

Learning Briefing

J

# Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership received a practice review notification in relation to J. J expressed that they were transgender and had autism. The notification was received after an incident when J, attempted to end their life. J was taken to hospital with non-serious physical injuries. J has now recovered, is back at school and doing well emotionally and physically.

# What should you do?

* Seek to ensure that the voice of the child is central to your practice
* Think Family
* Understand culture not just ethnicity
* Seek guidance in areas where you do not have specific expertise
* Work collaboratively with partner agencies
* Do not make assumptions regarding what other agencies are undertaking
* Use professional challenge and check back what is being communicated in order to enhance understanding of what has been communicated
* Use established guidelines and support documents as well as experts.

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| Learning identified | What will help? |
| Learning Point 1. It is important that there is clarity on the process of diagnosis of ASC i.e.is screening required mandated?  Learning Point 2: Understanding for professionals in clarifying the basis of diagnosis is important.  Learning Point 3: Nice Guidance provides evidence bases for diagnosis, support, and management and are useful reference points. | Understand and check out source of diagnosis and use guidance documents.  Ensure formal screening of Autism is undertaken.  Keep updated with commissioning issues related to autism and ensure appropriate support is in place whilst awaiting assessment. |
| Learning Point: Gender dysphoria is an increasing concern and presentation in young people, therefore staff need to have access to support and expertise to guide them.  Learning Point: Exploration of concerns that parents have regarding negative press issues should be explored rather than being accepted at face value, particularly where there are no alternative commissioned services.  Learning Point: Exploration of barriers to provision of appropriate support services for young people with gender dysphoria should be based on the needs of the young person and not the service or parents. | Seek out training and guidance on transgender issues in children and young people.  Seek to assess and understand parental views whilst ensuring the choice of the child remains central.  Use signposting to specialist services and support groups for both parents and children and young people. |
| Learning Point: Protocols for assessment provide a framework for all agencies to follow when a referral is received into Children’s Social Care.  Learning Point: A shared understanding of any impact of ethnicity and culture should inform multi agency working.  Learning Point: Effective multi-agency working includes professional challenge where there is a concern that any partner agency is not following policy, procedure or protocol.  Learning Point: Multi agency working can ensure that information regarding defaulted appointments can be explored and understood in context.  Learning Point: Effective multi-agency working ensures that all those working with a child and family have information from each agency to inform their individual work.  Learning Point: The voice of the child must be central to any assessment so that the child does not just tell their story, but they are heard, and appropriate plans ensue. The voice of the parent should not take precedence over the voice of the child. | Ensure that you are providing information for child and family assessments where you have involvement with a family.  Ensure that your assessments and record keeping documents explore ethnicity and culture.  Use supervision and peer support to professionally challenge partner agencies who you are concerned have not followed procedure or communicated effectively.  Ensure that your agency ‘was not brought’ policy is robust and that you use it effectively to challenge non attendances and to share that information with others before closing a referral/case.  Do what you can to establish a good working relationship with those partner agencies around you. Share information where it is necessary and appropriate, seek guidance and support if you are unsure.  Reflect on your practice and challenge yourself to ensure that you are truly hearing what a child is saying and evidence that you are listening by your practice actions. |