, approaches and models.

6. To promote a consistent, flexible and developmental approach to safeguarding learning and development to meet individual and organisational learning needs.

7. Builds on child safeguarding learning which should be part of all preparatory/undergraduate programmes.

Values and principles

It is intended that learning and development delivered under this strategy will reflect the following principles:

- A rights-based approach to safeguarding children's learning and development in accordance with the UNCRC 1989 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

- Safeguarding and protecting children and young people is everyone's business and all activity should be child-centred.

- A multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach to meeting individual and/or organisational learning and development needs is recommended where appropriate and relevant.

- Learning and development opportunities must be fit for purpose and have agreed learning outcomes as identified in this framework.

- Organisations have the responsibility to ensure that all learning and development is related to and demonstrated in practice.

- Learning and development will support improved performance in safeguarding children and young people.

- Learning and development is not a one off event; each organisation must take responsibility to develop safeguarding children and young people learning and development strategies for their staff and volunteers, and seek to identify the most appropriate and relevant opportunities to develop staff confidence and competence in their role.

- Learning and development in safeguarding children and young people is a developmental process and requires the investment of time and resources within organisations to create a competent workforce. It should also be responsive to different working practices that may evolve.

Target audience

The strategy and framework is aimed at all SBNI member agencies, any agencies providing services to a member agency under contractual/service level agreement and is applicable and relevant to all organisations and individuals who come into contact with children and young people, and their families. It also includes those who work with adults who are parents or have contact with children and young people through the course of their work and/or service users who have contact with children.

Safeguarding and protecting children and young people is the responsibility of every individual in Northern Ireland across all disciplines and sectors.

Using the Learning and Development Framework

The framework has been designed in 4 levels which are not incremental but offer a continuum of learning and development where an individual may move between levels. For example if an individual can evidence a higher level of skills and knowledge, they may not need to undertake learning and development at a lower level of the framework. Each organisation should determine the level, developmental requirements and appropriate timescale for staff/volunteers to undertake the training. The appropriateness of the medium of training for a varied workforce should also be considered i.e. an online individual training session may be a different

learning experience from a shared group experience. Discussion may be hampered by the medium and the potential emotional impact some training can have upon staff should be considered - follow up may be important. The Framework does specify some broad timescales but each organisation is responsible for determining if staff/volunteers require a certain level within a specific timeframe from date of appointment, for example. Where possible, organisations/individuals should take a multi-disciplinary/multi-agency approach to accessing learning and development.

❖ Level 1) All staff/volunteers within the organisation

❖ Level 2) All staff/volunteers who have direct contact with:

- Children and young people

- Adult carers/parents and those who have regular contact with children

- Adults known or suspected of posing a risk to children and young people

❖ Level 3) All staff/volunteers who:

- Could potentially contribute to assessing, planning, intervening and evaluating the needs of children and parental capacity where there are safeguarding issues

- Have a managerial or supervisory role

❖ Level 4) All staff/volunteers with specialist safeguarding roles and responsibilities including leaders and policy makers.

At each level, the framework identifies:

- Safeguarding knowledge and skills
- Key learning outcomes
- Target audience
- Potential development opportunities
- Organisational responsibility for implementation

All learning and development activity should be influenced by:

- SBNI strategic priorities;
- Recommendations from case management reviews, inquiries and other reviews
- New and emerging trends, research and issues in safeguarding in the context of SBNI strategic priorities;
- The legal and policy context, and any regulatory requirements;
- Training needs analysis (which will reflect national, regional and local needs).
- The UNCRC 1989 and the Human Rights Act 1998.
- A commitment to early intervention in children and young people's lives.

Programme Content 2020-2023

The training strategy for the next three years should include interagency training and learning outcomes as identified in the Framework, depending on the role and responsibility of the attendees, on the following:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences including societal issues impacting adversely upon young people, such as poverty and lack of opportunity, set in the context of culture, race, disability, gender and history
- Trauma Informed Practice
- The Signs of Safety process
- Building Better Futures approach
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Safeguarding Children with a Disability
- Mental Health and its links to safeguarding and the Think Family NI model
- Domestic Abuse and its links to safeguarding
- Substance Misuse and its links to safeguarding
- Children who pose a risk to others
- E Safety for children
- Outcomes of Case Management Reviews (CMRs)
- Chronic neglect as a form of child abuse and effective strategies of assessing and responding to neglect
- Bullying
- Working Together/Understanding roles and responsibilities
- Thresholds/ Risk Assessment and Analysis

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- Information Sharing & Confidentiality

- Physical chastisement of children.

