

Ann Craft Trust

Latest Research and News on Safeguarding Disabled Children and Adults at Risk

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www.anncrafttrust.org

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THE ANN CRAFT TRUST

Bulletin No 95

April 2016

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Editors Note



Welcome to this quarter's bulletin. We hope you all had a good Easter break.

This quarter has seen further comment about Connor Sparrowhawk when Sara, his mother, spoke of her frustration that little had resulted since the report on his death - "We thought the report would become a national priority for action. And nothing has happened."

And there was also further coverage of an investigation in Margate in 2014 which resulted in four people losing their jobs when new footage showed a carer had been filmed dancing naked around a severely disabled young man at the residential care home in Margate.

Such cases throw up many questions about how well we learn from situations that go wrong, how the recommendations of serious case reviews and adult safeguarding reviews are implemented and how negative attitudes towards people are addressed. In our next bulletin we will discuss these issues further as well as

letting you know the details of ACT's Autumn seminar.

In this bulletin we have included an article by Rod Landman who is discussing the 'Helping Each Other' project funded by Comic Relief. I was lucky enough to be on the Advisory Project for this project and was really heartened to hear of its success and the involvement of the young people as trainers. Further funding to continue this valuable work is now being sought and we wish them all the best with this.

We also have news about Oxfordshire's Family Support Network's Money Matters Conference. It was very well attended by family carers who shared their feelings and views about the financial affairs of the relatives they are supporting.

Nicola Dean gives an update of the work she is doing as our Safeguarding Adults in Sport Manager and there is also information about the seminar in June at the University of Nottingham aimed at developing best practice in sport. And Rachael Clawson talks about her continuing work on forced marriage of people with learning disabilities.

There is a news update as well as information about current research and resources and news about the work we will

be doing with Experts by Experience.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the ACT bulletin and please do get in touch if you would like to write a piece for us or include your news and views.

Deborah Kitson

Deborah Kitson, ACT CEO

Have you received services from social care or health during the last 5 years? If so we would love for you to be involved with Experts by Experience.

Experts by Experience Explained...

Led by Choice Support Experts by Experience is a project that supports the CQC when they inspect services. An Expert is someone who has used a particular service (like residential care or day services) or a family carer of someone who does. Our Experts come from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences and they work closely with CQC inspectors to find out what they think of a service. An Expert's role is to support CQC inspections of health, mental health and social care services (relevant to their experience).

Anyone can be an Expert if they have the right experience of services - which means you need to have personal experience of using a service or of caring for someone who uses services.

As an Expert by Experience you are supported through training and are paid for the work you do. The rate of pay is £15 an hour plus travel expenses. This work is on a casual basis and you can choose how many inspections you do.

Above all 'Experts by Experience' is a great way to help shape the services that matter most to you.

See the next page for more information



ACTing against abuse

Experts by Experience

Get involved in checking services. And make a difference!



An Expert by Experience is someone who uses services or who is a family carer of someone who uses services.

They work alongside CQC inspectors to carry out inspections of health, mental health and social care services. They get the views of people who are using the service.

Experts by Experience are paid for the work they do. The rate of pay is **£15 an hour** plus travel expenses.



What do you need to do become an Expert by Experience?

To become an Expert by Experience you need to have personal experience of using services or of caring for someone who uses services.

You will need to complete an application and personal profile form which we will send to you. We will also arrange a DBS check (Disclosure Barring Service), ID badge and training for you.

But most of all, if you want to make a difference and live in the central region we want to hear from you!



You can do this by writing to Deborah Kitson, Ann Craft Trust, Centre for Social Work, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD.



Or emailing me at deborah.kitson@nottingham.ac.uk



... and finally you can also call the ACT team on 0115 951 5400 **to find out more** about how you can become an Expert by Experience

Helping Each Other

Rod Landman discusses the development of a successful peer education project in Devon that tackles sexual exploitation.

The 'Helping Each Other' peer education project on sexual exploitation for young people with learning disabilities has been running in Devon since 2012.

Beginnings – mate crime

The starting point for the project was really the work we started in 2009 on what we ended up calling 'mate crime'. These are crimes that are perpetrated on people living largely independently in the community by people who pretend to be their friends. Perpetrators form a relationship with their victim and then use the relationship as a vehicle for the exploitation or abuse of their victim. The 'Safety Net' project (www.arcuk.org.uk/safetynet) was a response to this form of crime and arose partly as the result of anecdotes being told to us by our members, and partly as a reaction to high profile murders such as that of Steven Hoskin in St Austell in 2006. Such murders, whilst horrific in their nature, are fortunately rare, but we were



The peer led project began in 2012 and was born out of ARC's Safety Net programme

coming across a vast range of everyday abuses that we categorised as mate crime. These included women with learning disabilities being pimped out by their 'boyfriends', people whose accommodation was turned into crack dens, women being befriended by paedophiles in order to gain access to their children, and many accounts of perpetrators making a good living off the benefits of their 'mates' with learning disabilities.

The initial phase of the Safety Net project lasted for three years, and by the end of it there really wasn't a crime that we had heard of that wasn't associated with mate crime, including terrorism. However, we concluded that the two predominant forms of mate crime appeared to be financial exploitation and sexual exploitation.

In many senses the archetypal mate crime case came from a phone call from a provider in

Ring of Safety evaluation

Do service users have:

- Better understanding of their rights: Yes 71% A bit 29%
- More confidence: Yes 57% A bit 43%
- Better sex education: Yes 43% A bit 57%
- Better understanding of privacy: Yes 71% A bit 29%.
- Ability to say 'no': Yes 43% A bit 57%
- 57% had used the workbook



Over the past few years Helping Each Other has:

- Engaged with c.541 people with learning disabilities
- Distributed 200+ workbooks
- Produced 25 peer education workshops
- Delivered 11 staff training sessions
- Plus 2 combined sessions

Useful resources on the web...

www.arcuk.org.uk/safetynet

www.grapevinecovandwarks.org

Also ACT has developed training with Advance more of which can be found [here](#)

South West England. They told me about a young woman with learning disabilities who used their service. She was an avid user of the internet and keen on Facebook. Here she met a man who, after a period of time, sold her the all too common story that he had fallen in love, and if they got together they could get married, have kids, and the rest of their lives would be wonderful: "The only thing is, I'm a bit short on money right now, can you just send me £50 . . .". And so it went on with more requests for money. The service provider was ignorant of this relationship until a member of staff entered the woman's room one evening to find her undressing for her 'fiancée' in front of her webcam.

