

Safeguarding Bulletin

Safeguarding adults and young people at risk

ann craft trust
acting against abuse

July 2020

Issue 112

Bringing you the latest research and news on safeguarding disabled young people
and adults at risk.

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Ann Craft Trust Safeguarding Bulletin

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Editor's Note—Deborah Kitson, CEO

A very warm welcome to Edition 112 of the ACT bulletin.

The team here at ACT hope that you are managing in these continuing strange times and keeping well.

These are challenging times. But there is no doubt that we are all being encouraged to learn new skills and to adapt to a different way of working in order to keep in touch and to continue our commitment to safeguarding.

Since March we have seen a number of new safeguarding challenges arise including an increase in concerns about domestic abuse, and a rise in all sorts of scams including areas of financial abuse and grooming.

That people would take advantage of people at their most vulnerable continues to shock and sadden me.

In this edition we have included a number of articles and blogs about these new areas of work, information about upcoming training and news about recent resources to assist you and the people you support at this time.

We have unfortunately had to take the decision to postpone our annual conference. It was due to take place

“

*Our annual
safeguarding
conference will
now take place
18th March 2021*

”

during the Safeguarding Adults Week in November. It will now be taking place on 18th March 2021.

We provide further details in our next bulletin. We do hope you will be able to join us then.

Is there anything you'd like to see included in a future ACT Safeguarding Bulletin? If there's an issue you'd like us to cover, or if you've been involved in a project and you want to share your findings, we'd love to hear from you.

Please keep in touch and keep well.

Predatory Marriage—An Introduction

Rachael Clawson, Associate Professor of Social Work, University of Nottingham



We're working to raise the profile of predatory marriage and associated safeguarding concerns.

This work is being completed as part of the [My Marriage. My Choice project](#).

A predatory marriage happens when someone marries another (usually older) person for the purpose of financial or property gain upon the death of their spouse. This practice is more commonly associated with older people who may be vulnerable and/or experiencing dementia and who may be more easily tricked or duped into marriage. The person may not have the capacity to consent to marriage, which, under the Anti-social, Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 also makes it a forced marriage.

These marriages often take place in secret without the knowledge of the family and only come to light after their relative has died. They can however also happen with knowledge of family members who are unaware their relative either does not have the capacity to

consent to marriage or is being duped by a 'predator'.

Under English Law, marriage automatically invalidates any previously made will meaning the deceased's estate will be dealt with using measures usually intended for situations where no will is made.

In most of these cases the estate will go to the surviving spouse, even if the marriage is only short. This can mean that carefully thought through plans on funeral arrangements and who to leave an estate to will be legally disregarded and the 'predator' benefits without any changes needing to be made to the will.

In some situations family members may not even know that their relative has died or be party to funeral arrangements. The financial and emotional repercussions can be huge.

We are working to both raise the profile of the issue and seek to lobby for changes in the law.

Justice for Joan: A Story of Predatory Marriage

Daphne Franks, Communication Skills Teacher, Leeds Medical School



Joan (pictured above) was my mother. Three days after her death in March 2016, the phone rang. It was her GP. He sounded worried.

“Daphne, did you know your mother was married? Because your mother’s man friend’s here with a marriage certificate. It says they were married five months ago.”

The shock hit me like a punch in the stomach.

Predatory Marriage is a term that comes from Canada originally. It is usually defined as when a younger person moves into a caring role with an older person who lacks mental capacity to understand, and subsequently marries them. [Because a marriage revokes a will](#), the predator then inherits the first £270,000 of the estate – which in my mother’s case, was all of it.

My mother was 91 at the time of her death. She had terminal cancer and a five year history of worsening vascular dementia, diagnosed in 2011 and running through her medical records ever since.

Also in her medical records were a number of letters from me, stating how worried we were about this much-younger man who had suddenly moved in with my widowed mother a month after meeting her by her garden gate.

We thought he was in his seventies but it turned out that he was only 67 when she died. He was incredibly secretive and deflected even the simplest question.

We knew very little about him.

Initially he was over-friendly, but then became extremely hostile to the whole family and particularly to me, telling relatives that I didn’t care about my mother. This was strange as our family lived next door to Mum and we had been unusually close our whole lives.

One day as we left the house after visiting, we heard Mum say to the man “Did I say what you wanted me to say?” At this point we went to the police, but they were unable to help. We had a long conversation with social services, who visited and said that my mother was clean and well-fed.

Eventually we went to a solicitor and asked if mum would be able to change

her will, made in 2004 and which left everything to her two children. We were told that she would not, because she lacked mental capacity. Could he marry her, then? No, because she lacked mental capacity. We knew even then that if he married her, the marriage would revoke her existing will and the man would inherit everything.

What that solicitor didn't know was that there is so little safeguarding of marriage.

I had Registered Power of Attorney, but there is no requirement to check for it at marriage. Nobody consults anybody's medical history. One of the registrars freely admitted that my mother had been unable to remember her date of birth or address on the day of the wedding. The man who married her had deflected them from this concern by saying in advance that my mother was very old, and somewhat forgetful, and had had a stroke, and had terminal cancer. This was all true. He just didn't mention that she had vascular dementia. The registrars decided to go ahead anyway. The witnesses at the wedding were the man's son and a lady from the pub. None of my mother's family or friends was present, or knew about it.

Try Googling "How to become a registrar". You will find a lot about keeping accurate records and handling money, But you won't find anything about assessing mental capacity to marry: checking if someone can understand, retain and weigh up the information before making a decision.

Registrars have no training at all in assessing dementia, no robust questions that would do it for them, and there are no consequences for the Register Office if they fail to stop a wedding.

In this country, rather than Predatory Marriage, marriage with dementia or other lack of mental capacity comes under the criminal offence of Forced Marriage. The key phrase from the [Government Guidance on Forced Marriage](#) is this: *marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured to or not).*

Forced marriage is punishable by up to seven years in prison.

The police spent a year building a case for Forced Marriage against the man who married my mother. They put it to the Crown Prosecution Service, where it failed for lack of evidence, simply because no evidence is actually kept at a marriage. Once you have that certificate, it trumps everything else. My mother's history of dementia counted for nothing. What if she made a temporary miracle recovery on the day? The registrar's evidence that she could not remember her address or date of birth also counted for nothing. The man who married her argued that she didn't have dementia. "What do doctors know, anyway?"

My wonderful mother, Joan Blass, lived next door to us. We had seen her heartbreaking decline until she could no longer say our names or know who we were. "Oh, the hole in my head!" she would

say initially, until she forgot that too. She had no idea she was married and had no new ring. She wore the wedding ring that my father had given her until she died.

There has never been a prosecution for Forced Marriage with dementia, and until the procedures change, there won't be.

So at present marrying old people is a good career option for unscrupulous men and women and they are beginning to take full advantage of it. I have spoken to a number of other heartbroken sons and daughters, devastated both emotionally and financially.

[Our MP raised the issue in Parliament in a Private Member's Bill in November 2018](#)

and it was passed unanimously for a second reading, but then ran out of Parliamentary time. Solicitors are beginning to write about Predatory Marriage often and we have had a good deal of publicity.

Find out more at our [Justice for Joan](#) site, or [follow us on Facebook](#). We are continuing to campaign for change and are now building a group of people who are passionate about improving safeguarding at marriage. A key legal goal is for a marriage no longer to revoke an existing will, as that would remove much of the incentive for predatory marriage.

My mother's marriage had devastating consequences.

The man who married my mother had full control of her funeral. She wanted to be cremated, but instead she's buried in an

unmarked grave.. We cannot even put up a headstone, as he owns the plot. The man who married her inherited her whole estate – her house, her money, all her possessions, including the letters my grandad sent from the trenches in the First World War. He even owns my wedding dress, which happened to be in her house.

Soon afterwards, he started bringing another elderly lady back to what had been my mother's house. In 2018 he married her.

This is an extended version of a piece originally written for the digital newspaper Yorkshire Bylines in May 2020.

If you'd like to talk to Daphne about Predatory Marriage, you can contact her at daphne@franks.org.uk.

You can also listen to Daphne discuss Predatory Marriage with ACT's Lisa Curtis on our Safeguarding Matters podcast. [Listen here.](#)

National Safeguarding Adults Week 2020

16 to 22 November 2020

National Safeguarding Adults Week 2020 will take place 18 –22 November

We aim to create a time where we can all focus on safeguarding adults.

Everyone, from all walks of life, should be aware of the role they can play in helping to prevent abuse. We should all know how to spot the signs of abuse, and the actions we should take if we spot any signs.

That's what Safeguarding Adults Week is all about. We want to start a nationwide conversation about safeguarding – so we can all be better, together.