- Safeguarding unaccompanied children/trafficked children/ children who may be subject to a threat to life.

Organisational responsibility

The SBNI strategy and framework complements guidance in Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (DoH, 2017) and should be adhered to. Organisations should therefore review their own internal training strategies/plans in accordance with this strategy and framework.

Organisations have a responsibility to ensure that staff and volunteers have the appropriate knowledge, skills and competence to effectively safeguard and protect children and young people and to meet the requirements of this framework.

Organisations must consider the current skill levels of individual staff/volunteers, the learning outcomes already met and using a personal development plan, identify future development needs, commensurate with their roles and responsibilities. This could be linked to the mandated professional development requirements for some staff groups. They should also consider staff wellbeing and how this impacts upon the ability to learn, the experience of receiving training and the consequent effectiveness of service delivery.

Organisations have a responsibility to provide safeguarding induction to all new members of their organisation. The level of induction will depend on the individual's experience, skills and knowledge base and commensurate with their roles and responsibilities.

Organisations must record all induction and learning and development activity in relation to safeguarding. This information should be included as part of quality assurance and audit activity.

Organisations should be responsive to technological developments in terms of learning and accessing learning.

Monitoring and review

All SBNI member agencies and any agencies providing services to a member agency under contractual/service level agreements, should review their own internal training strategies/plans at least every three years, and update them if required in accordance with this Strategy. Each agency/organisation should apply its own quality assurance processes.

The SBNI will review this learning and development framework every 3 years to ensure it remains fit for purpose, and reflects any relevant developments in safeguarding practice, policy and legislation.

Conclusion

An appropriately trained and supported work force is central to safeguarding children and young people in Northern Ireland. Organisations must invest in training their staff/volunteers to ensure all those who come into contact with children/young people understand their contribution to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and are competent and confident to carry out their role.

Level One All staff/volunteers within the organisation				
Knowledge and skills	**Learning outcomes**	**Target Audience**	**Development requirements**	**Organisational responsibility**
Basic Knowledge of: • Signs and indicators of child abuse and contributory factors • Agency/staff policy and procedures • Reporting procedures/processes • Record keeping •Importance of early intervention.	Ability to: • Recognise and respond appropriately to child safeguarding issues • Understand own role and the role of others within their organisation using their safeguarding policies and procedures •Understand context for the child and family in terms of culture, race, gender, disability and history	All staff or volunteers in the organisation.	Minimum of access to information, training and learning and development activity every three years which enables them to develop their skills at Level One.	This will be determined by the individual agencies and can take the form of: • A leaflet on induction or in other refresher training requirements • An E-Learning programme • Corporate or departmental induction programmes • Face to face awareness sessions •Updating through information sharing, accessing online resources.

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Level Two (including an understanding of all at level 1)

All Staff/Volunteers who have direct contact with:

- children and young people
- adult carers/parents who have regular contact with children
- adults known or suspected of posing a risk to children and young people.

Knowledge and skills	Learning outcomes	Target Audience (Agencies can specify the particular staff or volunteers)	Development Requirements	Organisational responsibility
More in depth knowledge of a selection of the following areas, focussing upon relevancy to attendees • Values and principles of safeguarding children and young people • Signs and indicators of child abuse and contributory factors of ACEs particularly domestic abuse, neglect and mental ill health in the family •How social issues such	Ability to: • Recognise and respond to children's and young people's safeguarding issues using a trauma informed lens • Understand own role and the role of others • Contribute to the assessment and management of risk • Assist in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and	All staff and volunteers who have direct contact with: • Children or young people • Adult carers/parents and those who have regular contact with children • Adults known or suspected of posing a risk to children or young people.	Minimum 3 hours training over three years either face to face or online.	This will be determined by the individual agencies. Additional learning and development activity outside the 3 hour formal requirement may include the following and staff may need guidance on reliable/approved sources to access: • Face to face/direct input training/online training • E-Learning

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as poverty and any form of discrimination (race, disability etc.) impact upon children's wellbeing • Importance of using a trauma lens as a means of understanding behaviour and informing practise • Agency/staff policy and procedures • Reporting procedures • Code of behaviour • Recording skills • Relevant legislation • Services provided by other support agencies • Confidentiality/ information sharing • Referral process including UNOCINI • Awareness of process model of Signs of Safety	young people • Understand the importance of own behaviour and boundaries. • Recognise social contributory factors – adverse and positive			modules/programmes • Relevant safeguarding conferences • Other relevant child protection events • Accessing relevant articles, webinars, websites, and apps.

for safeguarding • Awareness of best practice models & approaches such as Think Family NI and Building Better Futures.				