This example is a perfect illustration of mate crime, involving the two main forms of exploitation and showing how the two link. Our experience was that you very often got boundary testing with financial exploitation, and if it wasn't interrupted it could lead to sexual exploitation.

It also demonstrated how new media impacts on this kind of crime. It turned out the perpetrator was in Iceland. Now, as I am fed up of saying, when I started working with people with

autism and learning disabilities in 1980 an abuser had to be in the same room as someone. Now, not only can you do it from the other side of the world, it is in your interests to do so, as the chances of being caught are remote. It also flags up that people are now no longer prey to just a few people in their home town, but to a whole world of potential abusers. Scary.

Sexual exploitation and learning disability

Of course, we only have our anecdotal evidence and that's why we rely on our stories so much. There are no statistics around sexual exploitation for people with learning disabilities. So we are left with our best guesses. The few research studies that have been conducted around sexual abuse and learning disability suggest that people with learning disabilities are anything between two and four times more likely to be abused than the general population. We proceed on the assumption that it is unlikely to be any different for sexual exploitation.

The lack of statistical evidence, of course, combined with historical attitudes towards people with learning disabilities as second class citizens, means that little attention has been focused on the area. So,

little in the way of policy, very little in the way of political support, and really nothing in the way of resources - both for people with learning disabilities and those aged over 16. The teams in Plymouth and North Devon felt pretty much on their own. Did this daunt them? It did not.

Of course, we only have our anecdotal evidence and that's why we rely on our stories so much

Peer Education

The project sought to work with young people who had experienced exploitation or who were, at least, at risk from exploitation. In practice, of course, this meant pretty much anyone. Peer education is now fairly well established as a model of good practice, and the research indicates that the strengths are related to trainers' credibility within the peer group and the expertise and insights they offer. I do not have a learning disability, and am not at risk of sexual exploitation. The training teams do and they are. I cannot tell you what that is like.

At times, I have to admit, I found my working relationship with the training teams frustrating. As I say, I bow to their knowledge and insight about disability and exploitation. However, I have been involved in the training field for nearly 25 years and reckon I know my onions. There were disagreements. In every case, we would have a good professional row, I would sleep on it, and I would realise they were right.

Two examples really stand out. Having watched the available educational resources, aimed at



The project sought to work with young people who had experienced exploitation



young people without learning disabilities the team concluded that they were a) too fast and busy b) hard to understand c) very upsetting. On this basis the team decided to reject all existing resources, and to couch their training within a positive framework. Which may sound odd in relation to sexual exploitation, I grant you.

Keeping it positive

So. Example one, the team wanted to talk to their peers about how to have positive relationships, rather than just focus on the negative relationships that constitute sexual exploitation. This was for two reasons. Firstly, we hope that positive relationships obviate, or at least lessen, the need for bad ones. Secondly we hope that by talking about good and bad relationships in tandem, people are less likely to mistake the two. First hand accounts from exploitation victims show graphically how people seem prepared to tolerate the most appalling abuses and still believe their persecutor loves them.

Example two. The team made the decision to focus its training sessions on what keeps people safe rather what puts them at risk. If you look at the standard list of risk factors for sexual exploitation, most of them apply to people with learning disabilities. This just seemed calculated to alarm.

The Ring of Safety

Hence we drew on the work of Dave Hingsburger, specifically the 'Ring of Safety'. Dave draws on the extensive work he has done with people with learning disabilities who have been 'sexually victimised' in his home country of Canada, and identified what he regarded were the most important

elements of people's lives that helped to keep them safe. This includes such things as self esteem, a good sex education and having someone in your life who really listens.

The Ring of Safety is what the team decided to put at the heart of their workshops for their peers. So a large chunk of time is allocated to discussing what people need to keep safe and how those needs can be met. This is then followed up in the workbook and action plan that each learner leaves the sessions with.

Ups & Downs

The project has not been without its difficulties. The initial recruitment of the training teams was a challenge. We were lucky to find 12 people who have the personal resources and skills to stand up in front of a group of people and not only talk about sex and relationships, but particularly about any dark aspects.

An altogether bigger challenge has been 'selling' the project in some quarters, and the work we want to do. We have found some doors very firmly bolted, and it has been both disappointing and astonishing to me that many services for people with learning disabilities continue to believe that their role in safeguarding people is to ensure that they remain as ignorant as possible.

All credit to Comic Relief for the open, sympathetic and supportive way in which they have worked with us on this difficulty. The upshot has been that we have actually extended our remit both geographically, and to include staff



training, which we are developing right now.

On the upside we have had a high degree of media interest, and in addition to recent appearances on local TV and radio there are imminent appearances on File on Four and You & Yours.

Products

We hope to have a decent legacy from the project, with our teaching plans and resources available free of charge from about the end of this year. We're particularly proud of the DVD we have just finished, which features a number of short plays about the sorts of sexual exploitation that can affect people with learning disabilities. Some stunning BAFTA worthy performances in there. We're using it as a trigger for discussions about what sexual exploitation is, how we know it is happening, and what we can do about it.

So . . . we'll keep testing those products out and hope to have something really useful by early 2016. We're delighted to hear from anyone who wants to get in touch.

To be involved or find out more contact Rod on the details below:

Rod Landman,

Project Co-ordinator

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Email: rod.landman@arcuk.org.uk

Web: www.arcuk.org.uk

Money Matters Conference

By Jan Sunman, Oxfordshire Family Support Network (OxFSN)

The Oxfordshire Family Support Network invited ACT's CEO, Deborah Kitson, to speak about financial abuse at a conference, held on March 14th.

