

Hello and welcome, to the first edition of our quarterly newsletter from the Vulnerable Adolescents Team. The newsletter is aimed at keeping you informed about what is happening in Barnet and good practice developments. We hope you find it a useful source of information in working with adolescents at risk or vulnerable to exploitation

Vulnerable Adolescents Team
Spring 2021

Vulnerable Adolescents Strategy 2018 -2020



A review of the work of the Vulnerable Adolescents Community Partnership (VACP) over the past two years is detailed in the first of our annual reports which can be found [here](#).

The report highlights developments in practice, in particular, the strengthening of partnership arrangements with the voluntary community sector (VCS), and the impact of this and the implementation of a contextual safeguarding framework (SEAM) on risk identification and management for children and young people in the borough. Our approach is enabling proactive and child centred assessments of risk, improved inter-agency working, including joint learning and public awareness raising events, and most importantly, better interventions and outcomes for young people.

Vulnerable Adolescents Strategy 2018 - Changing Needs in Barnet over the last two years

As the VACP report notes, there has been a marked increase, over the past two years, of adolescents being exploited through county lines drug dealing activity, many of these young people can be linked too known criminal gangs operating in London. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) affects disproportionately affects boys from Black and other ethnic backgrounds: our data shows that 88% of adolescents involved in CCE and/or Gangs are male and 66% are from Black and other ethnic backgrounds. Worryingly, the age of young people being targeted for criminal exploitation is decreasing and the correlation between school exclusions is clear. Tackling disproportionality is a key theme for our partnership to tackle in our refreshed VA Strategy 2020 -2022, read more about our Strategy below.

Vulnerable Adolescent Strategy 2020-2022

In July 2020, Barnet launched a revised Vulnerable Adolescents Strategy which sets out our key priorities and framework for delivery for the next two years. The strategy and Multi-Agency Work Plan can be found [here](#).

Our focus over the next three months our partnership will be focusing on:

- Implementing the Early Help Child Exploitation and Missing (CEAM) tool alongside a supportive framework for Early Help practitioners to support young people from becoming victims of exploitation through a range of diversionary approaches
- Promotion of disruption toolkits across the partnership which must always be used and considered when working with adolescents at risk of exploitation.
- Improved communication platforms for young people to contribute and shape the way we do things, including a website redesign.
- Revisions to the Strategic MACE and Vulnerable Adolescents Risk Panel (VARP)

If you would like to participate in any of the above work streams, please get in touch at this address CEAM@Barnet.gov.uk. We warmly welcome your contributions



Over the last two years there has been a reduction of reported missing episodes; this of course seems like good news right? However, one of the potential reasons for the reduction is the decreasing numbers of young people whom are identified to be at risk of child sexual exploitation and increasing numbers of young people who are identified to be at risk of child criminal exploitation.

Young people who are at risk of CCE are less likely to be in care, and their parents may not know how to report, be worried about inviting the police to home or be in collusion with criminal activities of their children (particularly when this supports household income) More information can be found here: Report or find a missing person - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).



Philomena Protocol

The Philomena Protocol is a police-led initiative and is designed to:

- Identify residential homes, semi-independent providers and foster care placements where there is a high prevalence of young people going frequently missing
- Assist multi agency engagement with the homes and placements in addressing missing episodes
- Support the implementation of coordinated preventative and planning strategies for vulnerable young people who regularly go missing.

The key highlights include:

Grab Packs

The Local Authority are expected to complete a summary risk assessment or “grab pack” for every young person that goes frequently missing from care which provides essential information highlighting risks, concerns, and information that can assist the Police in understanding the response required in locating them. The placement must do everything to ensure this is completed at the start of a placement of a child.

Checklist

Along with the grab pack, there is now a checklist of tasks that residential staff and foster carers will need to complete before reporting a young person missing to the Police.

Coordination of the Care Plan / Placement Plan

Young people who go missing from care frequently must have a care plan and placement plan which includes preventative and responsive strategies to help support the reduction of missing episodes.

The removal of the “Absence” category will require changes to our reporting and recording systems and to support these changes, the VA Team will be completing briefings for staff and our key partners, so watch this space!

In the meantime, please direct any question to the Team.



Updates from Strategic MACE and themes in Barnet.



County Lines

Emerging themes have been identified through a small number of young people being arrested, information from return home interviews and from information young people have shared with professionals and trusted adults.

The information notes criminal exploitation of Barnet young people through county lines to the south Sussex and north west Essex coast. British Transport Police are targeting these areas in response. A local multi agency strategic plan is being developed and implemented which will be shared in multi-agency briefings to help ensure that all partners are aware of the key indicators and contextual information. The briefing(s) will take place during spring/summer 2021.

I urge you to remain inquisitive about what is happening in young people's lives and share any concerns you have about young people's safety with **MASH@Barnet.gov.uk** or **CEAM@barnet.gov.uk**

The SEAM Name Change! And Early Help Roll Out

On 1 May, we will be changing SEAM to CEAM (Child Exploitation and Missing) as this better reflects the wider context of exploitation to both child sexual and criminal exploitation.

