



## **Safeguarding Children Partnership Stoke-on-Trent**

# **Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter.**

**(July 2025)**

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership (SoTSCP) newsletter. Here you will find details of upcoming events, training opportunities, safeguarding news, policy and procedure updates and much more.

Please don't forget to send us your safeguarding news and updates to share across our multi-agency partners, submissions to [SoTSCP.Information@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:SoTSCP.Information@stoke.gov.uk). We are particularly interested in case studies, lessons learnt and best practice.

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## **New Business Manager for Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership**

### **Rob Taylor**

I'm the Business Manager for the Safeguarding Children Partnership in Stoke-on-Trent, dedicated to improving the lives of children in our community. My role involves coordinating multi-agency efforts to ensure the best outcomes for young people. I spent 30 years with Staffordshire Police, many of those years in Stoke-on-Trent. As the Neighbourhood Commander for Stoke South from 2015 to 2018, I was proud to lead local policing efforts.



In my final years with the police, I specialized in child protection and collaborated on complex investigations, including leading the response to Operation Campus, which dealt with child criminal exploitation. I was truly impressed by the social work team's commitment to making a difference.

Now, I focus on strategic oversight of the Safeguarding Partnership, ensuring our partners collaborate effectively under the [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) legislation to support and protect children in Stoke-on-Trent. I'm excited to be part of this vital work!

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## Working Together to Keep Children Safe: Multi-agency Audits in Stoke-on-Trent

Multi-agency audits are a cornerstone of effective safeguarding practice. In Stoke-on-Trent, the Safeguarding Children Partnership (SoTSCP) lead on these audits to bring together key agencies to evaluate and improve how services work together to protect children.

### What are multi-agency audits?

Multi-agency audits are a way for professionals from different organisations, like social care, health (UHNM, MPFT, NSCHT), education, police and voluntary organisations such as New Era and CDAS, to come together and review how well they are working together to protect children.

### What is the purpose of multi-agency audits?

- To assess the quality and effectiveness of inter-agency working.
- To identify strengths and areas for improvement in safeguarding practice.
- To ensure that the voice of the child is central to all safeguarding activity.

These audits are not about blaming anyone. They are about learning and improving. By looking at real children and their families, professionals can see what's working well and what could be better.

### How are audits conducted?

Choosing the Focus: SoTSCP selects a theme like neglect, domestic abuse, or mental health based on local priorities or learning from serious incidents.

Reviewing: A small number of children are selected and each agency is provided with an audit tool to use to assess the quality of practice, timeliness and appropriateness of interventions, the child's lived experience and the inter-agency communication and decision making.

Multi Agency Panel: The agencies come together to discuss each agency's audit collaboratively, and the panel then identifies what worked well and what were the areas for improvement.

Voice of the child: the views of the children and families are also included and central to the panel's discussion.

### What is the impact from the audits?

The findings are used to:

- Development of action plans to address identified issues
- Improve training for professionals
- Update policies and procedures
- Share good practice across services
- Make real changes that benefit children and families
- Enhancing accountability and transparency

## Conclusion

Multi-agency audits are vital for continuous improvement in safeguarding. Through collaborative learning and reflection, the SoTSCP ensures that children in Stoke-on-Trent receive the protection and support they need.

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## S175 Audits

A S175 audit is a safeguarding review conducted in schools and other educational settings to ensure they are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities for child protection.

A new digital platform will be introduced in the new academic year to support the S175 audit. More details will be announced shortly.

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## Sextortion is on the Rise

A Growing Online Threat which is likely to increase with the summer holidays approaching.

Sextortion is a form of online exploitation where an individual often children and young people are coerced into sharing explicit images or videos, which are then used to blackmail them. Offenders may demand more content or money, threatening to share the material with family, friends, or online.



Perpetrators often operate across platforms, making multi-agency collaboration essential for early identification and intervention.

Sextortion can happen to anyone but children and young people are especially vulnerable (93% of victims are male and victims are most often aged between 15-17 years old with some being as young as 9 years). Risks increase during school holidays when children and young people are spending more time online and less time around community safeguards.

Victims may present with anxiety, withdrawal, self-harm, or sudden changes in behaviour. Children with additional vulnerabilities including those who are isolated, care experienced and those with additional needs are at increased risk.

A recent review with Police in Staffordshire identified 3 males aged 15 in the last 6 months had reported to police they had been the victim of sextortion. There was a

pattern of the perpetrators asking the victims to purchase gift cards to avoid any bank transfer and making it more difficult for police to investigate.

