



7 minute briefing on Contextual Safeguarding?

1. What is it?

Contextual safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to young people outside of their home, either from adults or other young people.

2. Why does it matter?

Traditional approaches to protecting children and young people from harm have focussed on the risk of violence and abuse from inside the home, and do not always address the time that children and young people spend outside the home.

7. An approach, not a model:

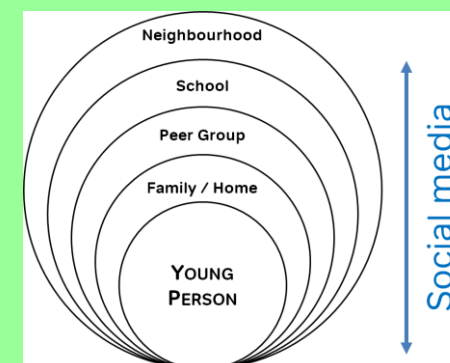
- Utilise the partnerships between agencies that reach into extra-familial contexts (transport providers, schools, retailers, resident associations, parks & recreational services etc.)
- Measure success with reference to the nature of the context in which the harm has been occurring, rather than focussing on any behaviour changes displayed by young people who were at risk of these contexts.



3. Why does it matter?

As children move from childhood into adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time socialising independently of their families. Contextual safeguarding recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

4. Expanding the capacity to safeguard:



5. Re-writing the rules of child protection:

In the link below, Dr Carlene Firmin outlines three important points: how contexts beyond families are associated; how traditional child protection systems fail to engage with these contextual dynamics; and the components of the Contextual Safeguarding system that would redefine what child protection means.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCFZQcagDM>

6. An approach, not a model:

- We need to recognise that children and young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors.
- Target the context in which the abuse occurs, from assessment through to intervention.
- Frame work to address extra-familial risk through the lens of child welfare and not crime reduction or community safety.