The Early Help version of CEAM will be rolled out by the end of February.

The development of the Early Help CEAM was co-produced with young people in Barnet and with some useful feedback, including:

- Young people wondered about the use of language, including “vulnerable”, “risky”, “gang” and “exploitation”
- Young people felt that the social media section needed updating to reflect how YP use social media
- Young people understood sexual exploitation and used the word “grooming” to show this but less so for criminal exploitation
- Young people wanted more explanation of terms used to check young people's understanding and best support them
- Participants wanted a trusted adult to support them when completing the CEAM tool or for EH workers to be aware of who they considered a trusted adult information can be shared

We will continue to seek the views of young people to ensure what we are doing is understood and meaningful to them



CEAM resources support, information and training,

We will be delivering multi-agency training on the following (DATES INSERT) This 1-day training can be accessed at no cost to your organisation and is currently being delivered virtually training will cover:

- Current themes of exploitation in Barnet,
- The various processes of grooming,
- Barriers to engagement and making impact
- Trauma
- Planning and engaging

Contact Barbara Scarlett/Gail Williamson

<https://fstraining.barnet.gov.uk/cpd/portal.asp> Barnet CPD On-line

Keys Partners Focus on Mentoring

There is a comprehensive Vulnerable Adolescents service directory which is in the process of being updated, the current version can be accessed here.

In delivering preventative and diversionary 1:1 support for children and young people in Barnet have provided some brief information about the services they provide and how to contact them. See the directory for the full list of agencies providing support

FUSE - Link <https://www.fuseyouthproject.com/about.html>

The FUSE YOUTH PROJECT aims to teach young people life skills through the use of cooking, creative art, group discussions around youth centred topics and team sports.

We also make it a priority to take young people on exciting offsite trips to encourage them to explore and get to know the world outside of their estate.

Art Against Knives - <https://www.artagainstknives.com/>

We intervene early to prevent young people from becoming victims or perpetrators of violent crime. We embed creative spaces in London's most isolated communities, co-designed with young people, that build on their strengths and create opportunity. These award winning spaces include a music studio and multiple nail bars, all open 48 weeks of the year. In these spaces our team of creative, highly skilled professionals provide skills training, mentoring and specialist support.

What makes our approach special is that we are fully rooted in communities and at the same connected with industry and specialist support. We work with participants long-term as their needs cannot be met through short-term, one-off interventions; we always co-produce our programmes and enable young people to shape the support they need. We build trusted relationships, resulting in participants'

active engagement: they seek our support when they face significant risks and challenges.

4Front <https://www.4frontproject.org/our-work>

FRONT was established in 2012 to provide a platform for young people who have been impacted by violence to create change. Since then, 4FRONT has pioneered an approach that empowers the young people most directly harmed by violence and the criminal justice system to be at the forefront of a grassroots movement for change. We fundamentally believe that there is a difference between reducing violence and building peace.

Our work centres racial justice and empowers members to recognise their strengths and identify systemic barriers to their progress. We specialise in providing culturally specific services, tailored to meet the needs of those with experiences of violence and the criminal justice system who identify as Black (which includes those who are Black British, African, Caribbean and Mixed Heritage). We not only acknowledge the impact of racism and discrimination on our members, we actively work to dismantle these systems.

Growing Against Violence <https://www.growingagainstvience.org.uk/>

Growing Against Violence (GAV) is a charity that aims to protect young people against peer-to-peer violence and exploitation both on the streets and online. The charity grew out of a partnership with London's Metropolitan Police Service and since 2008 GAV has delivered workshops to over 197,000 young people in over 940 schools.

GAV sees violence as a disease that is preventable rather than inevitable and examines the causes of violence using a listening and investigative approach that teases out issues specific to local communities. The charity follows the

World Health Organisation's 'public health approach to tackling violence', using data to identify risk factors for violence and the delivery of evidence-based violence prevention workshops.

Youth Realities

Youth Realities are a youth-led organisation addressing teenage relationship abuse, using creative education and supporting young survivors.

We work with young people ages 11-25, offering 1:1 mentoring, group activities, a dance group and employment and training opportunities - all to help young people be the happiest and healthiest versions of themselves.

We accept professional referrals but also (when safe and in usual delivery) young people can just drop in to our sessions and meet with youth workers for support, guidance or a fun new experience.

We're based on the Grahame Park Estate but also work from Unitas Youth Zone and other local locations. All our work and current virtual delivery can be found on Instagram **@youthrealities**. To discuss this further please contact Talia at **Talia@youthrealities.co.uk**



The Vulnerable Adolescents 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.

CEAM@Barnet.gov.uk
christopher.kelly@barnet.gov.uk
sonal.patel@barnet.gov.uk
amy.nowland@barnet.gov.uk

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