The conference, called "Money Matters" was developed by OXFSN, a group ran by families and carers of people with learning disabilities, and held at the Kassam Conference Centre in Oxford.

The focus of the day was an exploration of many aspects of money issues faced by people with learning disabilities and their families, from assessments, to managing personal budgets and the challenges that people with learning disabilities face from hate crime and mate crime, to the role of the Court of Protection.

Families were given valuable insights into the detection of potential signs of financial abuse. Deborah explored the sensitive subject of the financial abuse that family carers themselves can perpetrate. She advised families



on how to ensure that people with learning disabilities can become aware of the risks and practical steps they could take in order to protect themselves. She also advised family carers about how they could set up financial systems to ensure that they were not using the money that belonged to their relative inappropriately.

Deborah also gave an excellent example of how the wider

community could pick up evidence of financial abuse in the shops, by training shop assistants to spot behaviours from paid care staff that could indicate that they were financially abusing the person they supported.

The presentation is now available to families on the [Oxfordshire Family Support Network website](#).

Our thanks to Deborah and Ann Craft Trust for their support of this event.

Some key signs of Financial Abuse:

Unexplained loss of money

Inability to pay bills, overdue rent

Person unable to access their own money or check their own accounts

Deterioration in standard of living, for example an inability to purchase items that they could normally afford

Unusual activity in bank accounts

Cheques being signed or cashed by other people without someone's consent

Signatures on cheques etc, that do not resemble the person's signature, or signed when the person cannot write

About Oxfordshire Family Support Network



Oxfordshire Family Support Network (OxFSN) is a not-for-profit organisation run by and for family carers of people with learning disabilities – both children and adults.

We were set up in 2007 by family carers who wanted to use their experience to help others in the same situation, based on our

belief that family carers are experts by experience.

We are managed by a board of trustees, the majority of whom are family carers of people with learning disabilities. We provide information, advice, support and training to:

Family carers of people of all ages with learning disabilities

Health care and social care professionals

We provide a platform to ensure that the voices of families who

have relatives with learning disabilities are strong and are able to influence local policy making and service development

Our aim is to ensure that people with learning disabilities are able to lead fulfilling lives, enabled by high quality, person-centred support.

We have a number of projects supporting family carers and we also have written guides for families of young people moving into adulthood that are downloadable from our website.

Minimising the Risk of Financial Abuse

Below are some sample slides from the presentation...

Minimising the risk



- It's not a one person job!
- Appoint deputies and attorneys where appropriate.
- Talk to those who know person well: especially family
- If concerned, consider a capacity assessment,
- Discuss risks in any care planning meetings
- Include level and type of support in personal plans,
- Keep under review
- Be aware of your role, responsibilities and limitations of dealing with someone's finance
- Keep good records



Minimising the risk



The balancing act

- Enabling people to have respect, autonomy and as much control over their finances as possible
- Protecting people from abuse and exploitation

Must work within the **Mental Capacity Act**



Take a look at:
Financial Decision Making
for help on how to carry out an assessment of financial decision making capacity



Minimising the risk



Applying good practice to the people you support and care about;

- Don't give out personal PIN number for cards
- Don't give anyone a blank cheque
- Don't keep large sums of cash at home or with you.
- Don't throw papers with personal details (eg name, address, date of birth, in the bin. If possible shred.
- Don't sign up for store or credit cards, or loans if you do not understand the charges.

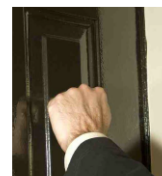


Minimising the risk



Applying good practice to the people you support and care about;

- Avoid traders with no landline phone or office details
- Do not sign or agree to anything on your doorstep.
- Ask callers to provide identification and agree a time when they can call again
- Don't leave strangers alone in your home
- Be very wary of doorstep traders offering to carry out work on your home such as roof repairs, hedge trimming or drive cleaning.



A Whole New Ball Game?

By Nicola Dean, ACT Safeguarding Adults at Risk in Sport Manager

In the last bulletin (Issue 94) I gave an introduction to my role as Safeguarding Adults at Risk Manager.

One of my initial tasks has been to survey County Sports Partnerships (CSPs), National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of sport and other sports organisations in order to identify their safeguarding needs. The online survey has now closed and I am currently in the process of analysing the results. A full report will be available soon, however, for this update I thought it would be good to share my initial thoughts and how this fits overall.

It has been pleasing to see that there has been a good response to the survey with completed forms from 59 organisations. The majority of returns were from CSPs and NGBs with a few from clubs and other sports organisations. This appears to reflect the high degree of interest in the safeguarding of 'adults at risk' in sport that I have noticed during the past few months. I recently spoke at a meeting of the safeguarding leads for CSPs and NGBs convened by the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and found the leads to be keen to learn more about how they could ensure that adult safeguarding becomes a priority within sports.

I was interested to learn more about the individuals whom organisations identify as being adults at risk within sports. What is clear is that organisations recognise that anyone involved in

sport can be at risk of harm – club members/ participants, members of staff, volunteers, coaches and others. Similarly in my discussions with sports organisations I have been interested in hearing the adult safeguarding issues that they have dealt with and it has become apparent that they are connected to a variety of people. This fits with the concept of safeguarding adults outlined in the Care Act 2014 in that harm can occur to anyone within society as it is situational, rather than some people in society (for example people with learning disabilities) being 'vulnerable adults'.

A key aim of the survey was to identify the support needs that sports organisations have relating to safeguarding adults. Since my appointment I have been contacted by a variety of sports organisations requesting support regarding the development of policies and procedures relating to adults. The survey showed that just over a half of organisations responding had these in place. What is not clear however is when those policies were written and whether they include the most up to date information. Of the policies and procedures that I have seen there are certainly some examples of good practice, however others are out of date or have been written as an add on to the safeguarding children's policies. In order to address this I am including in the Safeguarding Adults in Sport Resource Pack (available from May) that I am cur-

rently amending, a template policy and procedures document that organisations can adapt to suit their needs.

