



ESSAY

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES – BMHP5004

INTRODUCTION

Writing the following is a different type of abuse will be discussed, such as physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. Bryce et al. (2019) shared the signs of each type of abuse, including bruising, anti-social behaviour, guilt, and shame also their impact on the child development and health will be a subject. Social care services play the crucial role within the family and children life, their effectiveness in failure will be explored.

Social construction of the family suggest how is structured in various changes in the past decades. Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults will present policies and how those have improved the caring system. (NSPCC, 2021).

Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership (2021) define abuse as an “action taken towards a person that causes harm or distress”. As it has been stated abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. Safeguarding on the other hand is the prevention and protection of children, young people in vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect.

Social care services provide care and support from “childcare to end of life care”, they provide a range of services, such as protection from harm and helping vulnerable adults which cannot support themselves.



Image 1. Safeguarding. (Cheshire West and Chester, 2021)

MAIN BODY

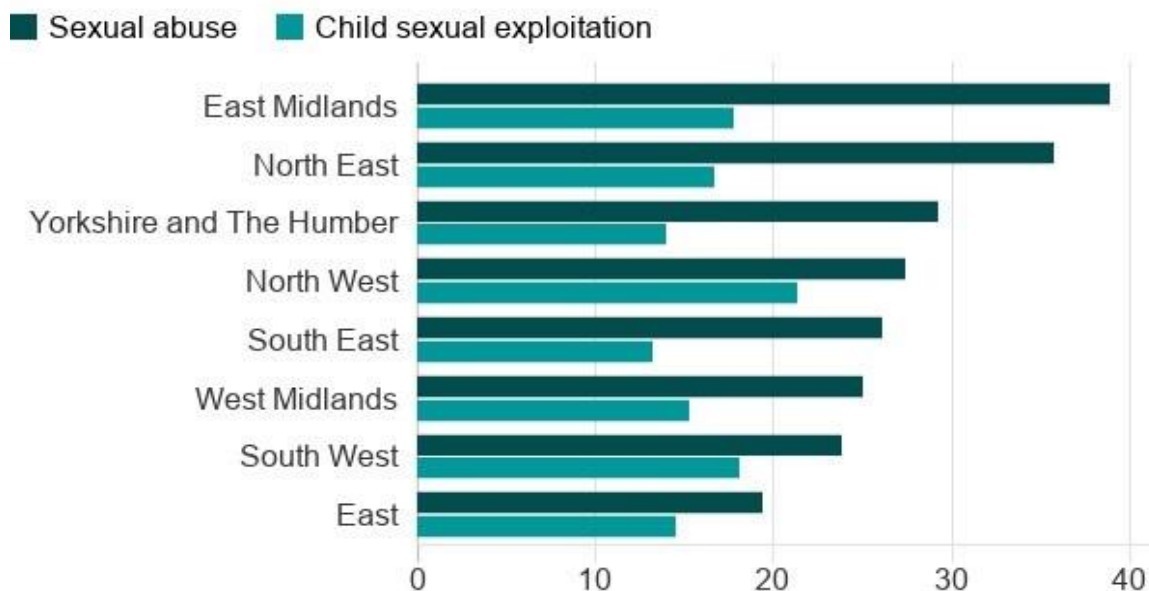
Davidson and Bifulco (2018) define child abuse as an action taken by another person which “cause significant harm to a child”. Davidson and Bifulco suggest that child abuse can have long term impact on children's development and “mental health damage”, being affected in childhood, adolescent, later life development causing various illnesses and leading to early mortality.

Child abuse has grown knowledge between different professionals, such as social workers, paediatrician, teachers, play group workers and the police, all working together to spot and preventing the abuse. In the UK the term of child abuse is well known by most of adults from parents to professionals and members of society. People working with children nowadays must be DBS checked and have a minimum understanding of safeguarding and how to report a concern.

Next various types of abuse, signs and causes will be presented, such as emotional, physical, and sexual abuse as well as neglect.