Key Themes

- **Monday** – Safeguarding and Wellbeing
- **Tuesday** –Adult Grooming
- **Wednesday** – Understanding Legislation
- **Thursday** – Creating Safer Places
- **Friday** – Organisational Abuse
- **Saturday** – Sport & Activity
- **Sunday** – Safeguarding in Your Community

Sign up online to receive updates and resources: [Subscribe Here »](#)

Key Workers and Families Found New Ways to Work Together During Lockdown

Sarah Goff, Safeguarding Young People Manager, Ann Craft Trust



There are rocks ahead skipper, but we can make it!

Speaking to practitioners over the last few days has really highlighted the intensity of the times. It gives us insights into practice and what is going on in family homes. These homes usually have lots of people going in and out. This is particularly true for disabled children and their families. This whole situation shows the incredible strength, creativity and resilience of parents, carers and practitioners.

Self-Isolating with Children with Complex Needs

Some families of disabled children with complex needs are choosing to physically self-isolate. They have decided that they prefer to hole up and manage their family's needs without risking outside contact. The determination of some to manage, and the creativity in how they are doing it, is so striking.

Some children find change hard and need routine to feel safe. Parents have found ways to manage anxieties by setting up

Careful routines to try to make days predictable. They're also creating and maintaining strong routines.

One idea is to have areas of houses delineated as 'school'. Sometimes it's just a very small area, as many people do not have a lot of space. In addition to this, regular video meetings provide that space to share a short break and a cuppa with case workers who know them and their child, and who understand their needs. These lifelines of support are helping many families to manage.

Case workers who are used to providing practical hands-on support must get used to doing things remotely, on a video call. This can be intense. They need to be able to provide rapid yet detailed explanations for anyone who does not know the individual child's ways of responding to situations. They need to help calm tricky situations, to make things more manageable for everyone.

Case workers understand a child's individual patterns of anxieties, and they understand that even small changes may disrupt their sense of safety. This can lead to an eruption of fear and tangled responses, all of which can make a bad situation worse. It's vital to manage these situations with kindness, awareness, and gentle encouragement with firm groundings in safe landings.

The relationships between workers in short breaks and social care practitioners familiar with the case history is crucial. At

the same time, families are demonstrating incredible strength and courage throughout this situation.

Giving Families the Support they Need

Some families are on the edge. Others are exhausted. Some may not be able to manage for a prolonged period. Others are coping with life-threatening conditions not connected to COVID 19. They need services to be there for them, to stay strong and be safeguarded through the financial challenges ahead. These services help us to keep children and families together. Families do the hard stuff, but everyone needs that back up.

In the world of multi-agency practice, linking services together to provide enough help is proving a challenge. But in some cases, greater flexibility, speedier responses and different ways of communicating are making things a bit smoother.

The hard stuff is the emotional support for families. It's all too easy for the stress of family life to bubble over. Key workers and families are finding new ways to work together. So let's thank these crucial key workers in social care, and let's continue to support these families who are trying so hard to keep it altogether. Families are awesome! So are social workers and care workers!

Listen to Sarah discuss safeguarding young people during lockdown in our [Safeguarding Matters Podcast](#).



Online Safeguarding Adults Training for Managers and Designated Safeguarding Leads

Wednesday 23 September—Wednesday 7 October

This online course will explore the roles and responsibilities of managers in terms of safeguarding adults at risk.

We'll look at the key changes within safeguarding as part of the Care Act. You'll be encouraged to identify where the challenges are, and to seek solutions towards implementation in practice.

We'll cover best practice, the expectations of regulators, and the lessons we learned from our safeguarding adults reviews.

The course takes place across three two hour Wednesday sessions, from 23 September to October 7. The fee for attending all three sessions is £125, and you must be able to commit to attending all three to fully benefit from this training.

For more information, and to book your place: [Register Here >>](#)

How Effective Are We at Safeguarding Disabled Children and Young People?



An important new study seeks to understand how we can better protect disabled children and young people from abuse.

Research indicates disabled children are at heightened risk of violence and abuse, including child sexual exploitation. Studies show that disabled children are 3-4 times more likely to experience violence and abuse than those without disabilities. Yet they are relatively invisible within generic child protection research.

These factors make effective safeguarding of disabled children and young people an urgent sector priority. To date, there has been no systematic review of evidence covering the abuse and protection of disabled children and young people.

So researchers from the Universities of Portsmouth, East Anglia, Nottingham Trent and the Ann Craft Trust based at University of Nottingham, will work in partnership on this unique study, which is being funded by [WWCSC – What Works for Children’s Social Care](#).

Assessing the Evidence

The review aims to assess the nature and quality of existing evidence. To date, nobody has collated this evidence to inform practice.

The study will support practitioners and decision-makers through identifying evidence on crucial areas. These include identifying abuse, involving disabled children and their families in child protection procedures, and also

improving outcomes for this group.

Finally, researchers will recommend how the care system can create a quality and tailored effective response.

A Long Overdue Review

Lead researcher, Professor Anita Franklin, Professor of Childhood Studies, University of Portsmouth says:

“This review is the first of its kind and is long overdue. It is critical that we better understand the evidence concerning disabled children’s increased risk of abuse and neglect.

“Until now, evidence suggests that despite their increased risk of experiencing abuse, disabled children’s access to safeguarding is often problematic. Support at all stages of the child protection system is at best inconsistent. So through working in partnership with such a highly experienced team I am convinced we can make a difference to the outcomes of disabled children and young people that have a right to be protected.

“We also want to support practitioners with an evidence base on which to build quality care.”

Sarah Goff, Safeguarding Children and Young People Manager at the Ann Craft Trust says:

“Practitioners, front line managers, and strategic senior managers who design and deliver services need an evidence

base that straddles child protection and disability. So we plan to explore this.

“We hope this study will open up this debate. It will broaden our understanding of what we need to do both in ‘mainstream’ and ‘specialist’ services to bring together the skills of helping families, listening to children and getting it right in child protection.

“When you listen to the voices of disabled children, it becomes clear we need to do more. So we’re going to do more.”

Research Team: Professor Anita Franklin, Jo Greenaway (University of Portsmouth); Dr Alex Toft (Nottingham Trent University); Dr Jane Hernon (University of East Anglia) and Sarah Goff (Ann Craft Trust, based at University of Nottingham).

#ACTSafeguardingHour

Every Wednesday

12.00—1.00 pm

@AnnCraftTrust

ann craft trust
acting against abuse

Do you have any questions or concerns about Safeguarding?

Join us for **#ACTSafeguardingHour**—every Wednesday on
Twitter, 12.00—1.00.

This is an opportunity to discuss safeguarding matters with an
online community of practitioners.

For more information, find us on Twitter:

[@AnnCraftTrust](https://twitter.com/AnnCraftTrust)

Jess Phillips MP is Campaigning for a Domestic Abuse Bill that Protects Everyone



Everyone is entitled to live safely, free from the risk of abuse and neglect.

The Domestic Abuse Bill is a huge opportunity to improve the protection and support given to victims of this terrible and often hidden crime.

Within the current Bill, there are people at risk who do not receive the support they need to escape their abusers.

In response, Jess Philips MP has launched the campaign [‘No Victim Left Behind’](#).

The campaign wants to ensure that amendments to the Bill are passed so that no victim is excluded from its protection.

The No Victim Left Behind Campaign is calling for:

- Better support for children impacted by domestic abuse.
- Ensuring that migrant victims with No

Recourse to Public Funds can access domestic abuse services.

- Resources for victims who access support in the community.
- Funding for specialist support services for victims who face multiple forms of discrimination including BAME women, LGBT+, disabled and older victims.

What would happen without amendments to the Domestic Abuse Bill?

Without improving the protections in the Bill there will be NHS workers, key workers, and care workers serving the public right now who would not be able to access the help they needed due to their immigration status.

How can we ask them to go out every day and protect us in this crisis, if we do not protect them in theirs?

How can you find out more?

- **Watch** the videos that describe first-hand the experiences of a [migrant women](#) and a [young person](#) who experienced domestic abuse. They discuss what the changes would mean to them.
- **Explore** [Jess Phillips'](#) work to change the Domestic Abuse Bill.
- **Follow** the hashtag [#NoVictimLeftBehind](#) on social media

We must listen to those who have experienced domestic abuse.

We must ensure that everyone is able to receive support to live in safety, free from harm.

How can you Make a Difference?

- **Sign the petition** to change the Domestic Abuse Bill so that No Victim is Left Behind.
- **Share** the petition and raise awareness by using the hashtag [#NoVictimLeftBehind](#) on social media.

SafeLives Support People Experiencing Domestic Abuse During Lockdown



It's hard to reach out for help from behind closed doors. Sometimes, we need someone to help from the outside.

