

LONDON ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING AND YOUTH JUSTICE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2024 ISSUE

Dear colleagues,

Last month's LASOB was themed around violence and exploitation. We reviewed the adolescent safeguarding programme's workstreams to see how these come together to develop an end-to-end partnership response to promoting safety for children and young people in London. A key area of development is reviewing the multi-agency child exploitation arrangements in London and the operating protocol which supports them. As partners we are exploring how we can bring together the work to reduce violence with that to address exploitation, so that we are looking at young people holistically and in one forum rather than talking about the same young people and responding to their risks / needs in multiple different places.



There is so much great work going on across London to support young people and it is one of LASOB's functions to make sure this is joined up and coherent for both our practitioners and for young people themselves. To that end we heard about MOPAC's newly commissioned Violence and Exploitation Support Service (VESS) which offers interventions to support young people through the voluntary sector Alliance (St Giles, Safer London, Anna Feud Centre and New Horizons) and will be supported in its work with statutory services through the LIIA VESS team. We also heard updates in relation to radicalisation and counter terrorism and considered the relationship between this and our violence and exploitation pathways.

Slowly but surely through the work of the adolescent safeguarding programme and LASOB we are reviewing and reforming how we work together as partners to give children and young people in London the best chance of staying safe. There is always so much more to do but it is good to feel we are involved in a genuine partnership endeavour.

Very best wishes

Florence Kroll, DCS Royal Borough of Greenwich, ALDCS Adolescent Safeguarding policy lead, chair of the London Adolescent Safeguarding Oversight Board (LASOB) and chair of the ALDCS.

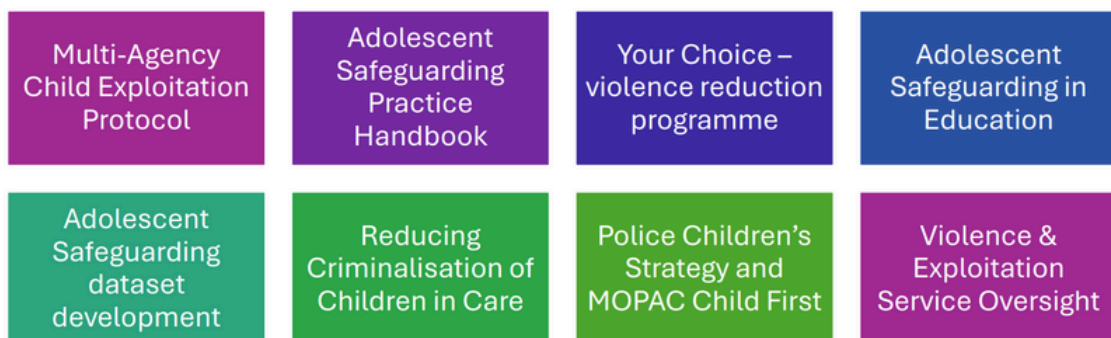
THIS MONTH'S UPDATES

- Updates from the London Adolescent Safeguarding Oversight Board (LASOB)
- ASIL Handbook 2.0: Read the new article and register for the upcoming Webinar
- London Violence and Exploitation Support Service (VESS)
- Stop & Search Phase 4 Launch Event – 9 September
- 'Reducing Criminalisation of Children in Care and Care Leavers' workshop
- Custody numbers for June 2024
- Check out the YJB's child first toolkit
- Youth Justice & Adolescent Safeguarding in the news

UPDATES FROM THE LONDON ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING OVERSIGHT BOARD (LASOB)

The August LASOB meeting was themed around violence and exploitation and the developments in the adolescent safeguarding system which are designed to build greater safety for young Londoners.