The main need that was identified in the survey was training and information. The majority of responders have received no training themselves regarding safeguarding adults and most organisations do not offer any training. In response I will be facilitating free introductory safeguarding adults in sport seminars which will offer an update on relevant legislation and guidance such as the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. There will also be the chance to discuss with colleagues the safeguarding adults issues that they are facing within sport. As mentioned I have found that there is a real interest in this area and I am looking forward to the seminars generating lively debate on this developing area. ■

Training Update:

In June ACT will be delivering two one day courses (Making a Difference) that support professionals within sport to explore 'Safeguarding Adults'. This training has been specifically developed by ACT to tackle relevant safeguarding in sport challenges and will include an update on legislation, theory and best practice guidance. Each course is free for participants for more information click [here](#)

Held at the University of Nottingham



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

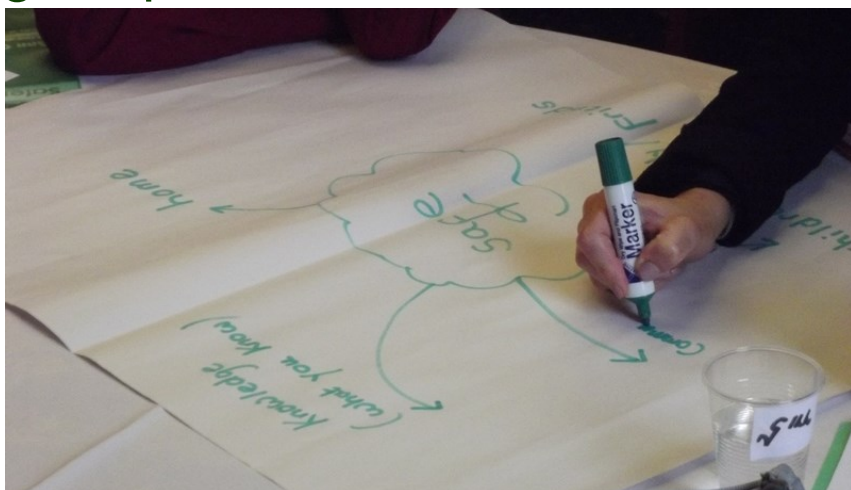


ACTing against abuse

Making a Difference

**June
2016**

Effective safeguarding in sport of adults at risk



Making a Difference is a brand new one day Safeguarding Sports seminar aimed at developing best practice within sport.

This course has been developed for safeguarding leads within National Governing Bodies and County Sports Partnerships

This seminar will offer participants expert input on safeguarding adults in sport including:

- The role of the Safeguarding in Sport Manager & National Steering Group
- What do we mean by capacity?
- How the Care Act affects sport
- Understanding 'Making Safeguarding Personal'
- How to create policies and procedures



ACT is delivering two courses on **16th June** and **23rd June** to take place at **University of Nottingham**. To book your place please complete and return the attached booking form to n.dean@nottingham.ac.uk

Each course will run from **9:30—4pm** (With lunch provided) **for more information** call **0115 951 5400** or email n.dean@nottingham.ac.uk

Please note: there will be a charge of £25.00 for non-attendance (without prior notice).

However we are happy to accept substitute delegates.



Safeguarding News Watch...

Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities calls for information on disability hate crime schemes.

Today the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities (the Foundation) launches a survey to address the kinds of disability hate crime schemes or projects currently operating in the UK.

People with learning disabilities are long-standing targets of disability hate crime and harassment, and despite a reported 18% increase in hate crimes to the police in the years 2014-15, the number of reported disability hate crimes is still very small.

In response to this there have been numerous initiatives and schemes developed with the aim of either reducing disability hate crime, supporting people to report it and obtain support after the incident, or for others such as police forces or housing associations to be more responsive and identify such incidents earlier on.

Even though there has been an encouraging emergence of such schemes across the UK, there are few opportunities for learning to be shared across communities and other areas or rolled out more widely. That's why the Foundation is investigating what works best for people with learning disabilities.

The investigation will work closely with the Foundation's disability hate crime reference group, made up of people with learning disabilities who take the role of co-researchers. Richard, a member of the reference group said of the investigation:

'Everyone has the right to live in safety, with dignity and respect. This shouldn't be happening anymore. There should be strong communities so that people don't feel threatened and we all have a part to play in that. We need to be talking to each other and sharing information about how to best support people.'

Janette McCormick, Deputy Chief of Cheshire Police and the National Police Chiefs Council lead for disability issues said:

'I urge those of you who run such schemes or projects to complete this survey. This is the first survey of its kind and it is really important to find out what schemes work for people with learning disabilities. Anecdotal evidence suggests people with disabilities put up with abuse and harassment on such a regular basis it becomes the norm, which may explain why we receive less reported incidents for this group of people. We want this to stop and by completing this survey, we will get a better picture of where people go to for support when they are victims of hate crime'.

The Foundation is calling on those with knowledge of running schemes to respond to an [online survey](#) by April 29th. The Foundation will gather evidence of good practice and effective programmes which either reduce incidences of hate crime or support people with learning disabilities who have experienced these issues. The findings of the investigation will be disseminated nationally to promote wider adoption of effective approaches against disability hate crime.

The Chronicle Live reported in January the tragic death of

a pensioner due to neglect from his son.

(story by Chronicle Live)

William Hedley, 64, was on Thursday jailed for 18 months after being convicted of eight counts of neglect in the run-up to the death of his 91-year-old father, who died in hospital in January 2013.

The Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board has now published the findings of a Serious Case Review carried out after Mr Hedley's death.

The report outlines how despite repeated attempts by the authorities to help Mr Hedley, his independent nature and determined opposition from his son made it near impossible for agencies to assist him.

And the report's independent author, Tom Wood, said the case was so rare and extreme it was unlikely that there would be a similar set of circumstances.

Mr Wood said: "It is hard to envisage that public services will soon again encounter such trenchant resistance to such obviously necessary care for a vulnerable adult.

"It is difficult to make meaningful recommendations from such an extreme case since it is unlikely that such circumstance would recur in the near future.

"However it is important that any death in such tragic circumstances is fully considered so that lessons can be learned."

Mr Hedley senior was admitted to hospital on December 24, 2012 suffering from severe pressure sores, and subsequently died on January 12, 2013.