### What professionals can do:

- Be alert to signs of distress or secrecy around online activity.
- Encourage open conversations about online safety and consent.
- Ensure children know how to report abuse and where to get help (e.g. CEOP, school DSL, police and web sites such ChildLine and the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) which has the report remove tool available.

Key message: **Early recognition and a coordinated response across education, health, social care, and law enforcement are vital to protect children from this form of abuse.**

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## NSPCC Update



Visit the [NSPCC Learning](#) website to access training, resources, and information to safeguard children from abuse and neglect. Content is regularly updated, and recent additions include:

- Our summary of the [National audit on group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse](#)
- A series of [online safety expert insight films](#)



**Schools** can find support from our wide range of **teaching resources**. We encourage primary settings to sign-up to deliver the [Speak out Stay safe](#) programme for the coming autumn term, and secondary settings can find support for delivering inclusive sex and relationships education with our [Talk Relationships](#) service.



[Together for Childhood Stoke](#) works in partnership with the local community to prevent child abuse and build a safer community. A recently published case study highlights the successes, challenges and opportunities and provides a deeper understanding of how Together for Childhood has evolved. Find out more about the [development evaluation of Together for Childhood](#).



**Support parents and carers** with our wide range of online guides. From bonding with baby and toddler tantrums to children sharing bedrooms and separation and divorce, there's advice and support available.

Find and share at [Parent Guides](#)



Childline is here through the summer holidays to support children and young people - whether that's having someone to talk to, giving ideas of things to do or helping to get support when it's needed.

Check out [Childline under 12s](#) and [Childline over 12s](#)



Don't forget the [Report Remove tool](#) which helps young people under 18 in the UK to confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves and remove them from the internet.

[Subscribe](#) to our **safeguarding child protection newsletter** for free weekly email alerts to keep up to date with the latest safeguarding and child protection news.

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## Summer Safety

Whilst the warm summer weather brings lot of opportunities for fun in the sun, there are also additional hazards for children. Take a look at the Child Accident Prevention Trust:



- [Summer safety tips: 8 reminders to keep children safe this summer](#)
- [On holiday](#)
- [6 dangerous products to avoid this summer](#)

**Why are slushies dangerous for children?** Glycerol is often used to create the slush effect. But in high quantities, especially to small children, glycerol can cause shock, hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) and loss of consciousness. In June 2025, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) recommend that **children under seven** do not consume slush ice drinks containing glycerol. This updated advice applies to ready-to-drink slush ice drinks with glycerol in pouches and home kits containing glycerol slush concentrates.



## Helping New Drivers

Did you know there is a great online resource to support new drivers, and their parents or carers!

[Helping New Drivers](#) created by Staffordshire Safer Roads partnership, shares short films including 'why crashes happen' and 'rural roads', and a quiz to support new drivers to get on the road safely.

Go to <http://www.helpingnewdrivers.co.uk/>

1. Watch the films
2. Take the quiz



3. Check out the bonus downloads!

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## What's On

- 12 August 2025: [International Youth Day](#)
- 9 - 15 September 2025: [Play Safety Week](#)

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## Stoke-on-Trent SCP Training

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership provides a series of multi-agency learning and development opportunities, which includes core safeguarding training, a variety of subject specific courses and topic based briefing sessions.



### Training taking place July - September 2025

- FREE lunchtime learning - [Developing Professional Curiosity & Hypothesis](#), Wednesday 16 July 2025
- Level 3 [Safeguarding Children and Domestic Abuse](#), Wednesday 16 July 2025
- FREE [Non-accidental and Unintentional Injuries in Children Under Five](#), Thursday 17 July 2025
- FREE [Early Help](#), Friday 15 August 2025
- FREE [Threshold Framework](#) 'accessing the right help at the right time', Wednesday 10 September 2025
- Level 3 [Safeguarding Children and Female Genital Mutilation](#), Tuesday 16 September 2025
- Level 3 [Child Sexual Abuse, Online Abuse, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and the Role of the SARC](#), Thursday 18 September 2025
- Level 3 [Learning from Local and National Reviews](#), Thursday 18 September 2025
- Level 4 [Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer](#), Tuesday 23 September 2025
- Level 3 [Safeguarding Children and Parental Substance Misuse](#), Wednesday 24 September 2025
- FREE lunchtime learning - [Lets Change the Narrative: The importance of language in Child Exploitation](#), Wednesday 24 September 2025
- FREE [Restorative Practice](#), Monday 29 September 2025
- Level 4 [Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers](#), Tuesday 30 September 2025

Prior to booking on to training, please could you check that your account is up-to-date, for example, current job role, line manager details, etc.

**To view further Stoke on Trent SCP Training**

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