Concerns about child sexual abuse

Assessments of under-18s per 10,000 population in 2016-17



Source: DfE (Note: Some children will be assessed more than once during the year and some will have been assessed for more than one issue.)

BBC

Image 2. Scale of child abuse survey. (BBC News, 2018)

Healey (2018) define emotional abuse as an inappropriate behaviour toward a child by their parent or caregiver. Forms of inappropriate behaviour could include rejecting the child needs, isolation from social experiences, terrorising the child verbally, ignoring their wishes and “intellectual development”, as well as corrupting the child to engage in anti-social behaviour. Such forms of emotional abuse damaged child social competence in self-esteem.

Other acts of child emotional abuse could include humiliating and criticism, shouting, blaming, exposure to domestic violence or drug use, manipulating, not showing them love or appreciation. Emotional abuse is hard to be proved and detected, but some warning signs a lack of self-assurance or unconfident, not controlling their emotions, difficulty making relationships and maintaining them, acting inappropriate to their age. Signs can also vary from age, such as babies and toddlers seem to be “overly affectionate” to strange people and aggressive behaviour towards animals or children. Causes of emotional abuse can include unemployment, mental health issues, addiction, domestic abuse, and poverty. (NSPCC, 2021).

Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children (2021) suggest that physical abuse can be experienced of many children home parents are passing through difficult time, including poverty, alcohol and drug use, relationship problems or lack of support. Signs of physical abuse can be spotted by bruising, broken bones, burns to the bottom or feet, bite marks, scars.

Vomiting, breathing problems, drowsiness or seizures can be an effect of poisoning or suffocating, more signs could include swelling, sleepy, irritable behaviour, seem scared of parents or adults.

Office for National Statistics (2020) suggest that there are around “4,170 children in England” Add risk or subject of physical abuse, and “7.4 child homicide”. Physical abuse is a form of abuse in which the parent or caregiver provokes physical harm or injury to a child. Despite the many professionals trained on safeguarding it's all real that abuse is still happening, and number are constantly increasing children die because of physical abuse every day. The government should take steps on reviewing the social workers personnel and their work on regularly basis.

Figure 1: Witnessing domestic violence or abuse and emotional abuse were the most commonly experienced types of child abuse

England and Wales, year ending March 2019

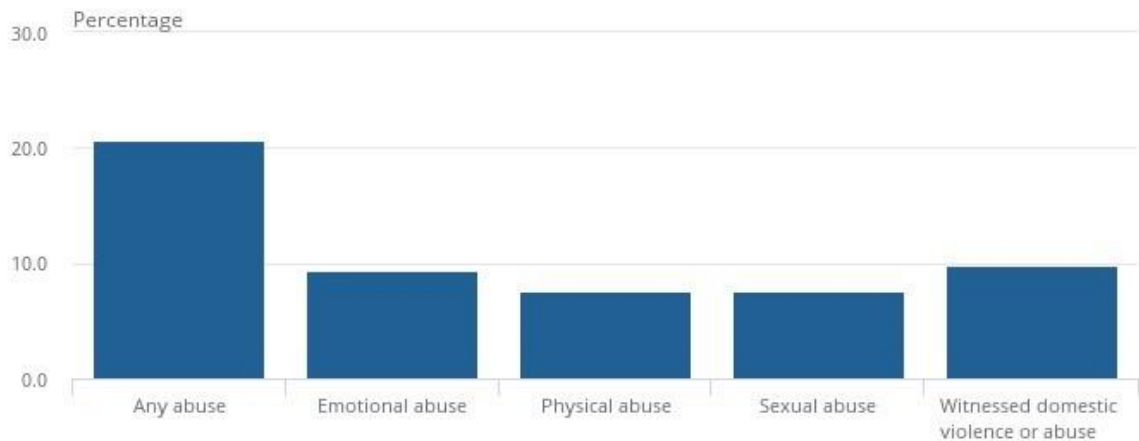


Image 3. Child abuse in England and Wales. (ONS, 2020)

Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime Survey for England and Wales

Sexual abuse it can be defined as a sexual touch between an adult and a child, as well as sexual gestures, taking pornographic pictures or any other “sexual orientated acts”. They often happened by force or manipulating the child that cannot take control over the situation, children rarely speak about sexual abuse, in many cases are afraid to do so because are threatened and manipulated.