Level Three (building upon knowledge, skills and development in previous levels)

All staff/volunteers who:

- Could potentially contribute to assessing, planning, intervening and evaluating the needs of children and parental capacity where there are safeguarding issues

- Have a managerial or supervisory role.

Knowledge and Skills	Learning Outcomes	Target Audience (Agencies can specify the particular staff or volunteers)	Development Requirements	Organisational responsibility
Knowledge of: • Key tasks to safeguard children • Threshold of significant harm • Adverse childhood experiences and their potential impact upon child development • Adverse experiences at a societal level and how they impact (environment, culture, race, poverty, gender,	Ability to: • Develop working relationships with other professionals • Understand their own role and the role of others • Work together to meet the needs of children where there are safeguarding concerns • Identify learning from case management reviews	Those staff who: • Could potentially contribute to assessing, planning, intervening and evaluating the needs of children (and parental capacity) where there are safeguarding issues • Managerial supervisory role. • Specific safeguarding role.	Access to learning and development activity that enables staff/volunteers to develop their skills in Level three. This can be direct, online, through individual learning and in different forms of supervision.	This will be determined by the individual agencies and professional requirements. it is recommended that it takes the form of: • Face to face/direct input training/online training -this can be supplemented by E-Learning) • Relevant conferences/events • Other learning and development activity

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disability) • Trauma informed practice • National, regional and local, policies, standards & guidance including Signs of Safety, Think Family NI, Building Better Futures • 'The Protocol for Joint Investigation by Police Officers and Social Workers of Alleged and Suspected Cases of Child Abuse – Northern Ireland' (April 2013) • Models of assessment • Impact of parenting in line with SBNI strategic Priorities • Relevant research, inquiries and case management review findings • Understanding of safeguarding for children in specific	• Contribute to interagency safeguarding assessments and risk analysis • Contribute to interagency safeguarding plans • Understand the importance of escalation regarding concerns about a child • Ability to challenge decision making • Ability to engage and challenge families in safeguarding • Understand the impact of child abuse and neglect on child development • Understand the importance and relevance to safeguarding children from research findings • Understand the			e.g. webinars, reading articles, apps, twitter, online newsletters/e-zines, attending working groups, committee working, developing cross sectoral/ multi-agency relationship working in collaboration, post qualifying training courses.

circumstances in line with SBNI strategic priorities. • Models of effective safeguarding supervision • Enhanced court process skills.	importance of governance and accountability arrangements • Ability to work within the court and child protection case conference Signs of Safety processes to safeguard children.			

Level Four (building upon knowledge, skills, and development in previous levels) All staff/volunteers with specialist safeguarding roles and responsibilities including leaders and policy makers.				
Knowledge and Skills	**Learning Outcomes**	**Target Audiences (Agencies can specify the particular staff or volunteers)**	**Development Requirements**	**Organisational Responsibility**
•The provision of expertise and the development of policy guidelines and protocols. •Contribute to international, national, regional and local governance, strategic and operational processes. •The specific knowledge and skills required to fulfil the specialist role. • Incorporate learning from relevant research, Enquiry and review reports. •Incorporate learning regarding diversity into policy and practice	Ability to: •Develop effective professional judgment and decision making skills and recognise complexity of context with regards to race, culture, gender, disability and history •Investigate safeguarding issues •Provide verbal and written report and evidence •Ensure effective interagency working •Contribute to effective governance arrangements •Contribute to the	Those staff with specialist safeguarding roles and responsibilities.	Access to learning and development activity that enables them to develop their skills in level 4. This can be in varied forms e.g. online training and webinars, attending conferences, participating in working groups, committees, delivering training (to peers etc.) opportunities for research into practice (formal and informal), cross sectoral working, multi-agency working, co-production.	Appropriate methods and forms to learning activity will be determined by the individual agencies and professional requirements.

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| | development of policy and procedure

•Meet on-going professional development standards and any other requirements. | | | |
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