



Contextual Safeguarding

A 2020 update on the operational, strategic and conceptual framework

Carlene Firmin and Jenny Lloyd

May 2020

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2. drew extra-familial contexts into traditional child protection and

policymakers and practitioners consider, and respond to, factors that compromise the safety

Key resources and activities

Researchers in the Contextual Safeguarding team have captured efforts to develop work at both Level 1 and Level 2, and worked alongside practitioners to convert these activities into resources. All resources are published free on the Contextual Safeguarding Network and can be accessed by network members. All resources are being tested, refined and adapted to suit a range of local areas – both with, and without, the research team’s assistance.

Key resources and activities which exemplify Level 1 work include⁷:

- Front door services: Amendments to guidance used at the front door of children’s services to guide the recording of peer, school and neighbourhood factors relevant to the protection or risks faced by that young person
- Assessments: Prompts and guidance documents for considering ways to draw context into child and family assessments and AssetPlus youth justice assessments
- Safety mapping: and broader tools to support young people and families to talk about their experiences in community and school contexts
- Child protection conference: Guidance documents for drawing context into child protection conferences and strategy conversations
- Thresholds: Adaptations to thresholds used for decisions regarding children and families which make increased reference to contexts and extra-familial factors

Resources available to facilitate the design and testing of Level 2 CS work with peer groups, schools and public places, include:

- Assessment frameworks: Triangles and prompts for peers, schools and locations
- Context assessment methods: Guidance and documents for assessing peer groups, schools and locations such as surveys, observation logs and direct engagement tools to assist in building an understanding of a context in question
- Context threshold: Thresholds specifically for contexts and policy documents to identify contexts which might require a statutory social care response and oversight
- Meeting frameworks: Developing plans for changing environments in which young people are at risk of harm

Conclusion Next Steps in 2020 - 2022

This briefing provides an update on what has been learnt since first testing the CS Framework in 2017. Specifically, it recaps features of the Contextual Safeguarding framework and introduces the values, practice requirements, levels of implementation and resources/activities that have developed when the framework has been put to the test.

This initial test period has reaffirmed that the CS Framework facilitates an approach to practice rather than produces a manual or a model: the activities, resources and wider approaches undertaken to realise the ambitions of the framework will reflect the local context. Testing will continue across 10 research sites until 2022 – enhanced by learning from a wider interest network of 25 areas who are adopting the approach outside of the

⁷ All resources listed on page 11 below

research programme; these tests will assist us in communicating what is shared across areas that adopt a CS approach, and where we see divergence.



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ISBN:

Website: www.beds.ac.uk/ic

Twitter: @uniofbedsCSE

For further information please contact carlene.firmin@beds.ac.uk