Lockdown is difficult for everyone. If you're living with an abusive partner or family member, it can be dangerous, traumatic and relentless. Opportunities to get support are more limited than ever. So offering support becomes even more valuable.

Reach In is a new campaign from SafeLives to support people experiencing domestic abuse during lockdown.

[You'll find all the information you need on the SafeLives Reach In hub.](#)

There are clear guidelines on how you can help people experiencing domestic abuse under lockdown. There's advice on

preparing, listening, and reassuring, with outlines on the sort of questions you might ask, and the sort of practical help you can provide.

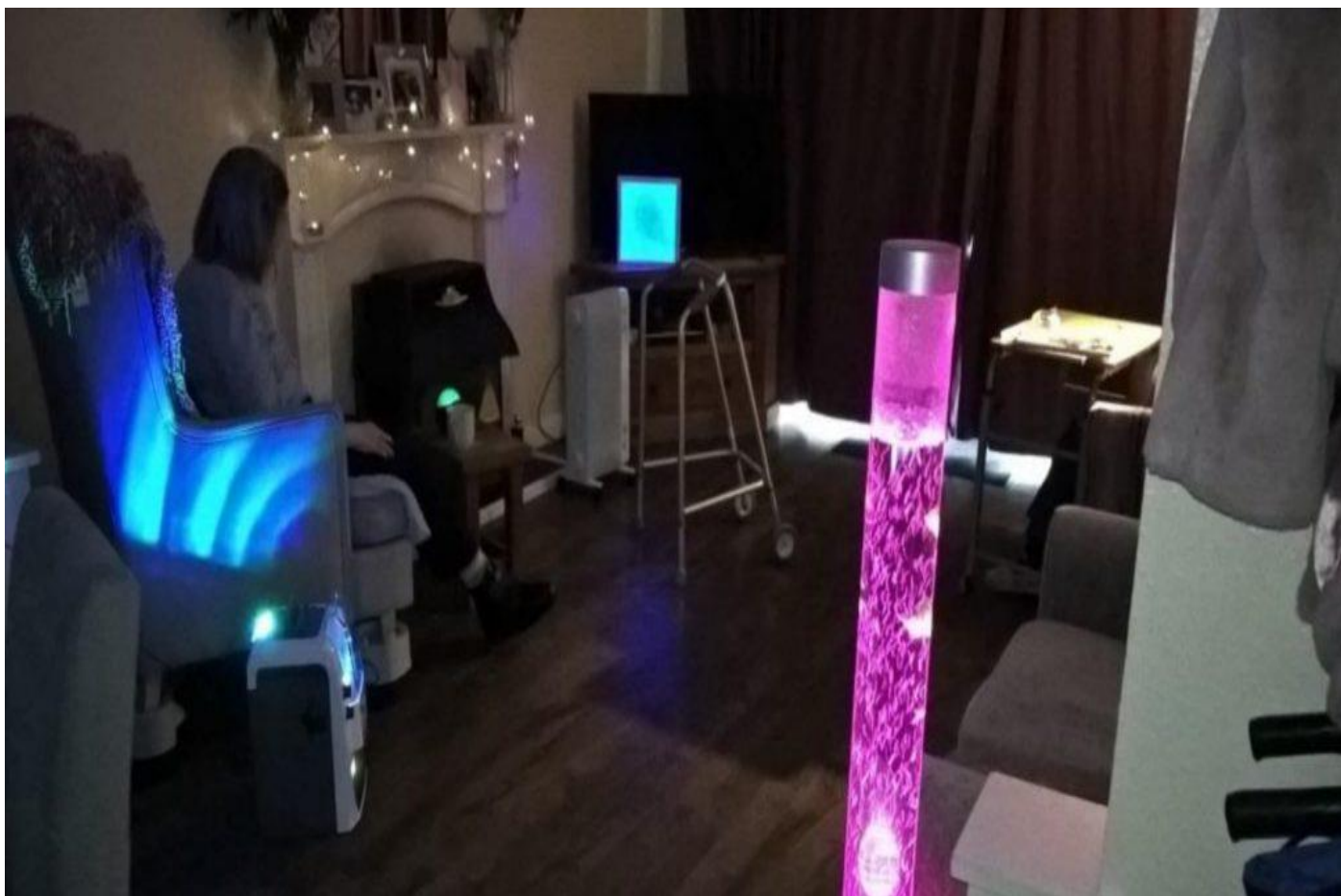
There's also a big pink "LEAVE THIS SITE" button, that'll instantly take you to the BBC news site. This is an important feature for anyone who might worry about an abusive individual monitoring their online activity.

[Head here to access the SafeLive Reach In resources.](#)

If you believe someone is in immediate danger, **call 999 and ask for the police.**

Silent calls will work if you are not safe to speak. Use the [Silent Solution](#) system and call 999 and then press 55 when prompted.

Positive Stories From Lockdown Life



The uncertain times have led to new ways of delivering support.

[Sense](#) is the charity for people with complex disabilities. 138 Bradford Road is Sense's accommodation for people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, or sensory impairments who require nursing or personal care.

During Covid-19 lockdown, Sense had to close their resource centre. This meant that they had to quickly find new ways to deliver support. So they welcomed some new support staff to their Bradford Road accommodation.

The Lockdown Lowdown

Sense shared a series of positive stories about life under lockdown at their support accommodation.

From a very special birthday to a full sensory house party, the stories demonstrate the power of positivity in trying times. Carers and support staff do amazing work all the time. But exceptional circumstances call for exceptional care, and it's been wonderful to see so many people go the extra mile.

[You can read Sense's positive stories from lockdown life here.](#)

“Coming Second All The Time” – Life in Lockdown for Siblings of Disabled Children



Sibs supports siblings who have a brother or sister with a disability, SEND or long-term health condition.

In May 2020, they surveyed 876 parents to learn more about how siblings of disabled children are experiencing lockdown.

They found that:

- 75% of parents said their sibling child's mental health had worsened.
- 50% of siblings are providing more care in lockdown.
- 1 in 3 siblings feel isolated and miss support from family and friends.

Dr Georgia Pavlopoulou University College London Researcher and Sibs' Trustee, said:

“Growing up with a disabled brother or sister brings unique joys and challenges. The sibling relationship is the least-studied familial relationship before and during the lockdown.

“This survey shows the huge amounts of labour of love and the great deal of time that siblings dedicate to assist their disabled brother or sister. Most importantly the survey highlights the lack of support for struggles that they face such as loneliness and lack of respite time.”

ACT Safeguarding Young People lead Sarah Goff said:

“The Sibs report shines a vital spotlight on how lockdown is stressful for the whole family when they’re caring without the usual support services. Unconsciously or not, parents and carers often prioritise their disabled children’s needs. We often fail to see how these situations impact their brothers and sisters.

“Brothers and sisters might have to deal with isolation and physical harm. Perhaps before lockdown, when services were in place, more positive experiences shone out. But this report demonstrates what we need to be doing as local authorities and support services. It also makes a vital case that many of these sisters and brothers should be able to return to school.”

You can read the report in full [here](#).

New eBook—Self-Care for Adult Siblings

Sibs have released a free eBook full of self-care advice for adult siblings.

Adult siblings play a vital role in supporting

their disabled brother or sister and their parents. Many receive little acknowledgement or support, and few recognise the impact of their sibling role on their own needs and wellbeing.

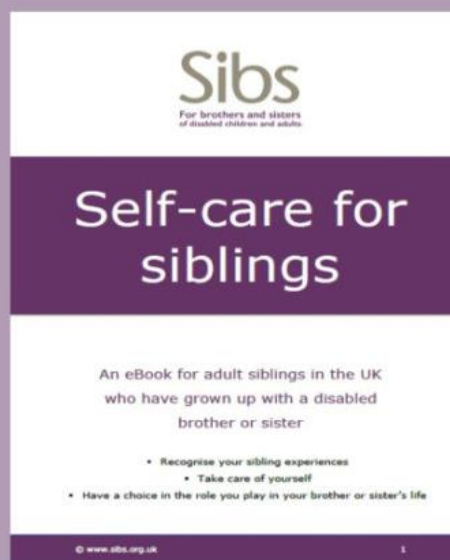
In response to this, they’ve launched ‘Self-care for siblings’. Adult siblings wrote this eBook, and it’s full of advice for anyone who’s grown up with a brother or sister who has a lifelong disability.

The book includes:

- Common topics and questions from adult siblings.
- Self-care ideas.
- Tips and experiences from other siblings.

[You can download your free copy of the new Sibs eBook here.](#)

[You can also hear us in discussion with Sibs on our Safeguarding Adults podcast.](#)



Let's Talk About Loneliness

Charlotte Brooks, ACT

**EVERY CONVERSATION
ABOUT LONELINESS MEANS
ONE LESS LONELY VOICE.**

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

In June we marked Loneliness Awareness Week.