The Chronicle's full report is [here](#)



Safeguarding News Watch...

Man with learning disabilities 'treated like an animal' by care home

The Guardian reports that: "A man with learning disabilities told police he felt like an animal when he was "imprisoned" in a "disgusting and cold" isolation room at a care home, a jury has heard.

The man, who cannot be identified, is one of a number of residents who were allegedly the victims of organised and systematic abuse at two care homes in north Devon."

You can read the article here: <http://bit.ly/cforum113>

Originally published February 2016

The government is failing to protect disabled people from discrimination, according to the conclusions of an investigation by a House of Lords committee.

The Equality Act 2010 and disability committee has concluded that laws designed to address disability discrimination were "not working in practice", while government spending cuts were having "a hugely adverse effect on disabled people".

Baroness Deech, chair of the committee, set up to examine the impact of the Equality Act on disabled people, said disabled people were being "let down across the whole spectrum of life", including in access to public buildings, housing, public spaces and public transport.

She said: "When it comes to the law requiring reasonable adjustments to prevent discrimination, we found that

there are problems in almost every part of society, from disabled toilets in restaurants being used for storage, to schools refusing interpreters for deaf parents, to reasonable adjustments simply not being made."

The full story by the Disability News Service can be found [here](#)

Originally published March 2016

The Disability Action Alliance is developing a new strategy focusing on its long term sustainability and more collaborative working.

The Disability Action Alliance (DAA) is now in its third year of existence and is coming of age! With over 400 members, a track record of tangible outcomes through collaboration and members starting to work together in new and exciting ways, the steering group is now developing a long term strategy for the DAA.

The strategy will both focus on ensuring the long-term sustainability of the DAA and build on natural evolutions in the way that members are engaging with each other. As a starting point the steering group is reviewing the DAA's impact so far and considering how best to build on achievements. This is with the aim of better enabling collaborative working that makes a positive difference to disabled people's full participation.

The Office for Disability Issues are providing a one year grant to fund the next stage of the development of the DAA and its long-term strategy. As part of this

grant the steering group has decided the DAA's chairing organisation, Disability Rights UK, should undertake the secretariat function for the period of the grant. Though government facilitated the DAA's birth, it is felt that now is the time to put disabled people at the heart of the DAA's delivery.

The steering group welcomes input from DAA members and will be approaching the membership for input from March-May 2016. Participation from members will be particularly important as the steering group reviews where the DAA focuses its energies, how it can best enable its members to join up both locally and nationally, what form the Alliance should take longer term and how the DAA can ensure sustainability.

Liz Sayce, chair of the DAA and chief executive of Disability Rights UK, said:

"The unique thing the Disability Action Alliance does is act as a catalyst. It brings organisations that don't know each other together, across different sectors, linking people with good ideas to others who can 'open doors', with practical results."

"It's great that disabled people are setting the direction, with many allies, and that organisations led by disabled people are strongly represented on the steering group. I look forward to working with the DAA's members to forge a successful future for the DAA"

The full press release can be found [here](#)

Originally published February 2016

A big thank you from ACT to County Hall

It's often said that keeping people safe from harm is everyone's responsibility and Nottinghamshire County Council employees have found a 'novel' way to do just that.

Employees at County Hall have for the past two weeks run a highly successful dvd and book sale raising over £200 for ACT.

Stuart Sale, who is the Board Manager for the County Council's Safeguarding Adults Board, came up with the idea of supporting the Ann Craft Trust after colleagues discussed the idea of a book sale for charity. Stuart said "We've done similar things in the past but usually for big national charities, this time though we wanted to

support a local charity that makes a difference". Deborah Kitson, CEO of the Ann Craft Trust, was delighted "It's wonderful for us to get this support and raise awareness around safeguarding. Often the work of smaller charities goes unnoticed but it's great to have everyone at County Hall doing their bit and helping to keep vulnerable people safe"

The Council's Service Director Paul McKay has been one of the fundraisers helping to support ACT's work. He agreed with Stuart about why they chose ACT and saw the sale as a great way for colleagues to bond "It's good to support the work the Trust does and everyone's had fun extending their library. We've had everything from Caring for Cows to Katy Price to the Bourne Ultimatum!"

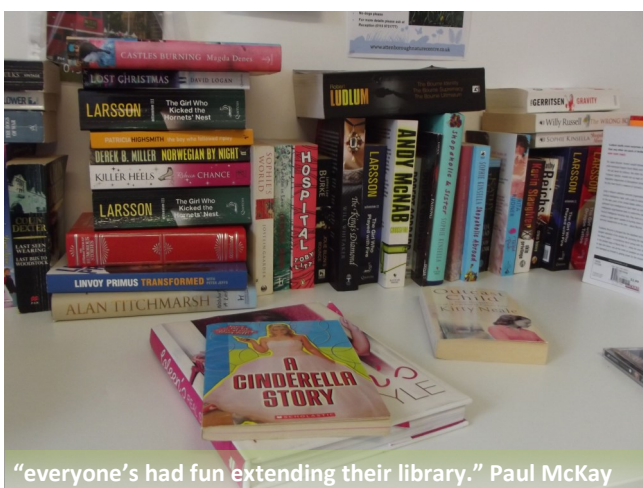
For the ACT team the money helps us to support individuals who are at risk of abuse. Deborah added "we specialise in research and training which is often funded but we also offer free advice, support and consultancy. This money will help us to keep this service going".

Finally County Council employee Georgina Ward sums up the sale for her and her colleagues "It's been fantastic, absolutely great that we're helping to make a difference simply through buying books".

Everyone at ACT would like to thank Nottinghamshire County Council for their support and hard work and in particular Teresa Ackroyd, Stuart Sale and Paul McKay for arranging the event.



Paul McKay holds up some of the donated DVD's



"everyone's had fun extending their library." Paul McKay

Could you help ACT?

Does a celebrity owe you a favour? Have you got contacts high up in hospitality or is a family member a sporting legend? If so, you could help...

ACT is getting involved with Small Charity Week, run by the FSI and taking place in June. As part of the celebrations we are taking part in an eBay auction for small charities.

