

# Significant Incident Learning Review

## Briefing Note for Agencies Re. Child V



### Introduction

This is the third briefing note compiled by the NCSCB in response to Learning Review.

### Case Summary

Child V was 12 years old when she was removed from the care of her family and placed into foster care. Concerns had been reported to Children's Social Care in respect of the care the family were providing, living conditions at home and instances of Emotional Abuse. There had been five previous referrals of a similar nature over a seven year period. Reported emotional abuse suffered included: Enforced social isolation through being locked in her bedroom for long periods of time. Segregation from other family members and family activities. Restrictions of fluids and certain foods; name calling, humiliation, denied access to a toilet and clothing, inappropriate behaviour management techniques applied for her age and level of distress.

### Findings

The main issue in this case focussed on practitioners understanding of emotional abuse, and their ability to frame or provide descriptors of Emotional Abuse in order to evidence the significant harm to the child. They became distracted by the parental projections that this was about the child's difficult behaviour. A summary of the findings can be found below.

### Summary

The SILP review identified similar issues to previous reviews including;

- The variable quality and effectiveness of assessments lacking depth and analysis.
- The rationale and evidence base for decision making was not always recorded or set within the context of known risks, or historic information.
- The effectiveness of multi-agency work was compromised when not underpinned by clear actions plans, with timescales and contingencies that are shared with all agencies involved.
- Work could have been improved by enhancing the voice of the child, directly and indirectly in work and assessments. Using information and observations to better understand their experiences of living in this household.
- Procedure was not properly followed; when work is not compliant with procedures this is intrinsically unsafe for children.
- Specialist consultation should always consider wider safeguarding circumstances and remain child focused.
- When parents are challenging or difficult to engage, the impact of this must be considered in a safeguarding context.
- Workers focused on individual aspects of the case presentation instead of the wider safeguarding needs and risks to the child.
- Workers struggled to frame the Emotional Abuse in this case, becoming more focused on behaviour.
- There was significant delay in referral and failure to effectively engage with escalation processes.

For detailed information of the learning in this case please refer to the full version of this document, available at; [need to get this in web site first](#)

### Useful references links:

NCSCB/NSCB Safeguarding Procedures <http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

NCSCB/NSCB Emotional Abuse Practice Guidance

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=49654&p=0>