The week was hosted by [Marmalade Trust](#), a charity that raises awareness of loneliness and helps people to make connections. Their vision is to create a society where anyone can talk freely and openly about loneliness.

When someone is lonely, they can take more risks and make different decisions to those they would usually make.

Being lonely can increase an individual's risk of abuse. For example, someone who is lonely might be more susceptible to grooming or financial abuse because of wanting to make connections with others.

In this case, loneliness could become a safeguarding issue.

It is important that people can speak about feeling lonely, are aware of initiatives to tackle feelings of loneliness and know how to get support should they need it.

What is Loneliness?

The Marmalade Trust defines loneliness as "a perceived mismatch between the quality or quantity of social connections that a person has and what they would like to have"

Anyone can experience loneliness. You don't have to be on your own to feel lonely. People can become lonely for many

reasons, but the pandemic has meant that many people have experienced loneliness for the first time.

You might feel lonely in a relationship or while spending time with friends or family – especially if you don't feel understood or cared for by the people around you. Other people might choose to be alone and live happily without much social contact.

What can you do if you are feeling lonely?

- Organise a weekly video call with friends or family
- Start or join a virtual book or film club
- Spend some time in nature or tend to some indoor plants
- Have a cup of tea with your neighbour (while maintaining appropriate distance)

What can you do to support someone who is lonely?

- Not everyone has internet access, you could send a letter or postcard to someone isolating by themselves
- Reach out to a friend to remind them you are always there to talk
- Talk with friends or family about their experiences of loneliness during lockdown
- Encourage them to access support from one of the organisations named in this blog

What can you do to feel more connected at work?

As more of us are working from home or seeing fewer people at work due to distancing restrictions, many people are missing the social connections with colleagues.

Alongside practical challenges of working at home, people may also be struggling to overcome the emotional difficulties of offering support services to at risk groups when their colleague support network has been removed.

Try to implement some of the ideas below to feel more connected to your team.

- Host a weekly social to catch up with colleagues
- Encourage employees to reach out to their HR manager if they are feeling lonely
- 'Meet' a colleague for a virtual coffee or lunch
- Ask how the people you work with are finding the change in routine

How can you support young people who are feeling lonely?

- Ask young people to share what they know about loneliness
- Explore when or why people might feel lonely
- Discuss what might help someone who is feeling lonely
- Draw a picture of what loneliness feels like

- Remember to discuss loneliness openly and positively – loneliness is normal and common.

What organisations can support in overcoming loneliness?

- **Age UK** have lots of resources on overcoming loneliness and supporting others. They also offer IT training to help you feel more connected and befriending services.
- **Mencap** are offering a befriending service to support those with learning disabilities.
Email friendships@mencap.org.uk to find out more.
- **The Marmalade Trust** have excellent resources to support you in feeling more connected
- **Mind** offers free advice via phone or email for people experiencing loneliness.
- **Mind** have developed a working from home wellness plan to support your mental health when working from home.
- **The NHS** provide information and advice to support you with loneliness.
- **The Campaign to End loneliness** has lots of resources, information, and support in overcoming loneliness across the UK.

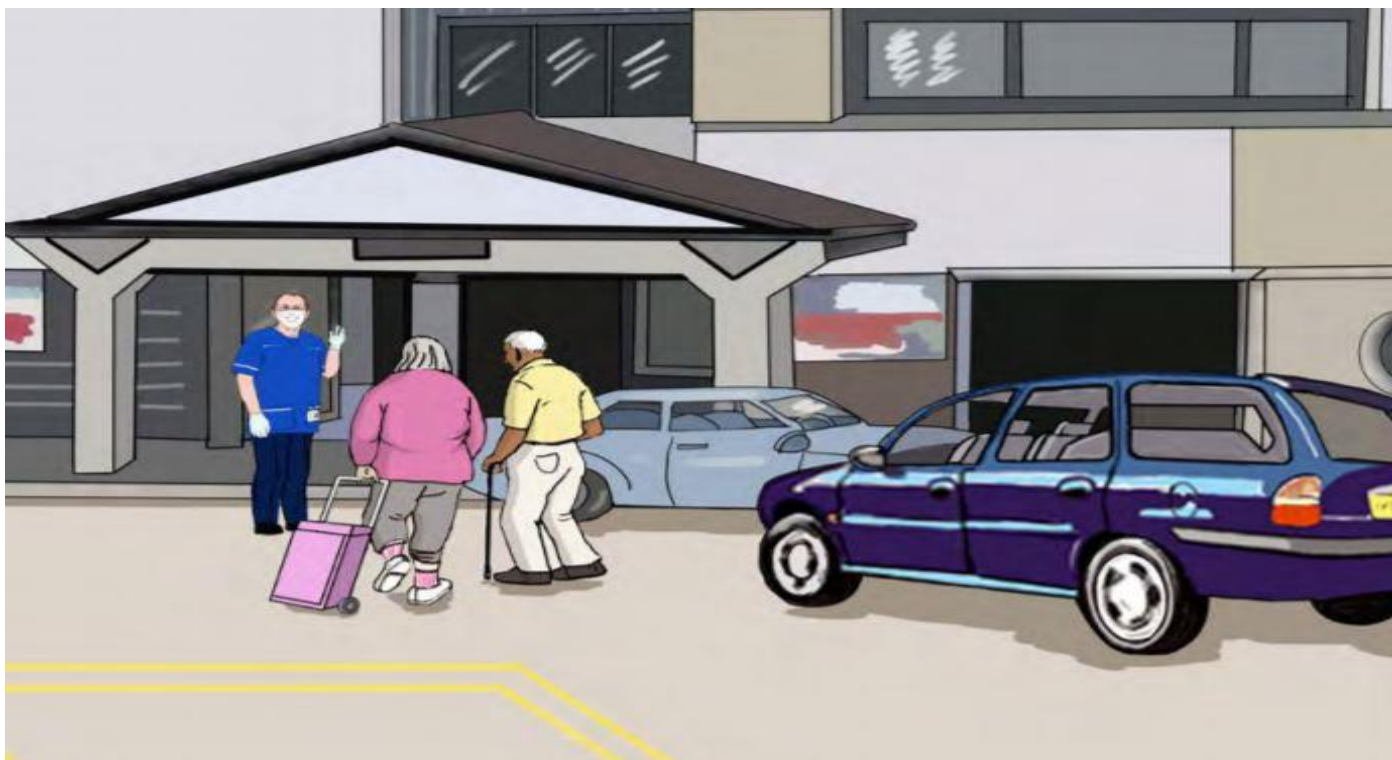
- **The Connection Coalition** is encouraging organisations to collaborate to overcome challenges such as loneliness that are increasing because of Covid-19.

- **The Ann Craft Trust** have advice on supporting your wellbeing during the pandemic.

Loneliness can impact our general physical health, as well as our mental health. If you, or someone you know is experiencing long term loneliness, reach out to one of the support services above or make an appointment to speak to your GP.

Most people experience loneliness at some point during their life. There are initiatives and organisations that can support you in feeling more connected.

Accessible Resources About Coronavirus



Online Covid-19 support for people with learning disabilities.

[Beyond Words](#) provides books and training to support people who find pictures easier to understand than words. Their aim is to “empower people through pictures”.

They’ve created a range of resources, covering different aspects of Covid-19. Click on the title of each book to download your free copy:

- [**Beating the virus.**](#)
This story will help people understand what to do if you have

Coronavirus, and how to keep yourself others safe. It also shows how to safely help others who may be self-isolating.

- [**Let’s talk about when someone is ill or dies from Coronavirus.**](#)
Conversation prompts about loss, grief, and more practical things, such as social-distancing at funerals.
- [**Understanding Covid-19 in secure settings.**](#)
Two different stories. One’s about a man experiencing Covid-19 in prison. The other’s about a woman experiencing Covid-19 in a secure care facility.

