

# Child Safeguarding Practice Review Liam SSCP 7 Point Briefing



## BACKGROUND

Liam was a 17-year-old child who was a Southampton Looked After Child. He was placed out of area numerous times. Liam had a significant history of intervention from various Local Authorities and many involvements with the Police for violence, drugs and criminality.

Liam died in January 2020 after being stabbed by a 15-year-old boy. His death happened amid major concerns around Liam's involvement with serious street violence being involved with gangs and County Lines and the significant serious harm he had suffered as a child.

## SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

The review found that the summarised periods of Liam's life highlighted how chaotic and emotionally complex it was for him. It also showed how difficult and challenging it was for those professionals trying to work with him, in particular his Social Workers and Youth Offending Team workers. There were concerns for the welfare of Liam and the lessons to be learnt to improve experiences for children in similar circumstances in the future. This needs to include the degree to which decisions were child focussed and the effectiveness of working arrangements across agencies and services.

## POINTS TO CONSIDER

Reflect on the findings and discuss the implications for your service or practice.

Are staff aware how ACEs can impact on a child making them more vulnerable to exploitation?

Outline the steps you and your team will take to improve practice in line with the recommendations.

<https://southamptonscp.org.uk/>

## WHY WAS THE CSPR CARRIED OUT?

It was decided that the criteria for a CSPR was met as throughout various periods of Liam's life it appeared that abuse and/or neglect had been suspected and prior to and at the time of his death he was a victim of Child Criminal Exploitation. There was a commitment across agencies to learn from his life and death and this would focus on the ways in which the Safeguarding Children Partnership and other relevant people had worked together to keep him safe.

## FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognise, identify and understand the impact of ACEs and provide a trauma informed response.

Intervene, identify and act on critical or reachable moments.

Always complete Missing Return Home interviews.

Review placements away from the home area and prevent school exclusions.

Expedite time for criminal investigations.

Improve knowledge of the National Referral Mechanism.

Understand and follow the HIPS Child Exploitation strategy.

Ensure all statutory Looked after Children reviews take place in a timely manner

## WHAT TO DO

Always respond to your professional instincts based upon information received!

Share important safeguarding information and improve communication between staff and agencies.

Be effective when providing professional support and overcome barriers.

Identify risk and act on it.

## WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE

Show curiosity during early childhood trauma including neglect and ADHD management.

Provide a coordinated and effective multi-agency response to all forms of child exploitation across the HIPS areas.

Ensure there is a professional team around the child, including the Independent Reviewing Officer and Looked after Child health support.

Consider and identify the collective 'critical points' in children's lives and circumstances where partnership intervention can be best targeted to have significant impact.

A better understanding of the lived experience of children who have suffered exploitation to inform ongoing work at strategic/local levels.

