

# LONDON ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING AND YOUTH JUSTICE NEWSLETTER

**DECEMBER 2024 ISSUE**

Dear colleagues,

And so another busy year for all those who are working to keep young people safe in London nears its end. Our last London Adolescent Safeguarding Oversight Board meeting of the year focused on what we are doing to address racism and disproportionality experienced by children and young people in London. We heard about some impressive work taking place in a number of boroughs, which in some places is seeing better outcomes in schools, youth justice and in the increasing representation of black and global majority colleagues in senior leadership positions.

Our challenge is to learn from these local successes to ensure that we are consistently embedding anti-racism across London services and turning the tide on disproportionality. We know we have a long way to go but we will only make progress if we learn from practice that is making a difference. We will continue to promote this learning through LASOB and ensure that our adolescent safeguarding programme retains its strong anti-racist commitment.

Very best wishes for the season. Hoping you all enjoy a well-deserved break.

**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 Practice Guide**
- **Your Choice**
- **London Violence and Exploitation Support Service**
- **Youth Justice Inspection**
- **Prevent update from Counter Terrorism Police**
- **Youth Justice & Adolescent Safeguarding in the news**
- **The London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Trauma-Informed Practice project**

# UPDATES FROM THE LONDON ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING OVERSIGHT BOARD (LASOB)

The November LASOB meeting focused on work to tackle racism and disproportionality in our adolescent safeguarding systems and included:

- Launch of the extended Leadership in Colour programme to address racial disproportionality in children's services. This year saw a major expansion of the Leadership in Colour ambition, with ALDCS committing to 'bake in' anti-racism and disproportionality activity into all its priority areas. Each of the five priority workstreams will use data and their strategic planning and delivery abilities to identify and tackle racism and disproportionality where it exists. Those leading the workstreams will work with the Leadership in Colour Reference Group to co-ordinate efforts.
- Updates on borough-level initiatives in Lambeth, Merton, Haringey, and Lewisham focusing on anti-racist approaches in youth justice, social care, and education.
- Ben Byrne presented the Adolescent Safeguarding Data Dashboard to members, providing a brief introduction to the data and highlighting key insights. This sparked a discussion among members about what the adolescent safeguarding dataset reveals regarding disproportionality. If you'd like to access the dashboard please contact [Mei.Ho@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Mei.Ho@londoncouncils.gov.uk)

Other updates at LASOB included:

- Hearing from the Difference about the collaborative work that is underway to address children's lost learning.
- A presentation of the findings of an analysis of rapid reviews undertaken on children who have experienced serious incidences of extra-familial harm in London. The report on rapid reviews will be published by the London Safeguarding Children's Partnership in early 2025.

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

# ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING IN LONDON PRACTICE GUIDE

## Adolescent safeguarding in London

A handbook for collaboration

Build safety with every young Londoner

ALDCS  
The Association of London  
Directors of Children's Services

LIIA  
LONDON  
INNOVATION &  
IMPROVEMENT  
ALLIANCE



The [Adolescent Safeguarding in London \(ASIL\) Practice Guide](#) is for everyone who works to build safety with young Londoners facing different types of harm in their lives.

ASIL was commissioned by the [London Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) (LSCP) and the [Association of London Directors of Children's Services](#) (ALDCS). The Practice Handbook has been developed by a project team at [London Innovation & Improvement Alliance](#) (LIIA) and overseen by the London Adolescent Safeguarding Oversight Board (LASOB).

**The ASIL2 project is underway to review the handbook**, with current priorities focused on finalising content, hosting user engagement sessions to ensure that ASIL2 is useful and user-friendly, and developing the practice handbook as a digital resource. The launch of ASIL2 is planned for Spring 2025.

**Feedback from colleagues in the two engagement sessions** held has been invaluable in contributing to progress, with a high level of interest and commitment to staying involved in next steps.

**If you'd like to be an ASIL Champion** please get in touch with [Mei Ho](#). There has already been a high level of interest, with a significant number of sign-ups, indicating strong engagement from participants.



## YOUR CHOICE

🎉 Exciting News! We've reached our minimum recruitment target! 🎉

We're thrilled to announce that we have now successfully met our minimum recruitment target of 1273 for the London Young People Study.

This milestone reflects the collective effort and commitment of practitioners, young people, and our partners across London in making this ambitious study a success —thank you for playing such a vital role in making this happen.

Your dedication is driving meaningful change and contributing to a robust evidence base for adolescent safeguarding practices.

Thank you to everyone involved for your incredible support and collaboration. Together, we're building a brighter future for young people in London!

