

Draft Stay Safe Summary

The following key issues have been identified::

A rise in both our Looked After Children and Child Protection rates

- We have seen a significant rise in referrals, child protection enquiries, police protection orders and an increase in care proceedings. More children are looked after because it is not safe for them to be at home. We are also receiving referrals for older children and an increase in 16 and 17 year olds taken into care as a result of new guidance based on a court judgment round vulnerable homeless young people. More children started to be looked after than in the previous year, and a higher proportion are spending longer looked after than in 2008–09. This reflects both our capacity to achieve change with families and secure a safe secure return home, and the fact that court proceedings are taking longer to conclude than last year.
- We have taken into care large numbers of babies, reflecting **decisive early action** to protect them. Numbers also include several large sibling groups taken into care (5 or more children in a family). There is an underlying problem of neglect and poor parenting over 2 or more generations in many of these cases.

Preventing children from reaching the significant harm threshold through early intervention

- Early intervention is critical to improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. CAF and TAC processes are beginning to improve multi-agency intervention with key vulnerable groups such as homeless 16 and 17 year olds but more children, young people and their families need co-ordinated support and we need to track the inputs and outcomes to ensure they are receiving a co-ordinated care pathway. Our Children's Trust have agreed ten areas where we want to support and monitor vulnerable children and young people through TAC and LP processes:
 - families receiving targeted parenting programmes
 - teenage mothers,
 - homeless 16 and 17 year olds
 - missing children
 - persistent absentees in primary schools
 - children with a disability

- substance misusers
- youth offenders.
- young carers
- Children and young people receiving support through the mental health in schools project (TAMHS)

Improving service provision for young runaways

- Missing children and young runaways represent a key vulnerable group of young people. A recent profile of children who run away showed that young people aged between 14 and 17, looked after children and children based in out of borough placements are most likely to run away. Improved information sharing, early intervention strategies and return interviews will contribute towards reducing the number of children who run away.

Tackling the fear of bullying at school

- Fear of bullying remains a concern for Greenwich children and young people. The TellUs 4 survey records that 30% of children had worried about being bullied in the last year even though the actual incidences of bullying are not higher in Greenwich than nationally

Fear of crime and fears about safety

- TellUs 4 found that young people in Greenwich are more concerned than elsewhere about feeling unsafe, often when travelling. There are indicators that parental fears about children's safety which may be a barrier to young people's participation in positive activities

Reducing domestic violence and its impact on children

- In 2009, there were 3003 domestic violence incidents in Greenwich. Evidence from a recent CP cohort study suggests that up to a third of children who become subject to a CP plan have experienced some form of domestic violence. MARAC Panel increasingly used to identify repeat victims of domestic violence and allows police to intervene earlier and protect 'at risk' children.