When children are being sexually abused are facing nightmares, fear to going to bed or in the dark, fear of the person or dislike, bed wetting, changing mood, seeing themselves as bad or dirty, sexual behaviour, self-injury, or any other unexplained changes. (Stonesifer & Tykeem, 2016).

Office for National Statistics (2020) suggests that in England and Wales, March 2019 were reported 65.68% sexual abuse towards children aged one year and less, 9.49% between one to five years, 4.18% to children aged 5 to 10 years, 6.48% towards children aged 10 and 20 years and 14.17% to 20 years and more. As stated, the higher percentage is towards the infants aged less than one year, 76% where indecent images, with a total of 2.1 million images recorded in the year 2019.

Swift (2018) suggest that child neglect has been a common problem among the children in the past century, meaning the “deficient of care by mothers”. Swift also sustain that welfare services how failed to rescue “neglected children” Resulting in increased number of child neglect. Nowadays the social worker are mostly women with little education and training, being the reason of failure of their crucial role in child welfare. In other cases, welfare workers tend to give another chance to the family and ignoring their worries and concerns regarding neglect, creating massive mistakes later on, affecting not only their performance also the child.

NSPCC (2021) define neglect as “ongoing failure to meet child’s basic needs”, such as food, clothing, health, education, and shelter. Warning signs of child neglect could include poor or dirty clothing, hungry, anaemic, untreated medical and dental problems, injuries as a result of poor supervision. More signs relating to housing, family and behaviour are dirty house, child being left under one at home, aggressive, obsessive, and clingy behaviour, anxious, not going to school, self-harm, and limited activities.

Neglected children can suffer long term effects such as brain development issues, alcohol and drug use, difficulty to maintain healthy relationships and mental health changes. the causes of neglect can be the families who facing domestic abuse between the parents, alcohol and drug use, mental health or learning disability, poverty, and no support available.

Looking at different types of abuse and neglect, now the impact of childhood trauma on children will be discussed.

Childhood trauma can have a long-term impact on brain development of the child, such as children who have been abused or neglected in childhood can experience mental health problems at a later age and find common changes difficult. For example, going to a new school can be challenging, as well as making new friends due to fear of new faces which can appear threatening for them. Conflicts are easily occurring among the abuse children, socialising issues, and different responses to common change. (Freud, 2020).

Children’s Bureau (2019) sustained that childhood maltreatment can have a long-term impact on overall health of children’s, resulting to serious illnesses at a later age. Some consequences on physical health could be diabetes, lung disease, vision problems, heart attacks, brain damage, malnutrition, cancer, stroke, or bowel disease. Also, the risk of hepatitis C and HIV Is likely to happen among the children who faced abuse and neglect in their childhood.

Psychological consequences as well can be numerous among the children who suffered childhood maltreatment due to isolation and fear exposure. The different forms of abuse and neglect can lead to learning difficulties, depression, low self-esteem, in some cases suicidal, as well as feelings of shame and guilt. More research has shown that abuse children will choose a wrong path when turning adolescent or adult, including criminal and anti-social behaviour.

The family structure has changed over the past decades from the typical structure, such as opposite sex marriage with biological children. Nowadays the relationship between the same sex is common, the partners don't have to be married to have children, most of them separated after having a child which led to many single parents.

There are 2.9 million lone parents' families in the UK with the biggest percentage in London of 19.1 %. Divorced parents ending up remarriage where it forms the combined families, the family structure then change into stepfather's or mother, stepsiblings and so on. Diversity of the family vary on several grounds, including cultural, social, organisational, life cycle and generational. (Tutor2u, 2020).

Next the role of social care services and safeguarding partnership will be explored, as well as their effectiveness and failures in child welfare.