- To frame the discussion, Ben Byrne and Florence Kroll presented an overview of the Adolescent Safeguarding system, the various programmes in London and what we collectively want to achieve. [View the presentation here.](#)
- The meeting included an update on key components of the London AS system:
 - The new CYP Violence and Exploitation Support Service (VESS)
 - Serious group offending – Connie Stygall and Nicky Hill (MOPAC)
 - Counter terrorism & radicalisation – Jane Corrigan (MPS)
 - The progress of the new MACE Protocol – Jeanne King / MPS

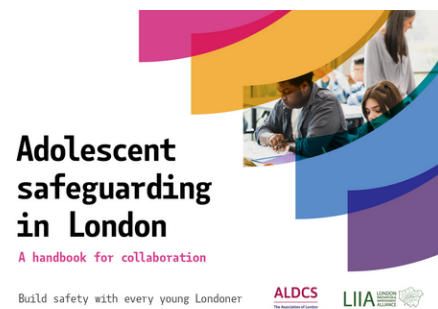


The above figure provides an overview of the projects that make up the London Adolescent Safeguarding programme.

[You can read more about the work overseen by LASOB on LIIA's Adolescent Safeguarding page.](#)

ASIL HANDBOOK 2.0: READ THE NEW ARTICLE AND REGISTER FOR THE UPCOMING WEBINAR

LIIA is excited to announce that the development of the second edition of the Adolescent Safeguarding in London (ASIL) handbook is underway! ASIL is a practice handbook for anyone who works to build safety with young Londoners facing different types of harm in their lives and is a valuable resource to add to yours', colleagues' and wider teams' practice toolkit. Since the launch of the [first edition of the ASIL Practice Handbook](#) in 2022, a team has worked in partnership to update its content and accessibility.



As part of this ongoing work, Colin Michel and Luke Billingham have written an article that puts forward a framework which outlines how conducive conditions for relational practice can be fostered – an essential foundation for effective adolescent safeguarding. This framework is designed to guide practitioners, managers, and leaders in exploring both the enablers and constraints of relational practice within local areas.

Don't miss the chance to hear directly from the authors! Colin and Luke will be discussing these ideas in a **webinar** on **24 September** (10.30am – 12.00pm), hosted by Partnership for Young London. This event is part of a series of new resources and webinars leading up to the launch of the second edition of the ASIL Practice Handbook.

[Book your place – “Creating conducive conditions for relational practice in adolescent safeguarding” Tuesday 24 September \(10.30am - 12.00pm\)](#)

Creating conducive conditions for relational practice to flourish in our adolescent safeguarding systems

16/08/2024

By Colin Michel and Luke Billingham

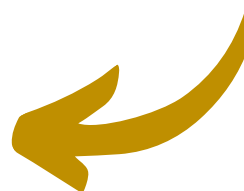
In this blog, Colin Michel and Luke Billingham introduce their article on relational practice in adolescent safeguarding systems. To read the full article, [click here](#), or scroll to the bottom of this page.

Colin and Luke will be presenting and discussing the ideas from their paper in an upcoming webinar, hosted in collaboration with Partnership for Young London, on 24 September (10:30 am – 12:00 pm). [Register here](#).

Colin and Luke would like to express their gratitude to Dez Holmes, Jeanne King, Sunniva Minsaas, Ben Byrne, Betty Lynch and Alex Honnan-MacDonald, who thoughtfully reviewed an earlier version of this article, and provided helpful comments and encouragement.



[Read the article and explore the framework on the LIIA website.](#)



LAUNCH OF THE LONDON CYP VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION (VESS) SUPPORT SERVICE

The Violence & Exploitation Support Service (VESS) was launched on the 3rd June 2024 and will aim to reduce violence, reduce violent victimisation and reduce harmful behaviours. The service is delivered by a pan-London Alliance which includes; Safer London, St Giles Trust, New Horizon Youth Centre and Anna Freud. Effective safeguarding and protection of young Londoners can't be done in silos. Through this Alliance, the service will be able to reach more young Londoners and their families affected by violence and exploitation than ever before.

