



LEARNING FROM A SERIOUS CASE REVIEW

Child BB

www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding

The SSCB conducted a proportionate Serious Case Review in relation to a two year old child known, for the purposes of the review, as Child BB.

Synopsis

In late May 2014 Child BB was taken to hospital in a state of extreme physical collapse. It was noted that Child BB had a large bruise to the side of the head and other bruises and burn marks. The child was transferred to a hospital with a paediatric intensive care unit later that day and died there the next day. In March 2015, the child's mother and her partner were charged with causing or allowing the death of a child and causing or allowing serious physical harm to a child.

Main Themes

Child BB and the mother were only known to universal services and none of the agencies were aware of any concerns about the child's wellbeing, nor were they aware that the mother was in a recent relationship with a man with a history of domestic violence and allegations of ill-treatment of children in another Local Authority area. The review has identified concerns regarding inter-agency communications between Police, Probation Services and Children's Services about incidents and call-outs in relation to domestic violence in the other Local Authority area.

It was noted that Child BB's mother met her new partner through an internet dating site. It is not known if she was aware of his history of domestic violence or the allegations about injuries to children in another area. Such encounters can be risky and currently the safety messages on these websites focus on the users' personal safety but not on potential risks after a relationship is established.

Good Practice

- Mother and child were only receiving universal services. The services they received from midwifery and health visiting services were appropriate.
- There is no expectation for health agencies to carry out risk assessments routinely. If they had known about the partner's

convictions and police call-outs in relation to domestic violence they would have wished to carry out a risk assessment.

Recommendations

- 1) Surrey Police, the National Probation Service (Surrey), the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company and the Surrey County Council Children's Services review their processes for liaison about incidents and call-outs in relation to domestic violence. Consideration should also be given to how any requests from health and social care agencies for information about offenders are handled so that contact with the police and probation services in other areas is also checked as far as is possible.
- 2) It is recommended that consideration be given to how mothers can be alerted to the need for caution when engaging in new relationships with previously unknown men, potentially with an emphasis on relationships made through internet dating sites and social media. This is a concern that crosses boundaries and it is recommended that it be referred for national consideration and action.

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