Learn more about the programme here: [Your Choice Programme - LIIA](#)

# VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION SUPPORT SERVICE (VESS)

- **The MOPAC commissioned Violence and Exploitation Support Service was launched in June** and aims to reduce violence, violent victimisation and harmful behaviours. The service is delivered by an Alliance of voluntary sector organisations. LIA has been commissioned as the local authority partner to the Alliance to support access to the service for statutory partners.
- **In November, the LIA team brought together representatives from Children's Social Care, Youth Justice Services and Community Safety** to deliver a pre-engagement workshop at London Councils to begin developing our understanding of how best the VESS Local Authority Coordination team could support the service delivery and help with the pan-London coordination of Local Authority partners.
- There was a fantastic level of input from all who attended, both in person and online, resulting in a number of key themes highlighted for further discussion.
- **Moving forward, further links will be established with all London Boroughs and other partner agencies** to ensure that the current design, test and learn phase of LIA VESS delivery produces a clear mandate for how LIA can be successful in providing meaningful support as part of our joined-up response to violence and exploitation.

## The Alliance Members

**Safer London** delivers pan-London services with a proven single-front-door pathway, supporting young Londoners, their families, peers, and communities affected by violence and exploitation. They have a team of caseworkers who will work alongside young Londoners and their families, providing intensive one to one support that is person centred and trauma informed. This includes girls and young women workers and family workers. Safer London's Front Door referral and screening team will oversee all referrals into the new service.

**St Giles' Trust** helps people held back by poverty, exploitation, addiction, mental health problems, caught up in crime or a combination of these and other issues. They have a team of caseworkers, including dedicated outreach caseworkers who have experience of "County Lines rescues," alongside a team of specialists focusing on Education, Training, and Employment.

**New Horizon Youth Centre** supports 16-24-year-olds who are homeless or unsafe in London through support to find safe accommodation; access education, training, and employment (ETE); improve their emotional and physical health; and to get the help they deserve through advocacy. They will bring their expert knowledge and experience around housing and youth homelessness, with dedicated caseworkers for housing advice and resettlement.

**Anna Freud** is a mental health charity that has been supporting children and young people for over 70 years. The charity listens to and learns from their diverse voices and integrates this with learnings from science and practice to develop and deliver mental health care. As part of the Alliance Anna Freud provides the foundations of key practice principles and ways of working including AMBIT, data-driven practice, as well as youth participation.

**The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime** is funding this service over three years (2024/5-2026/7) as part of the Mayor's wider commitment to reduce and prevent violence and exploitation and protect children and young people from being exploited or harmed as part of the Police and Crime Plan.

## How do I make a referral?



Referrals to the VESS can be made through the [Safer London Front Door](#).



If you have any questions or queries about referrals into VESS, please get in touch with the Alliance's Front Door referral and screening team [referrals@saferlondon.org.uk](mailto:referrals@saferlondon.org.uk).



The Rescue element of the service, operated by St Giles Trust, facilitates the safe collection of children and young adults who come into contact with authorities through suspected County Lines or other criminal exploitation in areas outside of London, can be contacted via 020 3911 9391.

# YOUTH JUSTICE INSPECTION

HMI Probation have published details of the new inspection framework for youth justice services, which will commence in April 2025.

The new inspection standards can be found [here](#)

- 👉 Take a look at the slides, which offer a clear overview of HMIP's new approach aimed at creating a more proportionate and agile inspection regime



## COUNTER TERRORISM POLICE – PREVENT UPDATE

Counter Terrorism Police in London already work very closely with Youth Justice services and Children's Services across all Local Authorities, helping to support hundreds of individuals referred to Prevent every year, and I am grateful for the dedication and support shown by all.

By way of an introduction, Prevent is a part of the Government's CONTEST strategy, made up of Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. Prevent is owned by the government, but delivered locally through the statutory partners, as directed by the Prevent Duty and the Counter Terrorism Security Act. More information around Prevent can be accessed online via the government website: [Prevent and Channel factsheet – 2024 – Home Office in the media \(blog.gov.uk\)](#). You can also speak to your Local Authority Prevent lead for further information.

Police Prevent teams across London are divided into 4 clusters, covering the North East, South East, South West, and North West. Each of those quadrants have a dedicated Inspector, leading a team of sergeants and constables.

This opportunity to introduce Prevent in to your newsletter comes at a time when across the world we are seeing more and more young people being drawn in to terrorism offending. This increase is stark since 2020, and you may have seen a number of senior police officers as well as the head of MI5 publicly announcing their concerns around this growing issue. This is an issue that the police cannot solve on our own and the recent release from Counter Terrorism Heads from across the Five Eyes countries emphasises the need for a whole society approach to fight the growing threat to children posed by online extremism: [CTP joins Five Eyes partners in calling for 'whole society' action to fight growing threat to children posed by online extremism | Counter Terrorism Policing](#)

Our work with partners such as yourselves is not just limited to supporting those individuals already referred to Police Prevent. We also rely on our partners to identify new individuals that may be at risk of being drawn in to terrorism offending. Your engagement with vulnerable individuals on a regular basis and over a prolonged period means you are well placed to identify concerns. I have attached a document that you may find useful in helping to identify concerning material relating to proscribed terrorist groups.