LIIA's role in Local Authority Coordination

MOPAC have recently awarded the provision of statutory support services for the Violence & Exploitation Support Service (VESS) to the London Innovation & Improvement Alliance (LIIA), who act on behalf of all London's LAs as an Alliance Partner.

"We delighted to confirm that MOPAC have awarded the provision of statutory support services for the Violence & Exploitation Service (VESS) to the London Innovation & Improvement Alliance (LIIA), hosted by London Councils (LC). LIIA brings a wealth of experience and expertise in the space of adolescent safeguarding, and a well regarded dedication to system improvement." - MOPAC

Through the VESS codesign process, the following scope was identified for Local Authorities to support the VESS Alliance.

1. Improved access to support

- Increasing awareness of support services and available capacity
- Improving and simplified pathways to support

2. Improved coordination

- Improving information sharing and knowledge exchange

Over the period of August 2024 - March 2025, LIIA will undertake an initial design and delivery phase, working closely with the VESS Alliance, Local Authorities and other public sector partners, such as police, probation, prisons, health and education. Our aim is to fully understand how best the LIIA team can coordinate routes into the VESS service, so Local Authorities and other pan-London referring agencies have a simplified and equitable experience when trying to identify the relevant support for their children and young adults.

We will also undertake pan-London strategic analysis of the various harm types associated with youth violence and criminal exploitation, which will guide the VESS service and provide useful data insights to be shared with project partners. LIIA will take an agile approach during the design phase, testing out new ways of working with partners and developing the model, before moving into full service delivery from April 2025.

Visit the LIIA website to learn more about VESS

You can also [login in or register on the Members Area of the LIIA website](#) to access the Adolescent Safeguarding resources area to stay up to date with VESS as we move forward.

If you would like to discuss anything further, please contact [Will Willson](#), LIIA Programme Lead for VESS.



STOP & SEARCH PHASE 4 LAUNCH EVENT - 9 SEPTEMBER

On 9 September, Points of Contact (POCs) from London's local authorities (LAs) and Police Basic Command Units (BCUs) gathered to launch Phase 4 of the Stop & Search project. This initiative, which was first piloted by the London Borough of Haringey and the North Area BCU, seeks to better safeguard children and young people by viewing stop and search encounters through a safeguarding lens.

With phases 1 to 3 successfully completed at a local level in Haringey, phase 4 seeks to expand this approach across London. All 32 local authorities and 12 BCUs have been invited to take part, with each LA receiving 10 eligible stop and search cases from their corresponding BCUs which they will audit. In this way, phase 4 aims to promote collaboration between local authorities and Police to ensure safeguarding opportunities are fully pursued.

The launch event featured a presentation from Pilot Leads Ann Graham, Haringey's Director of Children's Services, and Caroline Haines, North Area BCU Commander, who outlined the details of Phase 4 and answered questions from attendees.

The MPS will begin sending eligible cases to local authorities from 16 September onwards. LA and Police POCs will have received resource packs containing guidance and templates to carry out this work.

LIIA will be supporting colleagues in London Borough of Haringey and the Met Police with the coordination of Phase 4 across London.

"This launch meeting marks a pivotal moment for the project with the practice developed in Haringey being rolled out more widely. It also represents the collaborative work taking place in London. Ultimately, we seek to jointly improve the outcomes for children and young people"

- Ann Graham, Director of Children's Services in LB Haringey &
Caroline Haines, North Area BCU Commander

For further information, please contact [Sarah Ayodele](#), Haringey's Safeguarding Project Manager.

REDUCING THE CRIMINALISATION OF CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS WORKSHOP

On 3 July, LIA held the second session of our 'Reducing Criminalisation of Children in Care' series, which had a specific focus on care leavers.