Bradshaw (2016) recommend that UK should "produce a regular review of the wellbeing of its children" and that the Office for National Statistics should be responsible for it. The UK experience in 2008 a period of unemployment rate very low, during those difficult times there was an increase on taxes and benefits for families with children, as well as education, health, and transport expenditure.

Children services were also transformed, such as "establishment of Partnership and Children Trust". Bradshaw (2016) defined child wellbeing as a children's interest, views, development, and happiness. Children's views and interest should be taken into consideration, developmental needs are crucial, including education, health and social life, happiness should be the focus.

All professional that meets children have a key role to play within the UK, including social care services, practitioners, teachers, accident and emergency department, doctors, police, and volunteers. Safeguarding policies guidelines have been introduced in all sectors of child facing environment, social care services have a valued position on supporting the families, young people and children which cannot be replaced with any other professional intervention.

Social care services work based on rights and person-centred care, they support families, young people, and children to every aspect of their life in order to make a positive change, by a “strength-based approach”. (SCIE, 2018).

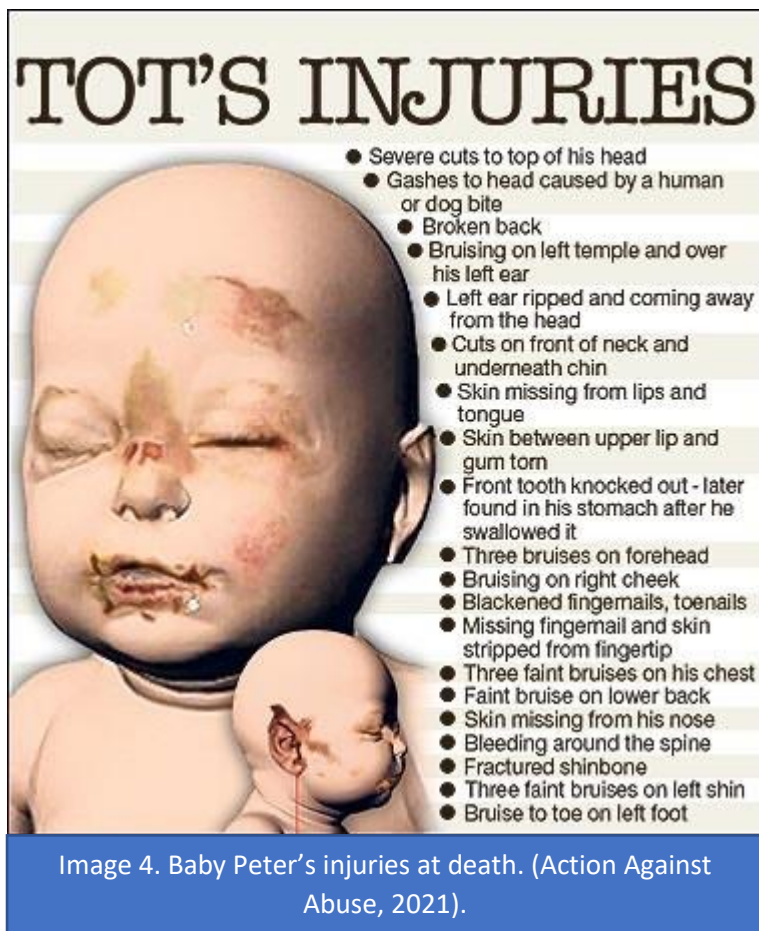
Safeguarding is the definition of child, young people, and vulnerable adults’ protection from any form of abuse and neglect. Children welfare is important to everyone, children are the future, and they deserve a life free from any harm. professionals have a duty of care and to work in partnership with others to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Local authority, social care services, GPs, volunteers, and all professionals that come in direct contact with the child and have a concern needs to be reported as soon as possible. Safeguarding promote the child welfare, protect them from maltreatment, prevention of harm and taking the right action to ensure the child safety and development.

NSPCC Learning (2020) suggest that child protection create a plan of what action is needed from the moment they meet the family. The plan will focus on promoting the child welfare and it will be reviewed on regular basis until the child is no longer considered at risk. If the child is considered not safe next to their parents, it will be taken into care until the court decides otherwise. The social worker for the child will create the plan for the court to be taken into consideration and help the court decide a better solution.