The only rule is that whatever we auction has to be a rare, one of a kind, event or gift. For example last year's donations included a signed guitar by the Arctic Monkeys and Kaiser Chiefs.

Small Charity Week runs from the 13th to 18th of June and includes a host of events. Check out what's happening [here](#).

If you think you can support ACT please email Nat Rock by clicking [here](#) or call the office on 0115 951 5400

ACT News

A brand new project

The Ann Craft Trust is very pleased to yet again be at the forefront of innovative research on forced marriage of people with learning disabilities.

Rachael Clawson, Assistant Professor of Social Work at the University of Nottingham has been awarded funding by the NIHR SSRC to undertake research aimed at developing knowledge, policy and practice to better protect people with learning disabilities at risk of forced marriage.

The two year project will involve interviewing people with learning disabilities, family carers, community and faith leaders and frontline practitioners about their experiences of, and views about, why forced marriage happens and how people can be better protected. The project also seeks to develop a range of tools that will be helpful to practitioners including tools and guidance for assessing capacity and a DVD aimed at people with learning disabilities and their families to raise awareness of the issue and where to get help. If you are interested in finding out more about the project please email Rachael [here](#)

Matthew Garnett and his family deserve better

The Ann Craft Trust (ACT) is greatly concerned to hear about the treatment of a 15 year old Autistic boy who has been living in a psychiatric unit for the past six months.

The news that Matthew Garnett believes that he is 'in prison' and

that his family has been campaigning for a more appropriate service to meet his complex needs raises huge safeguarding concerns. Our Disabled Children's Manager, Sarah Goff said "Matthew and his family have a right to better services. A child should not be in receipt of adult provision where he won't receive the child-centred help that he needs."

"We need a real focus on the development of mental health facilities for young people like Matthew. It's crucial that services, both at crisis point and prevention, understand autism and mental health and how this can shape a young person's view of their world"

The Garnett's fight over the last six months highlights an alarming lack of resources available to young people with learning disabilities and their families.

Sarah Goff adds "With the training and knowledge available today it's very worrying indeed that the individual needs of a young person with learning disabilities have been ignored".

At ACT we view the Garnett's experience as undermining to the good work being carried out by services across the UK.

ARC Making a Difference and Tackling Sexual Exploitation in Devon

The Ann Craft Trust is pleased to have supported ARC's three year project, Helping Each Other, which tackled sexual exploitation of people with learning disabilities. Our CEO, Deborah Kitson, was a

member of the Advisory Group and has seen first-hand how the project has made a positive difference to lives of people with learning disabilities.

"Over the last three years Rod (Landman, ARC) and his team have helped educate and safeguard young people and adults in Devon. Helping Each Other has been crucial in providing an insight in to why people with learning disabilities are at such an increased risk and the benefits of both peer education and raising awareness of professionals."

The three year project will come to an end in March this year. ARC's press release – containing information about the celebration events and the positive impact of Helping Each Other is available to read [here](#).

Note: If you have concerns or need more information about safeguarding people at risk of sexual exploitation contact the [ACT team](#). If you would like to know more about the specific training we offer around this form of abuse please click [here](#).

Understanding the Mental Capacity Act

The Mental Capacity Act has impacted positively on Adult Safeguarding but did you know that the Act applies when people turn 16? From that point onwards parents and professionals may disagree with a young person's choice but if that young person has capacity their life decisions are ultimately theirs.



ACT News

As professionals we need to make sure that young people with learning disabilities are ready for this next step, are assessed fairly around capacity and feel confident to make life decisions.

This one or two day training course is developed to include policies, procedures and team roles.

Delegates on the course will explore:

Why the Mental Capacity Act matters

Where the MCA applies

When and how capacity is assessed

How the Mental Capacity Act affects a workers role

What the MCA means for families

Who can make decisions for young people who lack capacity?

To discuss training or the issues raised please email [Sarah Goff](#) or call the office on 0115 951 5400.

Forced Marriage Statistics for 2015 released

In early March the Forced Marriage Unit released its statistics for the previous year.

These facts and figures cover all areas of reporting around forced marriage from geography to ethnicity right through to disability. They are also a good indicator of where the UK is with understanding and recognising forced marriage.

The statistics therefore are also a strong indicator of confidence of professionals in protecting people with learning disabilities from this rising safeguarding phenomena.

In 2015 141 of the reported cases (just over 10% of overall reports) involved someone who had a recognised disability.

In terms of age 33% were between 22 and 25 years old.

Of these cases over 62% related to concerns about a male with disability.

11% of cases involved the UK as the 'focus country'

(The 'focus country' is the country to which the forced marriage risk relates. This could be the country where the forced marriage is due to take place, or the country that the spouse is currently residing in (or both) - FMU Report).

For ACT the statistics are a good indicator of our understanding of forced marriage and in particular how this relates to people with learning disabilities.

Deborah Kitson said "There are still massive gaps in our awareness of risk for people with learning disabilities but the statistics do highlight that awareness is growing in identifying forced marriage and those at risk."

To read the full FMU report click [here](#)

Research & Resources...



New resources about dysphagia and people with learning disabilities

Dysphagia is the medical term for swallowing problems. There are

different causes and types of dysphagia. It is generally accepted that people with learning disabilities are more likely to have dysphagia than other people.

IHaL has published a new report that brings together some of the reasonable adjustments that are being made to improve management of dysphagia in people with learning disabilities. It includes a summary of the research evidence and guidance as well as links to resources and

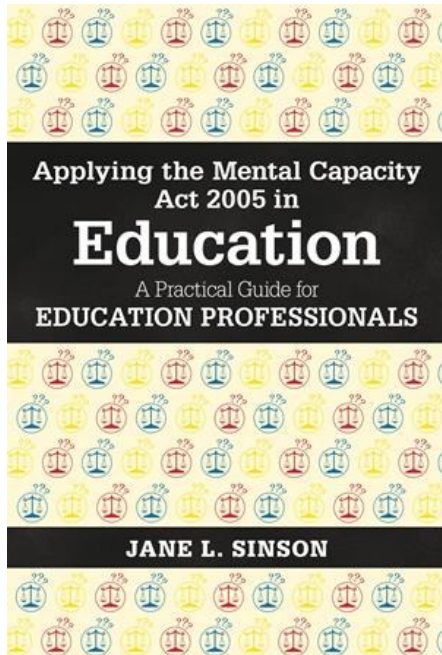
examples from practice.