Easy Read Guides to Coronavirus

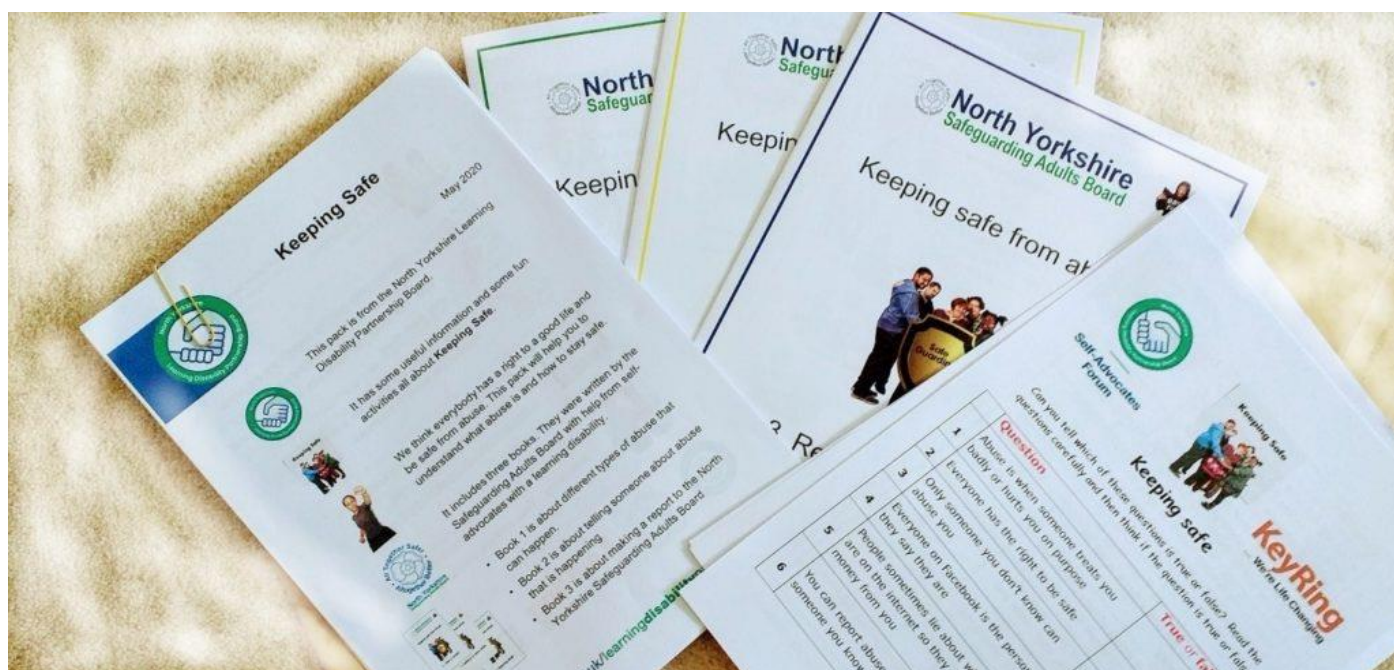
North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board have produced three easy-read guides about abuse.

The Safeguarding Adults Board collaborated with the North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board and Inclusion North. They've produced three easy-read books about 'Keeping Safe':

- **What is Abuse** – About different types of abuse that can happen.
- **Speaking up about Abuse** – About telling someone about abuse that is happening.
- **Reporting Abuse** – About making a report to the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

These books are free to download and print. Though they refer to the work of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board, they're a useful resource no matter where you live.

[Download your copies here.](#)



The Impact of Covid-19 on Disabled Women

Charlotte Brooks, ACT



Sisters of Frida have released a report highlighting the challenges faced by disabled women during the pandemic.

[The full report and details of recommendations can be accessed here.](#)

All minority groups need to be considered and specific adjustments made. This will ensure services are accessible throughout this time.

What are the immediate concerns of disabled women during the pandemic?

Access to Food

Queues at the supermarket, a lack of support with shopping from local authorities and a sharp increase in demand for online shopping, with no

priority access for at risk groups, has resulted in struggles accessing food.

Access to Health and Medical Services.

Disabled women are likely to receive care, which has now been withdrawn, whilst their caring responsibilities have increased. They are spending more time caring for relatives, children and home schooling.

Disabled women spoke about their fears over NHS treatment being rationed, and their lives not being prioritised should they become infected with Covid-19.

Access to Digital Services

Services are moving to online delivery, but

it is important to remember that not everyone has internet access, and this disproportionately impacts disabled adults. This digital divide is preventing many disabled women from accessing alternative services and volunteer networks.

Challenges Accessing and Delivering Care for Disabled Mothers

Disabled women who were not living with their children but were allowed contact, have had contact removed due to lockdown measures.

For disabled women supporting children with disabilities, they have had both their own and their children's support withdrawn because of social distancing measures and finding themselves providing round the clock care.

Domestic Violence and Access to Support

Disabled women are between three and four times more likely to experience domestic abuse than non-disabled women.

This is increasing during the pandemic as disabled women's access to services reduces. For example, women with learning difficulties may no longer have the one to one access to their advocates as before and might not be able to communicate as a result.

What are the recommendations to support disabled women during this time?

- **Information on how to access support** during the pandemic should be available locally as well as online.
- There needs to be **recognition that disabled women are a diverse group**, many of whom will be negotiating care and employment roles during this time alongside managing their own health needs.
- **The government and local councils need to work with supermarkets** to prioritise disabled people's needs for groceries.
- **Critical care guidance** being used by the NHS to decide who to treat and how to apply Do Not Resuscitate Orders, should be published. This will ensure that disabled people can be reassured that their right to life under Article 2 of the Human Rights Act will be protected, should they become critically ill.
- **Prioritise disabled parents** for local authority social care support
- **The government should carry out Equality Impact Assessments** on all its COVID-19 policies

There have been positive impacts

Travel has reduced and access to information digitally has increased resulting in some disabled people feeling more included in society than before.

Museums, theatre performances and courses that are usually geographically fixed are suddenly available to us all, with reduced associated logistical and cost barriers.

The post Covid society should ensure this inclusivity remains as we enter the 'new normal'.

The pandemic has had a substantial impact on minority groups

It is important that adjustments are implemented, and the needs of minority groups are explored.

It is vital that consideration is given to how identities such as ethnicity, gender and disability intersect to ensure services are accessible throughout this time.

We Matter Too! – Helping Us To Understand the Unknown

Lisa Scivetti, Manager, Beverley Lewis House



The staff and residents at Beverley Lewis House are so proud to have been part of the 'We matter too' research campaign looking at violence and disability.

For us it opened many doors to understanding what we don't know, learning where our strengths are and realising how different we are to other services. It gave us the opportunity to forge connections and alliances with other organisations and develop even more opportunities for joint work.

We knew we were the only supported living refuge in the country supporting survivors of abuse who also have a learning disability and complex mental health challenge. What was interesting to recognise was how different we are to a

standard refuge. I remember some of the feedback Sarah Goff gave at the conference in Nottingham when she talked about the skills gaps between services. Learning disability services not being skilled in working with survivors of abuse and refuge services not being skilled in working with women with learning disabilities. This led to us thinking about how we can bridge this gap.

One of the organisations that we became aligned with through this process was [Shared Lives](#). They share our vision that people with disabilities should be able to access specialist services. However, due to the lack of services this is rarely possible. Shared lives are planning to work on developing Domestic Abuse

champions within their teams and upskill staff to be able to meet the needs of this vulnerable group.

This led to negotiations with Beverley Lewis House about doing some partnership work to develop a training programme that could be used to do this. We then plan to make this training available to other refuges to allow them to develop their services and improve access for people with disabilities.

Sadly it is my experience that women with learning needs who don't meet the criteria or funding threshold for somewhere like Beverley Lewis House are placed inappropriately in the community without the support they need. These placements quickly break down, meaning these women either return to their abusers, go missing or end up in a mental health crisis and are admitted to psychiatric services. Our vision is that people with disabilities will soon have the same access to specialist domestic abuse services as everyone else. Anything else is discrimination and this needs to change.

The positive outcomes from the We Matter Too project are endless. Its influence and message has reached people from every arena. From residents that had their opinions, views and voices heard to members of parliament that wanted to use it to influence the review of the domestic abuse bill.

Lisa Scivetti is the manager of Beverley Lewis House, a supported housing service that safeguards women with learning disabilities who are at risk of, or are fleeing abuse. It provides temporary accommodation and specialised support to help women escape domestic violence and abuse. [Learn more about their work here.](#)

We Matter Too! is a project that addresses the needs of disabled young people facing domestic abuse.

The project was funded by the [Lloyds Bank Foundation](#) as part of a series of projects looking at domestic violence.

It explored gaps in domestic abuse service provisions and awareness of practitioners working with disabled young people. [You can read the full report here.](#)

Sports & Activity Organisations – Here's How You Can Support Your Members & Volunteers During Lockdown & Beyond



Our survey results offer valuable insights and lots of practical advice for sports and activity organisations.

We recently ran two surveys. One was for sports and activity organisations, the other was for sports and activity participants. We surveyed 82 sport and activity organisations and 504 participants.

We wanted to find out how sport and activity organisations are coping with Covid-19 lockdown. Have they changed their priorities? Have they amended their safeguarding policies, for example?

We also wanted to find out just what participants want from their sport and activity organisations during lockdown. What are sports and activity organisations doing well? And what sort of needs are they currently failing to meet?

So our survey results offer valuable insights into just how lockdown's affected sport and activity in the UK. They also offer lots of practical advice for sport and activity organisations who want to truly meet their members' needs.

