

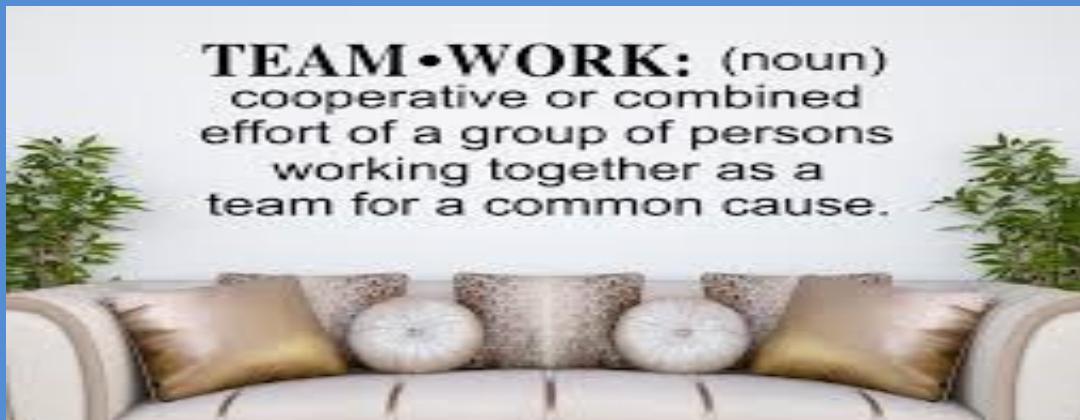
Welcome to February's Edition

I hope you have had the opportunity to access some of the activities that have been put on across the district to celebrate LGBTQ+ history month. I have included 10 Top Tips for Working with Transgender youth in this edition. Along with some resource information to support young people who may identify as Trans.

Also in this edition there is focus on 3 launches that take place on the 1st March 2021

- ◆ Introducing our Practice Model
- ◆ Focus on Practice months
- ◆ Private Fostering

We also have usual features, learning from complaints and serious case reviews alongside an article on the importance on looking after your physical and emotional health and the support available.

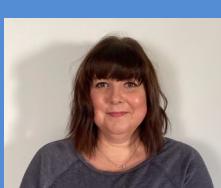


I thought

the above quote epitomises how we are going to get from Inadequate to Requires Improvement and beyond. We are not working in silos but as part of a service to make sure that our children are safe, happy and have the best chances in life.

Finally, I hope that there is something in here that you feel that you can take away and use in your every day practice. If you would like to see something specific covered please let me know.

Thanks



Traci Taylor – Principal Social Worker



Introducing our Model of Practice

As you may be aware from the 1st March we have introduced Practice Focus Months and the Practice Model.

The Model of Practice focuses on using a strength based approach while recognising the importance of building positive relationships with Children, Young People and their Families many of who have experienced traumatic events in their lives. This model is the basis of our work ensuring that we fully understand our children and young people's daily lived experiences and that we are listening to what they tell us to inform our plans.



The vision, aim and mission of the model is:

Vision is to ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life to be safe, healthy, happy and resilient .

Our mission is to always put children and young people at the heart of all we do.

Our aim is to consistently deliver services with care and compassion to strengthen families through a positive working relationship.

This model will ensure that we have a consistent approach a shared understanding and a shared language across all services by using a Signs of Safety approach while strengthening how we understand and build our relationships by understanding the impact of any trauma they may have experienced. The Model of Practice will be added into Tri-x for you to access.

The importance of good case recording



For the Month of March, the practice focus is on Case Recording; this has featured in a previous bulletin. We have decided that this is an area that we need to focus on as this as it is one of the main features of our work and is not simply an admin task but is a running record of the management of the case and what is happening, or has happened in the day to day life of the child or young person we are working with.

So, why is it so vital?

It is not just a way of keeping all the information together but should be used to assist us in making good decisions for children based on good, thorough assessments leading to SMART plans.

Good quality case recording encapsulates the child, their views, wishes and their experiences so that anyone reading the file can understand exactly what is, happening or has, happened to the child/young person and the impact of this.

Really high quality case recording lets the quality of the relationship between social worker and child/young person and the social workers aspirations for that child/young person shine through. Consider how important that must be to any care-experienced person looking though their case records as an adult.

We should always consider how and what we record and be mindful that at some point others will read this, but more importantly the child or young person we are writing about could read this. What would you want to see? We would all want our records to be clear, jargon free, concise; be evidence based using fact; detailing how decisions have been made and for what purpose. We would want to be able to recognise ourselves and our lives; what we said, what we felt and how that was listened to.

