

INEQUALITIES AND EXTRA-FAMILIAL HARM

RE-THINKING THE 'MISSING' RESPONSE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

What we learnt

1

THE YOUNG PERSON ISN'T WHERE WE EXPECT THEM TO BE

- Missing safety plan co-designed with young person, carer and social worker on arrival in care.
- Young person, carer and social worker identify a group of trusted people (not necessarily professionals, maybe a trusted trio) who are named in safety plan and in Philomena protocol, who carers can contact when concerned about young persons whereabouts - to avoid escalation.
- Out of hours service with workers who know/are known by young people and carers - to help risk assessment. Could be Out of Hours Foster Service, a youth org with out of hours rota, or Missing and Exploitation team - not police and not EDT.
- Prompt questions for carers and out of hours staff that is developed with young people to guide risk assessment.
- Mandatory training for carers on what to do if worried about a young person's whereabouts.



2

THE YOUNG PERSON IS 'MISSING'

- Increasing the capacity and trust for carers and trusted people to look for young people.
- Welfare/trauma-informed and cultural competency training for the police (and the use of a specialist missing team) to reduce heavy-handed policing and promote welfare response.
- Use of safety apps (i.e. Holly Guard/What Three Words) for young people to contact trusted people.



3

THE YOUNG PERSON HAS RETURNED

- Mandatory training for carers - set of standards for welcoming young people home (with young people's voices included) to avoid deterring young people from returning.
- Out of hours respite service (overnights and weekends) for young people at risk of EFH and in care, who need to get away for short periods.
- Agree and review with young people how information will be shared, and with who, in RHI to increase trust.
- Reflective multi-agency meetings to understand trends and patterns in relation to EFH and missing from care.
- Reflective supervision tool for social workers (including feedback from young people) to reflect on missing response.
- Feedback text/QR code and questions in RHI for young people to feedback on response, including EDI questions and training for staff on how to facilitate these discussions.



4

OVER-ARCHING PRINCIPLES

- **Trusted relationships** - bring in the people young people already trust and choose, and trust them to be vital part of the safety plan. Build trusted relationships by having well resourced staff who remain in roles (out of hours, carers, residential) - through training, co-creating plans with young people and time together.
- **Risk-sensible** - Avoid escalation to police unless real risk of harm, make collaborative decisions about risk with young people and their trusted network.
- **Guardianship** - Increase the availability of trusted people out of hours, increase access to safe respite spaces for overnights and weekends.
- **Care** - caring and nurturing placements that treat teenagers like teenagers and consider community and cultural needs.
- **Equality and respect** - equitable treatment regardless of race, gender, class or care status. Oversight (data) and training.



5

MISC ACTIONS

- Further consultation with young people on all changes
- Collect and analyse data on ethnicity bias (i.e. profile of response etc.)