The event started with an introduction by Chris Stevens, who has been a senior leader in children's services but has now returned to frontline practice as a residential care worker, who framed the discussion. Examples of innovative work being conducted by the Midlands Police was shared with input from the Care Leavers Covenant and Coventry City Council. MOPAC provided an update on their work reviewing the Reducing Criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers protocol, which you can access below. Measures to reduce reoffending and supporting care leavers within the criminal justice system were also outlined.



[Watch the session recording here or by clicking on the image above](#)

[Access the slides presented at the event here](#)

[Read the **Reducing Criminalisation of Looked after children and Care Leavers protocol** developed by MOPAC and partners here](#)

CUSTODY NUMBERS FOR JULY 2024

Custody numbers for July 2024

For July 2024 there were **437** children in custody in England and Wales, compared to **443** in July 2023 (Youth Custody Service, 2023, Table 1.1).



120 children and young people from London were in youth secure estates (including some 18 year olds) in July 2024. This compares to **106** at the same time the year before but accounts should be taken for the fact that there are a greater number of 18 year olds retained in the youth estate (Youth Custody Service, 2023, Table 1.10).

[View the full statistics on GOV.UK](#)

CHECK OUT THE YJB'S CHILD FIRST TOOLKIT

In celebration of Child First Day on 20 August, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) has launched their *Child First Toolkit*.

The Child First toolkit is a self-led resource to support organisations to reflect on their current practices and explore what changes they can make to become more Child First in their work with children. Cordis Bright was commissioned by the YJB to develop this toolkit.

[Access the toolkit here along with helpful guidance to support organisations when using the toolkit.](#)

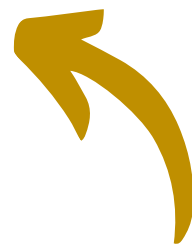
We would also recommend taking a look at the [YJB's guide to Child First](#), which is aimed at those working with children in the youth justice system to support embedding Child First principles into all aspects of their role.



Child First Toolkit

Self-assessment and action plan

August 2024



[Take a look at the self-assessment and action plan here](#)

YOUTH JUSTICE & ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING IN THE NEWS



The below articles highlight recent news, reviews and studies relevant to youth justice and adolescent safeguarding leaders.

[Justice review calls for end to child imprisonment in England](#) - The Guardian

- [A recent review](#) calls for an end to child imprisonment in England, arguing that the facilities are dangerous and beyond reform.
- The review, released 20 years after the deaths of two young people in secure training centres, highlights the harmful impact of child prisons and the failure to ensure safety or adequate education for imprisoned children.
- It urges transferring responsibility for imprisoned children from the Ministry of Justice to the Department for Education, emphasising community support over incarceration.

[Stop and search study in England and Wales 'casts doubt' on effectiveness](#) - The Guardian

- Stop and search is one of the less effective tactics to tackle rising violence such as knife crime, according to the results of a study.
- Research by the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) found that other tactics - such as community-led focused deterrence, putting more officers on the streets in targeted areas or mentoring and diversion for potential suspects - produced bigger cuts in violence. The charity says its study "casts doubt on the effectiveness of increasing the use of stop and search to reduce violent crime".

[Child strip searched every 14 hours by police in England and Wales](#) - Children's Commissioner

- A new report from the Children's Commissioner reveals that more than 3,000 strip searches were conducted on children in England and Wales between January 2018 and June 2023.
- The data shows some improvement, including fewer searches overall and a reduction in racial disparities, but significant concerns remain.
- Nearly half of searches between 2022 and 2023 lacked an appropriate adult, and many were conducted without clear justification, with almost half resulting in no further action.

GET IN TOUCH

Please visit our website: liia.london for more detailed information on each of the ALDCS priorities, or contact the team directly to discuss anything in greater detail.

Please let us know your feedback on this newsletter [via email](#) so we can keep improving future editions.

If you would like to be added to the main LIA newsletter circulation list please contact: liiateam@londoncouncils.gov.uk

THANKS FOR READING!

FOLLOW LIA

 **LinkedIn**

 **Twitter**
