

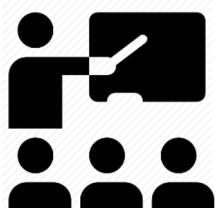


NADIA

- Nadia and her family moved out of their home temporarily whilst urgent repairs were undertaken to make it habitable. She was 9 years old when she and her family moved into her grandmother's house.
- Nadia was left alone in her grandmother's house when she was the victim of a serious attack by one of the family dogs. There were known to be a number of dogs living there and partner agencies had records of previous dog bites to family members, including Nadia.

POLICE RESPONSE

- When the police attended following the incident, they had concerns regarding the extremely poor living conditions. Nadia was taken into police protection, and the RSPCA was notified.
- Nadia's mother was thought by agencies to be vulnerable and there were concerns that she may not be able to fully understand harmful relationships, having been the victim of domestic abuse with previous partners.



WHAT DID THE REVIEW LEARN?

- Although neglect was identified in the early part of Children's services' involvement, it was unclear why a Child in Need plan was followed rather than a child protection response.
- A required action to undertake an assessment of Mother's parenting capacity was postponed while the family were temporarily living with grandmother and the focus on neglect was lost.

FOCUS ON NEGLECT WAS LOST

- Six years prior to the attack on Nadia, there were concerns about Mother's parenting and allegations that the children were being left unsupervised.
- Despite this, the focus of the work was on the housing situation with little understanding of why the neglect had been an issue previously.
- In the year prior to the serious incident, professionals were particularly concerned about Nadia's sibling, rather than Nadia. The sibling became the focus of professional interventions with the family.



THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ASSESSMENTS AND ASSERTIVENESS

- There is no evidence that there was any assessment of Grandmother and her role with or care of the children. It was assumed that her care was good enough and that she was protective and supportive.
- Nadia's mother was described as inconsistent and at times she could be avoidant and reluctant to have support.
- The Early Help worker was sometimes kept on the doorstep by Mother who stated it was not convenient to go into the home.



CONDITIONS IN THE HOME

- In the month before the serious attack by a dog on Nadia, she had been bitten and required hospital treatment. This was not treated as a safeguarding issue and information was not shared by those treating her.
- The risks to Nadia were not just about the bites, but also about the impact on the housing conditions and number of dogs in an already overcrowded home. Police found that the home was unsuitable for children due to the amount of dog waste throughout the property, including in Nadia's bedroom.

AWARENESS OF DOGS

- There were a number of dogs in the household and it is not clear if the professionals who were working with Nadia were aware of the identities of each dog and which one/s had bitten members of the family.
- It is known that a dog's environment will impact on the dog's behaviour and the potential risks it may pose, and there were indicators of dog neglect in the home which may have exacerbated the risk from the family dogs to Nadia.

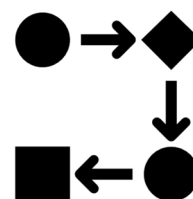


THE ISSUE OF NEGLECT

- The Safeguarding Partnership recognised that the issue of neglect is wider than the instances identified in this one case.
- Neglect and the ways in which agencies respond to it, has been made a strategic improvement priority for the Safeguarding Partnership.
- Work is underway to ensure that partner agencies can be confident in identifying and assessing neglect, including the consideration of the risk of on-going or future neglect.

WHAT IS DONE DIFFERENTLY NOW?

- Chronologies are used more effectively by Achieving for Children.
- Agencies seek safeguarding advice when a child is harmed by a dog.
- Partner agencies are more aware of the Safeguarding Partnership's escalation policy and use it when they have concerns that an agency is not fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Staff have been supported and trained to recognise and work with families who may not be consistently engaging with support.



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PRACTICE REVIEWS

- A Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) is a review into a case where a child has been seriously harmed or has died, and abuse or neglect is known or suspected.
- The aim of a CSPR is to establish any lessons learnt from the case and to identify how these can be acted upon and lead to sustainable improvements to practice and the prevention of death, serious injury or harm to children and young people.