

FOCUS

Welcome to our Spring Edition of Focus our newsletter which aims to inform you of developments around Reducing Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation for young people living in Barnet.

My team can be contacted if you or your organisation have any questions or requires information and support, please do not hesitate to contact us on CEAM@Barnet.gov.uk

Within this episode, we are focusing on young people's experiences of Return Home interviews, recent areas and themes that are emerging in the borough and outlining the launch of our Restorative Justice Network Hub.

Tackling Violence and
Exploitation Team
Spring 2023

Developing our Tackling Violence and Exploitation Strategy 2023 – 25 and new operating protocols.

It has been an incredibly busy start of the year, and within recent weeks we have begun to consult with partners and young people on our upcoming Tackling Violence and Exploitation Strategy. In the last year we have seen great developments in best practice and research including public sector approaches to reducing violence and vulnerability, development in contextual safeguarding and trauma informed responses to both individuals and collective trauma of communities.

Our consultation session was extremely helpful and marks an exciting time in being able to shape our approaches to support young people their families and communities in Barnet.

Alongside this we will be updating our operating protocols, Risk panels and our Child Exploitation and Missing (CEAM) risk assessment tool.

Over the coming months you will see a range of further consultation and launch events and briefings, so please feel free to become involved and support us shaping and building our approaches to support young people in Barnet. If you have any ideas please contact us at

CEAM@Barnet.gov.uk

Increasing Community Capacity Coordinator

We were recently awarded funding from the Violence Reduction Unit to employ over a fixed term a Community Capacity Coordinator. Using a public health approach to violence reduction this exciting post will focus in the areas of; Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, Friern Barnet, and Edgware. In which they will improve local resilience and develop plans that support the diversion of young people and adults from involvement in incidents of serious violence.

The coordinator will

- Maintain an overview of incidents of violence in the community, and in partnership with key grassroots organisations, key schools, faith groups, marginalised and isolated groups, and
- local businesses, to co-produce plans that will support reducing tensions, addressing contributing community needs and to develop community plans that support diversion of young people and adults from violence, and promote community healing.
- Coordinate Community Conferences, in partnership with My Family Matters, to co-produce support plans to reducing tensions, increase community cohesion, respond to collective trauma and promote community healing as a result of a serious incident.
- To develop key leads who will be able to eventually lead in coordinating and facilitating their own community conferences.

Caring for people, our places and the planet





Return Home Discussions – What young people said

Return Home Discussions (Interviews - RHI's) are completed for young people who return to their home or placement from being missing. The discussion is to enable the young person the opportunity to discuss why they were missing and their worries/concerns and experiences. This should lead to identifying support, guidance and information for the young person that can hopefully address some of the causal factors and to reduce missing episodes.

Sonal, from The Tackling Violence and Exploitation Team recently completed an in-depth report to better understand young people's experiences who have been through the process. This involved her meeting with young people open to a range of different teams in Childrens' Social care. They generously shared their time and experiences and produced incredibly valuable feedback which will drive substantial change to both practice and the process some of these changes will include:

- Moving away from practitioner using language and processes that make the RHI's feel like "interviews" rather than opportunities for discussions and engagement.
- To ensure that practitioners feel confident to complete return home discussions without forms and that they adopt a flexible rather than rigid approach.
- Improve consistency of practitioners undertaking the discussions to further develop trusted relationships with a young person.
- To look at how we can ensure young people are better informed to the purpose of the discussion and how the interaction can be supported by other professionals.

The full report will be made available in May 23. In the meantime there are a range of extremely useful resources for practitioner who are undertaking return home discussions.

the-first-step.pdf ([childrenssociety.org.uk](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk))

Return Home Interviews - Missing People

Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk))



Intelligence and emerging themes in the borough

Many of you will know Nina Teyara, who our Intelligence Analyst in the Tackling Violence and Exploitation Team. Part of her role is to make sense and understand emerging themes in the borough and to support professionals in understanding these themes to enable curiosity, effective risk assessments.

Barnet for the large majority of young people and communities is a safe borough and it is a very few young people or members of the community who will ever experience the impact of violence, harm, threat or antisocial behaviour. In addition our partners including, Police, social care, community safety, housing, health and education work in close partnership to respond to incidents, reduce tensions to prevent incidents from occurring.

If you require any information to support risk assessment, planning or intervention for a young person please do not hesitate to contact **Nina.Teyara@Barnet.gov.uk**, however, in summary the following have been themes:



There has been enhanced police presence in Friern Barnet around Parkhurst Road, and North Finchley and the High Road.



Some of the themes we have noticed since the start of 2023 included:

- There has been enhanced police presence in Friern Barnet around Parkhurst Road, and North Finchley and the High Road. These areas appear to become increasingly popular for young people to regularly meet, particularly around places which are well lit at night, offer free wifi and young people can eat.
- There has been substantial multi agency work and increased presence of Police, Community Safety, Health and Housing, to support and reduce tensions around the Grahame Park and Burnt Oak ward boundary. We have seen a reduction of incidents around these areas in recent months.
- We have seen a recent trend of young people taking money from other young people and provide them with fake money in return, or to take goods such as expensive clothing and shoes to sell on without returning the profits to the seller. In addition some young people have had their Paypal accessed and being used by other young people to pay in and withdraw money.
- Social media continues to be a popular way to entice people, by glamourising using and selling drugs, often by spreading mis-information about the amount of money people can allegedly be making if they were to also get involved. TikTok is another popular platform for this kind of content, however TikTok is also being used to allow young people to antagonise rival individuals and groups.
- With the redevelopment of various residential areas around the NW9 young people and adults are gravitating to abandon property. So please stay curious and report in any concerns to **CEAM@Barnet.gov.uk**, the Police or Barnet Council if any addresses or locations are mentioned please contact **CEAM@Barnet.gov.uk**