Key Findings – How Do People Feel Sports & Activity Organisations are Responding to Lockdown?

- 56% are exercising less as a result of coronavirus outbreak. Just 18% are exercising more.
- The majority of people think their clubs have responded either well or very well to the coronavirus outbreak.
- 72% have received communication from their sports and activity group about the coronavirus outbreak.
- Popular means of responding to Covid-19 include fast communication, halting fees, and offering online classes and guides to exercising at home.
- Common sources of frustration with clubs include poor communication, taking too long to react, and appearing to flout the rules.

[Head here to read the Sport PARTICIPANTS Report.](#)

[Head here to read the Sport ORGANISATIONS Report.](#)

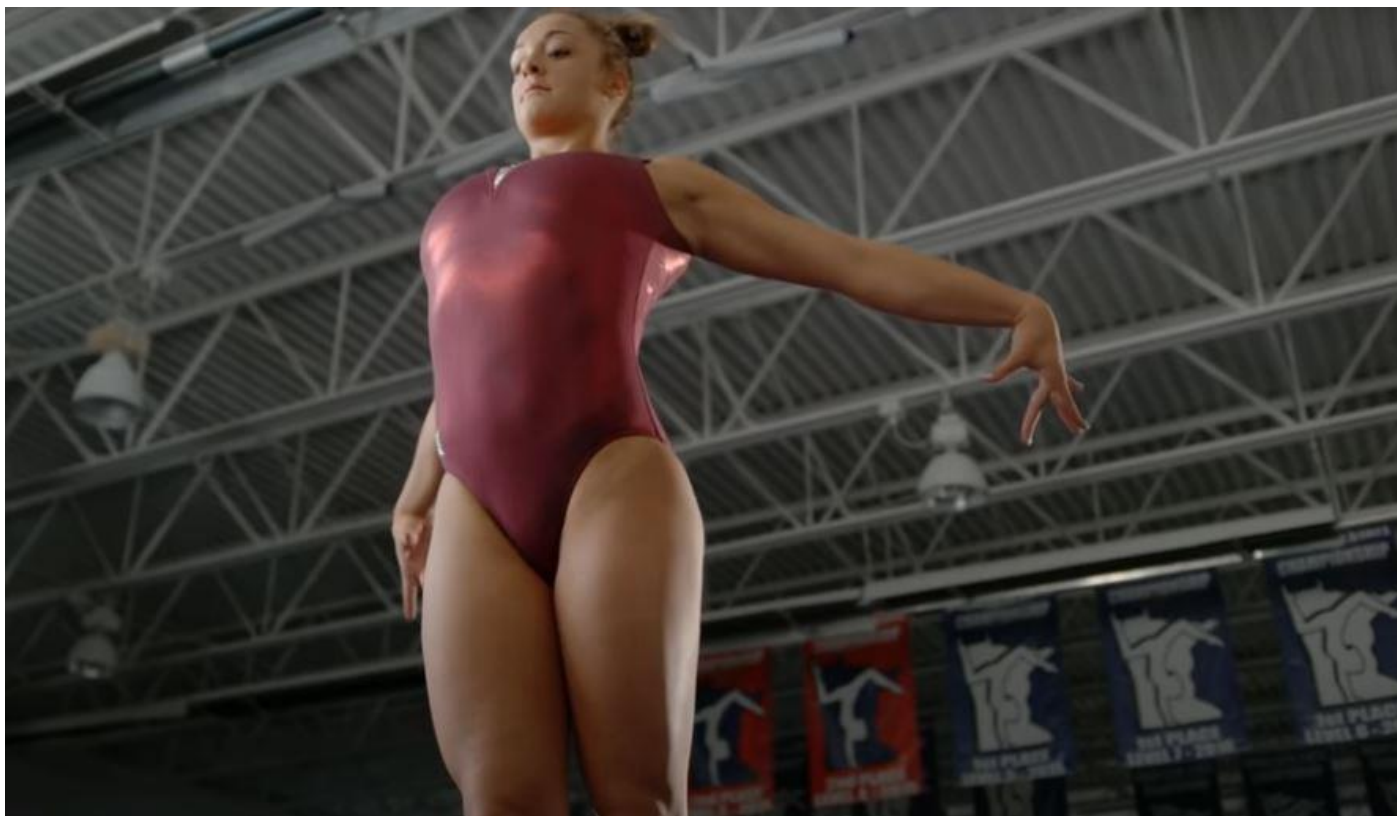
Listen and Act

ACT Safeguarding Adults in Sport Manager Nicola Dean says:

“Every sport and activity organisation needs to hear every participants’ voice. So these surveys offer organisations ideas on how to improve engagement with participants. They’ll also help you develop your approach to safeguarding adults.”

How Can We Prevent Harmful Cultures Developing in the World of Elite Sport?

Kimberley Walsh, Elite Athletes Lead, ACT



We are still hearing elite athletes talk about experiencing a culture of fear and abuse while training and competing for their country.

The sporting world has made significant progress in safeguarding athletes' mental health, welfare and wellbeing. But we still have a long way to go. We must continue to challenge and address entrenched cultures of harmful behaviour and the normalisation of poor practices.

Key Areas to Address

Recent heartbreaking reports from gymnasts have highlighted numerous priorities for the sport community:

- Safeguarding and wellbeing must be high on sport and activity organisation's agendas, at all levels.
- We must inform and empower everyone involved within sport and activity to share concerns, without fear of retribution, when something doesn't seem right or if harm, mistreatment or inappropriate behaviour has occurred or is suspected.
- We must encourage people to report their concerns. People should know who to report their concerns to. They should also understand the official procedures organisations will follow after they've reported.
- Organisations must take appropriate

action as soon as someone reports a concern or makes a complaint about harmful or inappropriate behaviour or cultures.

- Procedures for responding and dealing with reported concerns must be fit for purpose, transparent and able to withstand external scrutiny.
- The safety and wellbeing of individuals must take priority over an organisation's reputation and business needs.
- We must not allow poor practice, inappropriate behaviour or abuse to be 'normalised' in any form. Information should be available to support people involved in sport or activity, to help them identify what behaviour is acceptable and appropriate. That way, they can recognise and report when it is not being practiced. Organisations should help participants gain this understanding.

Finally, we must ensure that people feel safe speaking up and sharing concerns.

Athlete A and the Wider Conversation

The recent Netflix film '[Athlete A](#)' focused on fear abuse in American Gymnastics. This, along with recent reports from British gymnasts in the media, triggered a wider conversation across the global sporting community. What can we learn? What areas should we consider when making improvements to policies, procedures and safeguarding measures within an organisation?

A few questions immediately come to mind:

- Harmful or inappropriate behaviour can be 'normalised'. When this is the case, how does someone instigate change? How do they ensure their voice is heard when those they report to are part of the culture?
- If someone reports a concern, how will they know if it's being followed up appropriately?



- How can we best communicate information about code of conducts, policies and procedures to people involved in the sport or activity? It's also important to consider to what extent people understand this information.
- Is it appropriate for children to train behind closed doors? Is it OK to prevent parents from watching their children train? This can throw up many additional safeguarding issues.

Codes of Conduct

Most sport and activity organisations have codes of conduct outlining what behaviour is appropriate for different roles. And if they don't currently have a code of conduct, then they should get one as soon as possible!

In general, coaches read and sign their specific code of conduct. Athletes or participants read and sign the 'Athlete/Participant Code of Conduct'. Many coaches are probably aware of the content of the athlete/participant codes. But are those taking part aware of the Coaches Code of Conduct? Do they know what behaviours they should expect from their coach?

Harmful behaviours, cultures and abuse do still exist in sport. These gymnasts have demonstrated great courage in coming forward and sharing their stories. Now it's up to us to listen. Only then can we address the issue of abuse in sport, and make it a safe enjoyable place for everyone taking part.

Safeguarding in Sport as the Lockdown Eases



As the government begins the gradual task of loosening restrictions, sports are understandably keen to start returning to face-to-face activities.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and subsequent lockdown had put a stop to active participation in sport for several months in the UK.

As things resume, however, a raft of government restrictions, rules and practical guidance still govern these activities and must be accommodated by individuals, clubs and organisations seeking to bring more people together for sports activities of any kind.

Government guidance for sport

[DCMS has released guidance for England](#) on the re-introduction of some elements of sports activity (initially in outdoor settings) at both elite and community level. Sports organisations and clubs should familiarise themselves and comply with this guidance.

There is similar guidance for [Northern Ireland](#) and [Wales](#), where the easing of lockdown restrictions differ from those in England.

Addressing the ongoing coronavirus risk will require an approach that will no doubt further stretch resources at delivery level.