Please make sure that you have booked on the training for case recording, the e-learning module as well as the face to face training; discuss case recording in your team meetings.

Just a reminder that we have clear practice standards about case recording which can be accessed via Tri-x

MAKING A PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENT

On Monday 1st March 2021 a campaign was launched to raise awareness of Private Fostering Arrangements. This was done through comms with all parts of the service and with our partners, as well as with the wider community through a press release and a week-long Social Media Campaign.



The law states that a Private Fostering Arrangement happens when a person is caring for somebody else's child, under the age of 16 (18 if the young person has a disability) who is not a close relative of the child for 28 days or more. A close relative is a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt or someone related to the child through marriage, such as a step parent.

The law around Private Fostering was strengthened following the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report. Victoria Climbié was a child who was abused and murdered after being placed with her father's great aunt. This arrangement would have been considered as Private Fostering. For more details, please click on the link to the report below: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-victoria-climbie-inquiry-report-of-an-inquiry-by-lord-laming>

As a local authority, we have a legal duty to make sure we know about children and young people in Private Fostering Arrangements. This is because they are potentially vulnerable as they are not living with their parents.

Private fostering is significantly under reported in the UK, which is why, as an authority, we are raising awareness so that cases can be correctly identified and children/young people, carers and families can be supported.

Referrals for Private Fostering come through the Integrated Front Door and are transferred to the Child and Family Team who are then responsible for: -

- ◆ Contacting the family within 5 working days of the referral
- ◆ Issuing a Checks and Information Pack to the Carer for completion of the Application and Declaration Form and Consent Forms
- ◆ Undertaking the necessary checks on our internal systems, including with the Child Minding Service, with other Local authorities, Cafcass, Ofsted, Child Minding Service and the Police on each applicant as well as gaining references
- ◆ Notifying the Designated Manager of the Private Fostering Arrangement
- ◆ Completing a Private Fostering Agreement Assessment
- ◆ Visiting the child and reviewing the Private Fostering Arrangement in line with Child in Need Practice Standards

We have Practice Guidance for practitioners which can be located in Tri-x shortly and for further information please go to [private fostering web pages](#) or [Private Fostering \(proceduresonline.com\)](#).

FOCUS ON PRACTICE

10 Top Tips for Working with Transgender Youth



What's in a name? Use young Trans people's preferred names and pronouns, including ones you may not have used before, like 'they' or 'her'; and make sure they are marked clearly on their records to minimise the risk of awkwardness and embarrassment. If you do make a mistake, just correct yourself, apologise and move on. Apologising profusely or drawing attention to your mistake will make the young person feel awkward.

Everyone is Trans enough. Increasingly young people identify as non-binary or gender non-confirming. They might feel that they are between male and female, a mixture of both, or beyond all conventional gender categories. They might not dress or act in a way you can easily define, but this doesn't mean that they are not transgender or 'Trans enough' to access services and be treated with respect.

Be mindful of your own gender expectations. Young trans people don't need to know how successful you think they are at being a man or a woman (if that is how they identify). How would you feel to be told you are no feminine or masculine enough? So, use positive affirmations.

Confidence and humility are key. It's ok to make a mistake or not to know something.

Don't rely on young Trans people to be the sources of knowledge in your area of expertise. For example, if you need to know how equality law relates to Trans issues, do a bit of research. Your knowledge will show that you are engaged.

Body Talk. References to body parts associated with someone's assigned birth gender (testes, breasts, ovaries, etc.) might cause distress. Try to use more neutral terms before you determine their level of comfort. Some people might prefer it if you say "**the ovaries**" rather than "your ovaries".

Young Trans People. Should access health services or join screening programmes that are appropriate for their anatomy.

Aren't you too Young to Know? Avoid undermining young Trans people's feelings about their gender and decisions they make around gender based on their age.

Don't second guess a young Trans person's sexual orientation. Trans people can be asexual, bisexual, gay, heterosexual or lesbian – and many young people do not define within traditional categories of sexual orientation.

It's not all about surgery and hormones. Don't assume that all Trans people will undergo medical procedures.

Support services for Bradford's Trans Youth:

Bradford's Youth Service offers support for 13 – 19 year olds (up to 25 with a disability)
07582102135 or sound@bradford.gov.uk.

Yorkshire MESMAC: Phoenix Bradford Trans Youth Group
For more information email Finn on finn@equitypartnership.osrg.uk

learning from complaints

It is important that we learn from the outcome of complaints made about the services and /or our practice; that way we can adapt and ensure that when faced with a similar situation we respond appropriately.