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Restorative Barnet

The roots of Restorative Justice (RJ) can be traced back to indigenous communities around the world who use it as a form of enforcement, as a mechanism to resolve conflict, and to rehabilitate offenders. Members of a community committing acts of wrongdoing are seen as having strayed or become alienated from the community and as such, the community has a responsibility to reunite and reconnect the person to restore harmony. At the heart of the process is the firm belief that reconciliation and reintegration as well as the repair of harm are possible when, through restorative dialogues, those causing harm accept responsibility for the wrongdoing.

RJ works best in conjunction with traditional criminal punishments such as community orders or custodial

sentences. RJ is not a substitute for sanctions, it is a vital component of the criminal justice process that considers the needs of the harmed and the harmer to bring about meaningful outcomes. These outcomes are often reflected in some form of 'closure' for the harmed and a change in behaviour by the harmer, which reduces the likelihood of re-offending.

RJ is an entitlement for all victims of crime under the terms of the 2021 Victims Code. The Barnet Victims Hub Co-ordinator, has established a referral pathway to ensure all victims of crime have access to comprehensive practical and emotional support and the introduction of a Restorative Justice Co-ordinator in Barnet will ensure that this support extends even further.

Project Scope

Barnet has one existing Restorative Justice Practitioner located in the Youth Justice Service responsible for supporting young people involved in juvenile offences. Our addition of a Restorative Justice Coordinator will be responsible for the development of RJ and Restorative Practice within the borough, working with both young people and adults.

This project seeks to increase the understanding and use of RP/RJ across Barnet with the intention of creating positive, progressive and cohesive communities. We will work towards an establishment of a RJ Network, led by RJ Champions, will increase the capacity within the community to facilitate restorative interventions and create opportunities for learning, collaboration and the sharing of good practice. As a result of this action, communities will experience a reduction in the rate of re-offending and a reduction in violent escalation requiring intervention by emergency services.

Outcomes following RJ interventions are highly effective, for example, in a survey conducted by Remedi Restorative Solutions (2021), 94% of victims of crime reported an increase in their feelings of safety following a RJ intervention, while in the Why Me?

2020 Valuing Victims Report, over half of victims reported being better able to cope with aspects of life such as health and wellbeing following an intervention.

We are working on several strands within this project:

- We are working to improve the awareness and use of restorative processes in Barnet. This will be via a schools' project, community outreach activities and training. The intention is to signpost, then embed the proactive, relationship building activities associated with RP, therefore enabling people to build resilient and meaningful connections throughout their communities. When conflict does arise, people will be equipped to lead restorative interventions to de-escalate conflict and repair harm, reducing the need for intervention by external agencies.
- We are creating a Restorative Barnet Network to grow the numbers of people working in explicitly restorative ways in the borough. It will be comprised of internal and external partners who can collaborate and share good practice to improve the quality of relationships, resulting in greater efficiency, productivity, and satisfaction.

- We are also working on increasing the numbers of adult RJ referrals. Referrals can be made directly to me and, if they meet the requirements for intervention, I will (usually) refer them on to Calm Mediation, who are the London-wide facilitators for RJ. I can deal with referrals that involve either the harmed (victim) or the harmer (perpetrator), and if you are not sure whether the referral meets the criteria, please refer anyway as this will help to raise awareness of RJ.

We have held our first Community engagement meeting in the community of Friern Barnet. Here, we discussed issues effecting the residents and together, we explored solutions to some of the difficulties. This speaks directly to Restorative approaches, where we work collaboratively, provide a space for listening and empowering people to help resolve issues effecting them.

Later this month, we will be holding our first RJ network meeting, where we will be coming together, to solidify our network, share good practice and raise awareness about some of the existing RJ work happening in our borough.

Focus on The Centre of Excellence



The Centre of Excellence (COE) is a non-profit organisation who provides support to the Somali community. The overall mission and aims of COE

- Strengthen Tie Between generations
- Improve access to mental health and other vital services
- Foster community provide and local leadership
- Be a hub for community and service providers.

The COE are currently offering a range of programmes that include:

Tea and Talk

- Safe Space for women and girls

Father And Son

- Amplifying the voice of men and boys and supporting relationships and healthy narratives around gender

The Change Makers Club

- Youth focussed groups supporting and developing leadership skills and community organisation

Culture and Heritage

- Groups to support intercultural conversation and constructive dialogue

The COE are also providing free interpretation service between the Somali community and private public sector providers in Barnet.

CONTACT DETAILS

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info@centerofexcellence.org.uk



The Tackling Violence and Exploitation Team can always be contacted if either you or a member of your staff are worried about a young person who may be experiencing exploitation.

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However if your concern relates to an immediate safeguarding concern then please contact. **MASH@barnet.gov.uk**

**In future additions we would welcome partner contributions and updates
so please forward these to CEAM@barnet.gov.uk**