There are practical measures to put in place to limit the potential transmission of the virus such as:

- Cleaning equipment
- Not sharing equipment
- Using personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Social distancing
- Restricting group sizes

These measures will put additional strain on those organising and delivering the activity, potentially with a reduced workforce due to people still needing to self-isolate.

Maintaining safeguarding standards and practice

It is absolutely vital that, in their enthusiasm to restart some face-to-face activities for adults, organisers do not ignore, abandon or otherwise dilute established practices, rules and regulations designed to safeguard adults at risk of harm and neglect and provide the safest environment possible.

For example, in 'normal' times, most sports would carry out an effective assessment of the suitability of those working with adults at risk. In safeguarding terms, it is difficult to understand or justify why in the current circumstances, this protection would or should be reduced. For example, subjecting supervising individuals to much less, or even no screening arrangements simply in order to meet established supervision ratios.



What sports organisations need to do

While following the government guidance on re-starting sport during coronavirus, organisations should:

- Not compromise on safeguarding practice to meet coronavirus measures
- Postpone any planned activity until it can be provided safely, both in terms of coronavirus measures and safeguarding
- Continue to risk assess safeguarding practice in your activity as before
- Make sure all those working with participants in sports clubs are assessed for their suitability
- Make sure all staff and volunteers maintain some level of safeguarding training and continue to refresh their safeguarding knowledge

It's important for sports organisations not to compromise safeguarding and wellbeing in the rush to restart activities.

Return to Play Guides For Your Sport

[The Sport and Recreation Alliance](#) has also put together a list of guidance and resources from across the sector to help people stay active, healthy and happy during the COVID-19 lockdown. They've gathered the guidance from dozens of official sport bodies, with return-to-play guidelines for everything, from angling to volleyball.

[Find the guide for your sport here.](#)

Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport as Lockdown's Lifted

[The CPSU](#) has brief but comprehensive guidance for any organisation looking to return to face-to-face activities.

They begin by looking at the government guidelines, where they highlight a few best-practice precautions that all sport and activity organisations should adopt. They stress the importance of maintaining safeguarding standards as lockdown eases, before providing a clear and concise list of "what sports organisations need to do."

[Find the CPSU guidance here.](#)

JOIN OUR ONLINE SPORTS SEMINAR!

**Tuesday
6
October.**

Places are free for
Active Partnerships
and NGBs.

**Learn about topical
issues in safeguarding
in sport and activity .**

**Share best practice
with colleagues across
the UK.**



Child Protection in Sport Unit

ann craft trust
acting against abuse



**Visit:
anncrafttrust.org**

**Email:
[ann-craft-
trust@nottingham.ac.
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Dusting Off My Bike To Improve My Wellbeing

Nicola Dean, ACT Safeguarding Adults in Sport Manager



Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic I have been reflecting on the role of sport and activity in our lives and the impact it has on our wellbeing.

Wellbeing is about:

- Feeling you are contributing to society.
- Your physical, emotional, and mental health.
- Living free from abuse and neglect.
- Having positive and safe relationships with others.
- Opportunities for social and economic stability.
- Opportunities to engage in work, study, or training.

Being active is of course crucial to achieving these. Yet we were asked to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives, only being allowed out once for activity. And those deemed to be extremely vulnerable to the virus were advised to stay at home and only go in the garden, where it was possible to be socially distant from neighbours.

When this was announced I was worried about our national wellbeing. I expected to see statistics later in the year showing how inactive we have become. Yet for many of us the opposite is true. [Sport England's recently reported that in fact we are appreciating how crucial being active is to our mental health.](#)

Do Things That Make Us Feel Better

Maybe this shouldn't be a surprise to me. The success of [Parkrun](#) and other outdoor training initiatives in the past few years is in part down to using local spaces to get people together to exercise. Lockdown has nudged many more of us to follow that lead. Growing numbers of us are getting out into our communities to do things that make us feel better.

I live in Hull, an industrial city that is surrounded by beautiful East Yorkshire countryside and shoreline. The city, though, is not renowned for its beauty. So the lockdown has made me appreciate what I have locally, the things I can easily get to by walking or cycling. I used to go to an indoor leisure centre to swim, and to potter around a gym. Now I exercise outdoors in my local fields and urban spaces.

I have found paths along the river bank that I didn't know existed. I've cycled through a deserted industrial area to reach the beautiful marina. Countless times I've noticed the hawthorn and heard the birds as I circled the playing field behind my home. My bike hadn't left the garage since I moved here a year ago. But it's now had a service from a local bike shop, where business is booming.

Relaxing Lockdown

In England, from Wednesday 13 May 2020, [the government relaxed lockdown regulations so that we could exercise](#)

[outside as often as we wish](#). We can also sit and rest outside. Exercise or recreation can be a solitary activity, or you can do it with members of your household, or with 1 other person from outside your household so long as you stay two metres apart at all times. I have seen people in the fields practising long jump run ups, doing circuits of cones, and families playing cricket.

There are different restrictions in the other home countries. In Wales, people are cycling and playing golf, as golf clubs reopened on May 18th. You're also allowed to fish from the land – but not from a boat. [The situation for professionals is mixed](#).

And so yes, I have missed the leisure centre and the cappuccinos. But my wellbeing is OK thanks in a large part to my permitted daily outdoor exercise. I am hoping that one legacy of my lockdown experience is that my bike never gathers dust again!

[Head here to read our full guide to looking after your wellbeing during lockdown.](#)

Online Sports Participation Surveys—Join Us in August!



Help us develop best practice in safeguarding adults at risk!

We're running two online discussion forums in August. Both forums will take place on **Monday 24 August 2020**.

One forum is for anyone participating in sports or activity at a grassroots, semi-professional, professional or elite level.

The other is for anyone working or volunteering in the sport sector—again, whether it's at a grassroots, semi-professional, professional or elite level.

Join us to share your experiences about what is working well, and what could be improved, in relation to safeguarding and sport.

We will discuss how sport could be safer for all.

We will then hand over to you to discuss topics such as:

- What does safeguarding mean to you?
- What can individuals, clubs, and organisations do to keep people safe?
- What are the possible safeguarding risks in sport?

Book Your Place

- **Participants**—Monday 24 August, 10.30 am—12.00 pm.
[Book your place >>](#)
- **Workers and Volunteers**—Monday 24 August, 2.00 pm—3.30 pm.
[Book Your Place >>](#)

Safeguarding News Watch:

Safeguarding Young People

Almost 7,000 counselling sessions taken place with children about impact of Coronavirus

28 May 2020 | [NSPCC.org.uk](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Coronavirus Briefing: Safeguarding Guidance for Schools

28 May 2020 | [NSPCC.org.uk](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Social isolation and the risk of child abuse during the coronavirus pandemic

24 June 2020 | [NSPCC.org.uk](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Haringey Council “failed to safeguard disabled child from paedophile”

21 May 2020 | [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com)

Free membership offer: Association of Child Protection Professionals

5 June 2020 | [ChildProtectionProfessionals.org.uk](https://www.childprotectionprofessionals.org.uk)

Review sets out reforms to painful restraint use

18 June 2020 | [CYPNow.co.uk](https://www.cypnow.co.uk)

Sector letter to Children & Families Minister

29 May 2020 | [NNPCF.org.uk](https://www.nnpcf.org.uk)

Safeguarding News Watch:

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

CQC data on Covid-19 Deaths of People with Learning Disabilities

12 May 2020 | [CQC.org.uk](https://www.cqc.org.uk)

The IMO Podcast—Open & Honest Conversations with Care Leavers

17 June 2020 | [IMOHub.org.uk](https://imohub.org.uk)

The Court of Appeal and Sex: Have We Been Getting It All Wrong?

11 June 2020 | [Mentalcapacitylawandpolicy.org.uk](https://mentalcapacitylawandpolicy.org.uk)

Third of Social Workers Considering Quitting Following Covid-19 Pandemic

10 July 2020 | [CommunityCare.co.uk](https://communitycare.co.uk)

Post Brexit Immigration Plan Cuts Off Entry for Care Workers

13 July 2020 | [CommunityCare.co.uk](https://communitycare.co.uk)

Call For Urgent Enquiry into Covid-19 Deaths

9 July 2020 | [DisabilityNewsService.com](https://disabilitynewsservice.com)

Pandemic Survey Leads to “Outpouring of Fear”

9 July 2020 | [DisabilityNewsService.com](https://disabilitynewsservice.com)

Safeguarding News Watch:

Safeguarding Adults in Sport and Activity

Netflix Documentary Asks: “What is the Cost of Winning?”