As with all complaints we look for our learning opportunities and develop action plans to ensure similar situations do not occur in the future. Following a recent stage 2 complaint the following lessons are highlighted:

- ◆ Relationship building is essential when working in partnership with families and members of the public - training is being offered through mandatory modules about how to engage with children and young people and adults. Relationship building is at the heart of our new practice model.
- ◆ At times family members, or members of the public may have video or audio recordings that they have taken to highlight a concern about a child they have. It is important that when we are assessing an allegation of concern that we consider all evidence which includes video and audio recordings which should be accessed in a timely manner.
- ◆ It is essential that prior to a child being placed with a connected person there needs to be a viability assessment which is approved by a Head of Service under Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.



Your Health and Wellbeing Matters



YOU ARE IMPORTANT; YOUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IS IMPORTANT AND THIS INCLUDES YOUR MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELLBEING

These are unprecedented times and we are all living and working in difficult conditions. However, you have risen to the challenge and adapted to the environment and the circumstances to ensure that the Children and Young People of Bradford have remained supported and kept safe. You should be really proud of your achievements.

The work that we do is by nature very social, we are usually based in teams where we receive support from colleagues and managers and have regular face to face contact with an array of people. Some of you continue to go in to the office on a regular basis, where safe to do so but for the majority of you, you are working at home and may not have seen a colleague face to face since March/April 2020. We know that this is impacted on people's health and well-being; so, please consider the tips below to look after yourself so that you continue to be resilient.

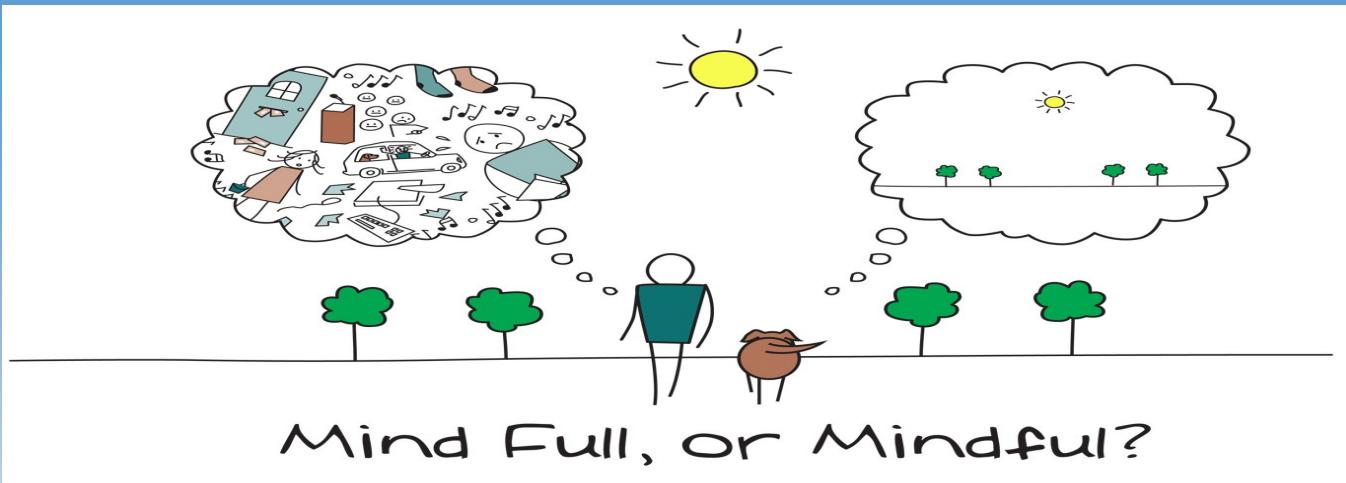
Working at Home: - There are very clear guidelines about flexible working that were in place prior to the Pandemic; it is important that you continue to follow these guidelines so that you do not experience injuries to your neck, back, etc. If you need to have an office chair or foot rest so that you can sit properly this can be borrowed from the office; please speak to your line manager about this. Take regular breaks from your screen - you blink 50% less when you are in front of a laptop/ computer and this can lead to eye strain, headaches and fatigue. You can alleviate this by looking into the distance for at least 20 seconds every 20 minutes (advice I have just been given by an optician!).

Make sure that you regularly stretch your legs and if possible get some fresh air and sunlight (when it appears).

Keep in touch with colleagues and peers through regular phone calls, Webex meetings and Microsoft Teams. It is really important that you still feel that you can access emotional support, especially when you have had to deal with a very emotive, or difficult conversation or experience/situation at work.