We have also published two factsheets which explore dysphagia and learning disabilities:

1. What do we know about dysphagia (difficulty in eating, drinking or swallowing) in people with learning disabilities?
2. What do we know about supporting people with learning disabilities who have dysphagia (difficulty in eating, drinking or swallowing)?

These can be downloaded [here](#)

Research & Resources...



Applying the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in Education

A Practical Guide for Education Professionals

Jane L. Sinson

This straightforward book explains the introduction of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) and its code of practice (COP) as part of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the accompanying SEND COP in England.

This is the first comprehensive book to explain to education professionals the legal requirement to follow the MCA COP and SEND COP guidelines when formally considering a young person's (16 - 25) capacity to make decisions about their education. Using education-focussed case studies throughout to illustrate key points, this practical guide explains the MCA five principles, defines the term 'mental capacity' and clarifies the circumstances in which a young person would lack capacity to make a decision. It

describes when a capacity assessment is likely to be required and presents a step-by-step guide to undertaking a capacity assessment.

This is the essential guide to the MCA for FE college tutors, post 16 teachers, specialist teachers, local authority SEN officers and educational psychologists.

In another step towards making Information Technology more accessible, Hep Hep Hurra has created an Easy-to-Read version of Wikipedia. Available in either App or Webpage form, Hurraki describes the meaning of words clearly and concisely helping people of all intellectual abilities to understand.

Hurraki uses pictures, synonyms and examples to communicate clearly the meaning of words. The purpose is to break down complicated written and spoken words because everyone has the right to understand information. It is also a useful tool for those wishing to learn a new language which creates an inclusive virtual space for people of mixed abilities to come together. Like Wikipedia, it relies on users contributions and corrections to build an ever expanding vocabulary database. By inviting anyone to join, the website encourages more people to learn to write in Easy-to-Read. The App, which is also free to use, enables users to take the plain text language dictionary on the go, save articles and retrieve definitions offline. It is currently available in English and German with plans to be extended into many languages.

You can visit Hurraki [here](#)

Promoting Child and Parent Wellbeing

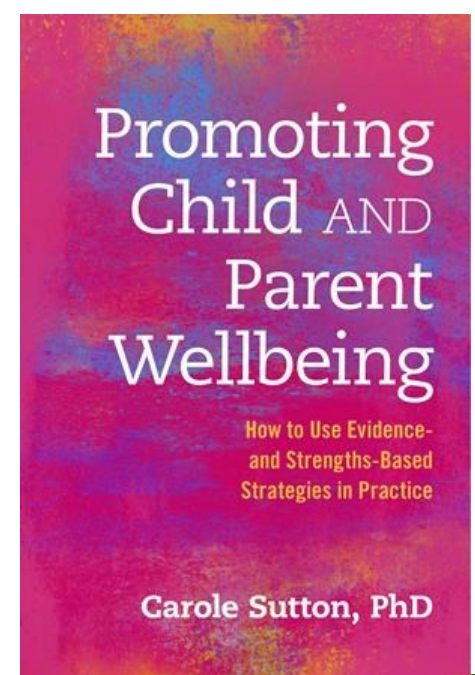
How to Use Evidence- and Strengths-Based Strategies in Practice

Carole Sutton

Informed by a wealth of research, this accessible book focuses on a strengths-based approach to promoting children's wellbeing and giving them the best opportunities to succeed.

By identifying risk factors and the protective factors which can be used to counter them, this book stresses the importance of preventative measures and early intervention to effectively support parents and their children. It shows that there are many protective factors and practices that parents, teachers and carers can employ to support children's development, promote mental and emotional wellbeing, and reduce the risks of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Further details can be found at Jessica Kingsley Publications [here](#)



From the Vault...

Forced Marriage of Children and Young People with Learning Disabilities

By Rachael Clawson ACT Bulletin 69 October 2009

Forced Marriage of Children and Young People with Learning Disabilities

The Right to Marry

I would like to begin by stating that the Ann Craft Trust fully supports the right of people with learning disabilities, who have capacity and who are of a legal age to do so, to marry. We support the right to enter into an arranged marriage. However, where required, assistance must be provided to people with learning disabilities entering into marriage to ensure they are able to consent to marriage and sexual relations and that both spouses have an understanding of what their marriage might entail.

Forced marriage - a hidden issue

The forced marriage of children and young people with learning disabilities is, as with many other types of abuse, a largely hidden issue and likely to be vastly under reported. It is a problem which has been drawn to our attention by frontline professionals and by recent court cases. It is an issue that many people are only just becoming aware of and little data has been collected on prevalence. However, the research and official information which is available gives cause for concern and highlights the need for professionals and agencies providing services for children and young adults to be aware of the issues and be clear about their own roles and responsibilities.

Why are people with learning disabilities forced into marriage? Children and young people with learning disabilities may be forced



into marriage for the same reasons that anyone is forced into marriage. However children, by virtue of being children, are more vulnerable and there are also a range of reasons which are more specific to people with learning disabilities.

For example:

Marriage can be seen as a means of providing a carer and/or financial security to the child or young person throughout their adult life. Parents may be primary carers and may view marriage as a means of ensuring continuing care

for their son or daughter as they get too old to provide the care themselves.

Marriage can be seen as a means of improving the chances of getting a visa to the UK. A young person with learning disabilities may be seen as easier to deceive or coerce into such a marriage and into then acting as a visa sponsor.

Families may believe that marriage will "cure" learning disabilities and / or allow a person with learning disabilities to lead a "normal" life.



From the Vault...

Families may be responding to peer pressure to follow cultural norms, it is expected that children will marry and have children of their own.