**Young People and Violent Extremism: A Call for Collective Action.** Learn about the critical role of collaboration in preventing youth radicalisation and fostering safer communities.

👉 [Read the report here](#)

**SO15 Proscribed Groups: Signs & Symbols Reference Guide:** A practical guide to identifying and understanding symbols associated with proscribed groups.

👉 [View the guide here](#)

[Edward Miles](#)

Chief Inspector – London Counter Terrorism Prevent

[www.ActEarly.uk](http://www.ActEarly.uk)

Visit [liia.london](http://liia.london) to learn more

# YOUTH JUSTICE & ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING IN THE NEWS

## SERIOUS YOUTH VIOLENCE JTAI

The Joint Targeted Area Inspection overview report on multi-agency responses to Serious Youth Violence was published in November. Headline findings from the inspection were that:

- The extent and impact of youth violence is more serious than many adults realise.
- Children as young as 11 carrying knives 'for protection' because they feel unsafe.
- Action needs to be taken to support children most at risk, including those with special educational needs.



Read the JTAI report [here](#).



[Who Cares? Hearing from Children and Families about Their Experiences of Multi-Agency Support in the Context of Serious Youth Violence.](#)

The JTAI report was accompanied by Safer London's qualitative research with young people and families reflecting on multi-agency support they received when affected by serious violence.

## MACE REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION

There was a discussion of the forthcoming revision to the London Child Exploitation Protocol at the September's London MACE chairs Network meeting led by Jeanne King.

The upcoming fifth edition of the protocol aims to refine its focus, stripping unnecessary content to create a streamlined document that promotes genuine collaborative working.

Key areas of focus include violence and exploitation in all its forms. Members emphasised the need for precise data sharing and analysis, underlining the importance of using intelligence effectively to measure and benchmark progress.

Partners are working towards a publication date in early 2025.

Also discussed was how language shapes how we respond to victims of exploitation and abuse. This guide highlights why avoiding victim-blaming terms is critical and offers practical alternatives for professionals and communicators.

By choosing the right words, you can help build trust with victims, challenge biases, and avoid reinforcing harmful narratives.

[Read the full guide here to learn how to use language that supports, not harms](#)



# THE LONDON VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT (VRU) TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE PROJECT

The London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Trauma-Informed Practice project aims to help create the conditions for a more trauma-informed and ultimately trauma-responsive London.

The project is seeking to build a shared cross-sector understanding and common language of trauma-informed practice, better understand what trauma-informed practice looks like across policing, healthcare, and local authorities in London, helping to elevate case studies and then communicate these insights and ways of working to practitioners and leaders in the city through a visual 'roadmap'.

The project is split into four phases:

**Phase 1:** Establishing a definition of being trauma informed for London a scoping phase including evidence review, scoping interviews, setting up Champions Group

**Phase 2:** Understanding the London landscape through a needs assessment and promising practice workshops;

**Phase 3:** A suite of contextualised promising practice – Building and sharing case studies of trauma-informed approaches;

**Phase 4:** A road map to a trauma responsive London; Codesigning and building the interactive roadmap and writing up a final report.

The VRU are on the cusp of phase 2 of this research project; launching the [Trauma-Informed London Survey](#) to identify existing trauma-informed examples from those working in London's healthcare, local authorities and Metropolitan policing. The knowledge shared in this short survey will help the VRU to better understand the variations in current practices as well as support building a common language and portfolio of best practice that can be shared cross-sector. This will ultimately help London move towards becoming a truly trauma-informed city.

Given your experience within your local authority; your sponsorship and support of this work and your connection to relevant networks within your borough could significantly help encourage responses to the survey; helping us to build a rich and diverse snapshot of trauma-informed practices across London.

We really appreciate you taking this time to complete this survey and for your onwards dissemination to relevant contacts and roles within your network.

**The survey** will take approximately 15 minutes to complete and will be open until **10th January 2025**.

## MEMBERS AREA ACCESS

As always, [you can click here to register for access](#) to our dedicated Members Areas.

## GET IN TOUCH

Please visit our website: [liia.london](http://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 LIIA newsletter circulation list please contact: [liiateam@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:liiateam@londoncouncils.gov.uk)

**THANKS FOR READING!**



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