Have a routine—this is important so that work and home do not morph into one environment; put your work things away when you have finished for the day so that you don't see them when you are not working (this can stop triggers about work tasks etc.).





Mind Full, or Mindful?

Do you sometimes lie awake at night worrying about relationships, money, school or work, your health, family or friends? Many of us do, and it can be very hard not to. We are all so busy during the daytime, when we stop sometimes a million thoughts can come flooding into our minds.

If this sounds familiar, something that could help is **mindfulness techniques**.

Mindfulness is about being aware of how we are in any given moment, and in a way which is kind and supportive to ourselves and others. It is proven to help **reduce stress and anxiety** and **helps us live with pain or illness**.

We are all already mindful to some extent, but it is something we can increase in our daily lives as well.

100 minutes of mindfulness during March

Throughout this month, our resident mindfulness coach, **Mark Anslow**, is providing mindfulness sessions several times a week on our staff Facebook group **Your Wellbeing Matters**, with the aim of helping people have 100 minutes of mindfulness during the month.

You don't have to do 100 minutes of mindfulness to take part, even joining just one session could help you.

Mark said: "You may have heard about mindfulness or attended a course or training already. Many people are also now using apps such as Calm and Headspace.

"Mindfulness is about being aware of how we are in any given moment AND in a way which is kind and supportive to ourselves and others. It is proven to help reduce stress and anxiety and help living with pain or illness. We are all already mindful to some extent but it is something we can create more of in our daily lives as well."

Mark will post three short mindfulness practices in the Facebook group each week. These will be either a short practice to drop into daily life, or short 5-10 minute meditations. These can be done when convenient to you.

He will also continue with the weekly mindfulness drop in sessions each Friday at 12.30pm on the Facebook group for those who might want to connect with others as you practice mindfulness.

Each week will have a different theme:

- Week one – coming back to the 'here and now' with our senses, the body and breath
- Week two – how we can work with our thoughts and wandering minds
- Week three – how to be with the ups and downs of our lives
- Week four – kindness to ourselves and others

To join all you need to do is go to the **Facebook group, Your Wellbeing Matters**. If you haven't already joined, please request to join the group (you will be asked some basic questions to approve membership, make sure you fill these in to ensure that your membership validation is not delayed).

The sessions may help you if you have problems with sleeping, and can help in many other ways as well.



It is important that we all continue to develop professionally and there are lots of ways for us to develop.

We are all migrating to Microsoft Teams which will be easier for access to live training events; the Workforce and Learning Service has, and continues to review the training and development offer. We aim to be as responsive as possible to ensure that we are able to provide training and development opportunities subject to the needs of the service, and as a response to lessons learnt from complaints, serious case reviews, research, whistle blowing and audit findings.

We are also moving away from the traditional face to face training as our main way of providing learning opportunities. We intend to offer a blended approach to training and development through podcasts, video's, live and recorded webinars, reading material, direct training, shadowing, mentoring, coaching , and other learning opportunities etc.

The safeguarding partnership is also reviewing the training and development opportunities to make sure that they remain relevant and up to date.

One of the big calendar events for the partnership is **SAFEGUARDING WEEK**. This year, safeguarding week will be held on **21st June 2021** watch out for fliers about this and book quickly as this is a really popular week and places to workshops and events are quickly booked up. These events are open for everyone to attend.

Other training events to look for via CSWM: this is not just for social workers.

The recording for the **February webinar** with Professor Brigid Featherstone and Alicia Lee (Doncaster Trust) is now available on the CSWM webinars page on the portal for anyone who missed it <https://our.childrenssocialworkmatters.org/webinars>

March's live Webinar is on **Wednesday 17 th March 2021**, 11.00am – 12:30pm with Professor Anna Gupta and Dr Yuval Saar-Heiman During this live session Anna and Yuval will talk about their extensive research on poverty and shame and the damaging impact of poverty and inequality along with the implications on practice. You'll have the opportunity to ask questions after their presentation. Access is via the link above. A flier will be circulated.

April's live Webinar is presented by Ben Ashcroft (author of 51 moves) about his experiences—this will be held on the 14th April at 1pm; I will circulate a flier when this is available.

Internal training events:

The focus this month is on case recording and on assessment and planning—these are mandatory modules for those teams who will be completing case recording and undertaking assessments so please ensure that you have booked on to one of the modules. These are available until the end of March.



As always, please send me your feedback and any suggestions for the bulletins. Contributors are also very welcome.