28 June 2020 | [Independent.co.uk](https://www.independent.co.uk)

British Gymnastics “Appalled and Ashamed” at Multiple Abuse Stories

10 July 2020 | [TheGuardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com)

Amy Tinkler: Trauma Led to my Retirement

14 July 2020 | [TheGuardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com)

Athletics: Alleviating Anxiety with the Alexander Technique

11 May 2020 | [athleticsweekly.com](https://www.athleticsweekly.com)

Joint Review of Code for Sports Governance

13 July 2020 | [SportEngland.org](https://www.sportengland.org)

How UEFA is Helping European Football “In Its Time of Need”

1 July 2020 | [UEFA.com](https://www.uefa.com)

Webinar: Reimagining the Future of Sport and Development

June 2020 | [SportandDev.org](https://www.sportanddev.org)

Safeguarding Research and Resources

Information to Support Safeguarding Children in a Digital World

A suite of resources gathered by CAFCASS, covering a range of topics including safe social media use and cyberbullying.

Access it here: https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms1/media/5367/cafcass_staying_safe_online_information_for_parents.pdf

Young, Disabled and LGBT+

Voices, identities and intersections. Book edited by Anita Franklin and Alex Toft.

Access it here: <https://www.routledge.com/Young-Disabled-and-LGBT-Voices-Identities-and-Intersections-1st-Edition/Toft-Franklin/p/book/9780367188146>

BSL Health Access

App and online connection service to get on-demand BSL access to UK health services

More than 70,000 Deaf people across the UK use British Sign Language (BSL) to communicate as our first and preferred language, but we know from research that Deaf people's health is already much poorer than hearing people's. Deaf people often rely on asking family and friends to interpret for them but they can't do that with the current social distancing and stay at home policies.

When people wear PPE it makes communication and lip-reading impossible. Deaf people are being left frustrated and isolated. We need to be able to communicate with doctors and nurses now. As a result, SignHealth have teamed up with InterpreterNow to provide a solution, to fill the gaps in BSL interpreter provision in health settings and provide on demand BSL interpreting when it's really needed.

More information: <https://www.bslhealthaccess.co.uk/>

Safeguarding Research and Resources

Caring Behind Closed Doors

Report and campaign by Carers UK. Millions of people are providing care unpaid every day. During this national crisis many carers have had to provide more care for their elderly, sick or disabled family or friends.

Read more: <https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/campaigns/caring-behind-closed-doors>

Understanding Grooming and Entrapment

Webinar recording: CPSU senior consultants Paul Stephenson and Liza Ware discuss sexual offending and the grooming and entrapment process. Paul and Liza examine a specific model of how child sexual offenders operate and explore what this means in the sporting environment. The consultants also talk about some of the things sports can do to address the specific risks of child sexual offending within sport.

Access here: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/webinars/understanding-sexual-offending-and-the-grooming-and-entrapment-process/>

Getting Your Voices Heard—Safeguarding You, Safeguarding Me

Identifying the best approaches for people with a learning disability to influence adult safeguarding and associated policy and legislation.

This project sought to identify the best approaches to influencing adult safeguarding and associated policies in different contexts across all four nations in the UK. The project concluded with the development of co-produced recommendations.

Learn more: <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/research/getting-our-voices-heard-safeguarding-you-safeguarding-me/>

Safeguarding Research and Resources

LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Support

Information sheets by GALOP.

Staying safe online: <https://www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Staying-Safe-Online.pdf>

Finding emergency accommodation: <http://www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Emergency-Accom.pdf>

Contact During Lockdown

Resource from Nuffield Family Justice Observatory. How are children and their birth families keeping in touch during lockdown?

Learn more: <https://www.nuffieldfjo.org.uk/resource/lockdown-keeping-in-touch>

Reaching Families—Coronavirus Survey

This survey was carried out in order to better understand the challenges experienced by families of children with SEND in West Sussex during the coronavirus lockdown. It comprised of 25 questions (22 closed, 3 open) covering a range of subjects – income, mental health & well-being, physical health, home schooling, returning to school, shopping, etc.

Read more: <https://www.reachingfamilies.org.uk/images/impact/RF-CoronavirusSurveyReport-April2020.pdf>

From the Vault: “Our Debt to Ann Craft”

By Hilary Brown, Open University, from the foreword to the 1997 edition of the *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*.

Ann Craft—Reader in Learning Disabilities, University of Nottingham and Director of NAPSAC. 5 June 1943 – 13 April 97.

Ann Craft, who died suddenly, but not unexpectedly, on 13 April 1997, will be much missed, both professionally and personally.

Over the years she precipitated a quiet revolution in the way in which services for people with intellectual disabilities approach the sexuality of the people in their care and latterly has played a major part in addressing the issues raised by sexual abuse of children with intellectual disabilities and of vulnerable adults. Her research and scholarship contributed to a fundamental shift in attitudes and has had a major impact on the lives of people with intellectual disabilities who used to be condemned to furtiveness and ignorance but are now accepted as adults and as citizens.

Initially she broke a taboo by speaking of these issues at all, and it is a tribute to her knowledge and her sensitivity that she was able to do so in ways which led to consensus around good practice. Central to her work was the collaboration she sought between the many constituencies involved, and her capacity to build close

links between users, carers and a wide range of professional bodies and interests.

Ann Craft was born and educated in Aldershot and Woking, with a brief spell in Egypt, which gave her a taste for travel

“
*Over the years she
precipitated a quiet revolution*
”

and a certain air of indomitability. She worked abroad for the World Council of Churches for a time in her twenties but later studied at Swansea University and qualified as a social worker. She then found herself working in one of the larger old fashioned ‘mental subnormality’ hospitals where she began to articulate the needs of residents for sex education and support in their relationships.

She believed passionately that service-users deserved to be given the information they needed to make sense of their own lives and personal options. Her early research work on handicapped married couples (with her then husband Michael Craft) was followed by work

funded by the Health Education Council on the development of sex education programmes, and both works are still widely used by students and practitioners alike. Her later edited books on aspects of sexuality are considered essential texts for undergraduates, postgraduates and for those on professional courses.

“

She believed passionately that service-users deserved to be given the information they needed to make sense of their own lives and personal options.

”

More recently she had been working with Caroline Downes on the sexuality needs of people with profound intellectual disabilities which she regarded as an appropriate 'rounding off' of her contribution.

She came to the work on sexual abuse from this very positive commitment to the sexual rights of people whom she regarded as uniquely but unnecessarily disadvantaged. In 1989 we convened the first national conference on sexual abuse of adults with intellectual disabilities. Once this next taboo had been broken it was clear that there was much work to do to 'lower the odds' that such abuse would occur in services and to ensure that people who had been victims of abuse were properly supported and protected.

In 1992 she set up a voluntary organisation within the University of Nottingham to inform practitioners and to influence public policy. The National Association for the Protection from Sexual Abuse of Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (NAPSAC) has gone from strength to strength producing, in collaboration with other relevant agencies, model policies and guidelines governing the prevention, investigation and response to such abuse.

She spoke as a recognised authority on all these issues and her views were sought by a very wide range of individuals and agencies including the Department of Health, the Association of Directors of Social Services, The Association of Chief Police Officers, and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Sexual Abuse and Learning Disabilities. She was also the first social worker to be admitted onto the Royal Society of Medicine's Learning Disability Committee and had recently been asked to convene a sexuality forum within IASSID.

Ann was enormously generous as a colleague and mentor. She somewhat reluctantly arrived at a feminist analysis of the pressures and prejudices which led practitioners to flock to her seminars and workshops while her work was sometimes side-lined within the mainstream academic agenda. Her response was to open the field as widely as possible and she was always ready to give support to people starting out on their careers or studies. She was particularly keen to

encourage practitioners who wanted to undertake practice-based research.

A Fellowship scheme is to be founded in her name to allow people working in relevant fields to take time out for such projects.

Having started as a lone voice, she leaves a thriving and dynamic field of work and policy development: that is what she wanted most and will be her most fitting memorial.

The seriousness with which she addressed her work was balanced by the pleasure she took in her personal life. She had warm, longstanding friendships which stretched back to her schooldays. She was wonderful company and had many friends all over the world. She had spoken and worked in Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, America, Belgium, Israel, Iceland and Italy. She was an intrepid sightseer and eater of seafood!

She first became ill in Autumn 1995 and resolutely faced up to the ensuing struggle against, and eventual acceptance of, ovarian cancer.

Ann was a very brave and honest woman and I count it a tremendous privilege to have worked alongside her over the years. Her too early death will leave a terrible gap in the lives of many people who knew and loved her. Without her pioneering contribution it would be difficult to imagine that this blend of open discussion about sexuality, rights and exploitation could have been tolerated within either the academic or the service

community. I am glad to have brought together the work of colleagues and authors whose work derives from, and has such a direct impact on, the lived experience of men and women with intellectual disabilities.

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Everyone has a right to be treated with respect and dignity.
Everyone deserves to be safe.