It is thought that in many cases the family of the child or young person believe they have the best interest of their offspring at heart. A lack of knowledge regarding health and social care services, or indeed the available services not meeting cultural needs may lead to families finding their own way of providing support to their children. However, whatever the reasoning behind forced marriage, the consequences can be devastating both for the individual involved and others, potentially including any children resulting from the marriage.

The consequences can include:

Sexual assault and rape - the expectation that marriage will be consummated and result in children means that people with learning disabilities who are forced into marriage may be subjected to sexual assault and rape. As many young people with learning disabilities do not receive adequate sex education, they may be ill-equipped to handle unwanted sexual advances, not understand sex, be unaware of contraception and not understand that children can be a consequence of sexual intercourse.

Domestic violence and abuse – families may keep from the potential spouse the information that the child or young person has learning disabilities because of the perceived stigma attached. They

may fear that openness will lead to a marriage being cancelled. The potential spouse may have little understanding of learning disabilities and how they might support the person they have married. The spouse's resulting feelings of resentment and confusion may lead to domestic violence and abuse.

A double forced marriage – if a potential spouse has not been informed that their partner has a learning disability it is questionable whether they have given informed consent to the marriage. Questions about informed consent also arise if the spouse is unaware that they are being married into the role of full-time carer. The spouse may also be vulnerable to abuse from the family of the person with learning disabilities if they are reluctant to perform their caring role as expected.

Abandonment - a young person with learning disabilities who is forced into marriage may be abandoned by their spouse. This can create feelings of rejection, stigmatise the person and possibly lead to the loss of a primary carer. This abandonment could be because the spouse was unaware of all of the circumstances of the marriage and / or they simply used the marriage to facilitate improving their immigration status.

Existing official information and research

As noted above, very little information from research or official sources is available regarding the prevalence of forced marriage of children and young

people with learning disabilities or the reasons for it happening.

Evidence from the Forced Marriage Unit data reveals that the majority of the cases of forced marriage reported to date in the UK involve families from South Asia. Coupled with this is the evidence from research demonstrating the prevalence of learning disabilities in South Asian communities being up to three times higher than in other communities, primarily for reasons of social and material deprivation as well as issues over access to healthcare (Learning Disabilities and Ethnicity, Department of Health, 2001, pg. 10).

A study of people with learning disabilities in Tower Hamlets who were either married, pregnant or parents found that all the Bangladeshi women identified were married. Less than half of the other women with learning disabilities in the study were married. The authors noted that it was questionable whether or not many of the Bangladeshi parents were able to give informed consent to marriage (O'Hara, Jean & Hemmie, Martin, Parents with Learning Disabilities: a Study of Gender and Cultural Perspectives in East London, British Journal of Learning Disabilities, 31, 2003).

In evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee on 25th March 2008, the Director of UK Visas, Mark Sedwill, stated that in 2007 the consul in Pakistan dealt with 250 cases in which a UK citizen was a "reluctant sponsor" of a visa. 86 of these cases involved adults with severe disabilities somehow involved in a marital case.



Did you know? ACT currently delivers training developed especially to tackle [Forced Marriage of people with learning](#) disabilities contact the [office](#) for more details

From the Vault...

KC & NNC v City of Westminster v IC - IC Neutral Citation Number: [2008] EWCA Civ 198

This example of a court case concerned a young man with autism and severe learning disabilities referred to as IC. In September 2006, IC's parents arranged for him to be married to NK. The marriage took place over the telephone, while IC was in the UK and NK in Bangladesh. The parties to the case accepted that the marriage was recognised in Bangladeshi and Sharia law. IC does not have capacity in English law to enter into marriage or engage in sexual relations. The Court of Appeal ruled that the marriage was not entitled to recognition in UK law. It also ruled that the marriage was "potentially

highly injurious" to IC and that consummating the marriage would constitute rape or indecent assault.

What action is required?

The Ann Craft Trust believes that the issue of forced marriages of children and young people with learning disabilities requires sound research; this is vital to effectively tackling the problem.

There is also a need for:

Acceptance from schools, agencies, professionals, faith groups and communities that the forced marriage of children and young people with learning disabilities does occur

Greater understanding in statutory, voluntary and private health and social care sectors and professionals who have a clear

knowledge of the issues relating to forced marriage and the skills to address these

The difference between arranged marriage and forced marriage to be recognised and understood

Professionals to move from a mindset which includes fear of causing offence to particular communities to understanding the facts and acting appropriately upon them

Greater understanding in schools, including special schools, and a rigorous 'follow up' system for children who disappear from the school roll

Culturally appropriate health and social care services and information about these services to be widely distributed to those who require it.



ACTing against abuse

We'd like to hear from you!

Everyone at ACT hopes that you enjoyed our latest e-bulletin. At ACT we want to make sure that everything we publish makes a difference and matters to you. We aim to publish stories, news, research and resources that support your day to day work. With this in mind if you have any ideas about how we can improve the bulletin please contact ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk

Would you like to contribute to ACT?



We all know that reflecting on safeguarding practice is important. Championing the work we do and celebrating our successes helps us all to explore our roles fully. The ACT e-Bulletin is a great way to showcase what you do. If you'd like to write for ACT contact matthew.parr@nottingham.ac.uk

THE ANN CRAFT TRUST

ACTing Against Abuse

ACT is an association concerned with facilitating the protection of all adults and children with learning disabilities who are vulnerable to abuse.

AIMS:

ACT maintains an information exchange network for statutory and voluntary agencies, for professionals and individuals through a national office and

the production and circulation of a quarterly bulletin

the compilation of a network of members and their specific interests

the editing and updating of an annotated bibliography and information sheets on specific topics.

ACT works towards raising the general level of awareness of issues relating to the abuse of children and adults with learning disabilities by

making links with other relevant organisations (both specialist and main-stream)

producing a wide range of publications

organisation of, and contribution to conferences, seminars and training events

contributing to public debate as appropriate when matters of concern arise locally or nationally.

ACT works to an equal opportunities policy, facilitating protection to all people with disabilities, with attention and respect to race, culture, religion, gender, age and sexual orientation.



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ACTing against abuse