With all the support and help children services give to families, young people and children, and all other safeguarding partnerships, there have been also failures. As a result of abuse and neglect many children have been “brutally murdered”, including Baby Peter Connelly, Daniel Pelka, Victoria Climbié, Ayesha Aly and many more. A series of professionals have been involved in each of the above cases, such as social workers, GPs, health visitors the police, all failing on saving the lives of the children abused to death.

According to Willis Palmer (2021) “things have got worse” since Baby P’s murder, following up a series of cases and it’s still happening today. Peter Connelly a boy of 17 months old died in 2007 with “more than 50 injuries” on his body, not long after Victoria Climbié’s death. In Baby P’s case where involved social care, health services and police, all failing the safeguarding policies. He has been seen 60 times of all the professionals involved and none of them did anything to prevent his cruelty death.



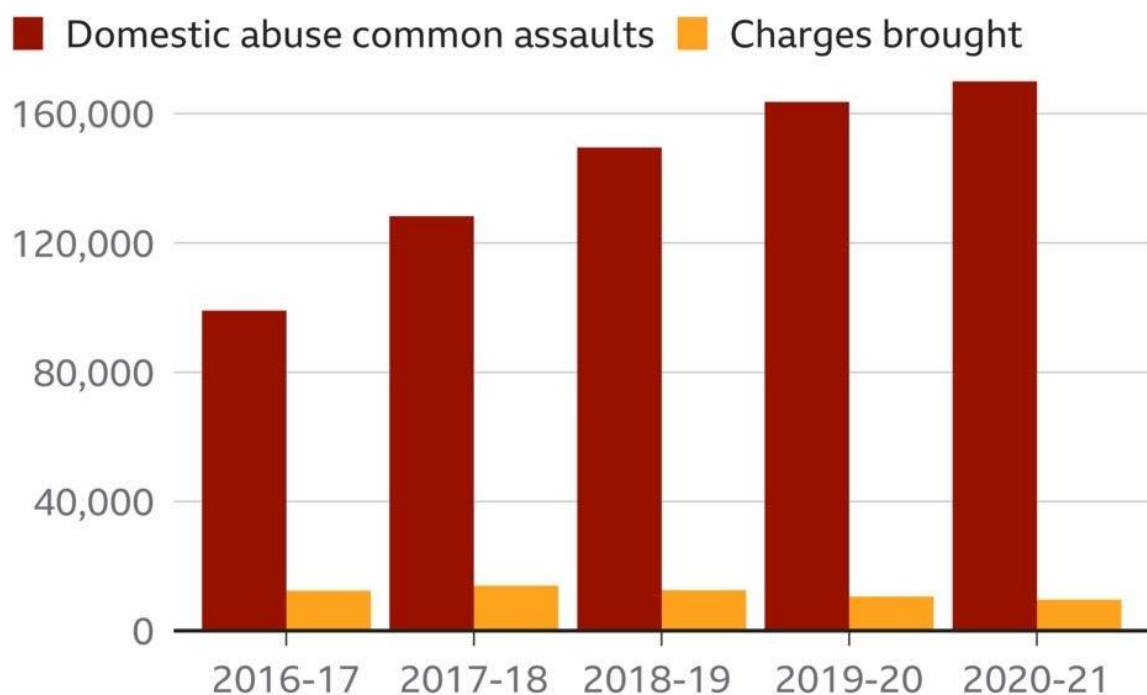
Ed Balls, the social worker for Peter Connely was sacked after his death, however more action was needed in order to make the professionals involved learned from the biggest mistake. (McNicoll, 2017).

Daniel Pelka born in July 2007 was a four-year-old boy from West Midlands who suffered starvation, he was starved to death, neglected and physical abuse. At the time of his death, he weighed 10 kg. He was living with his mother and her boyfriend, they kept him locked in a small unheated room which he was to use as a toilet. He was forced to stay under cold water, indigest salt and regular beatings.

The police were called at the family home 26 times and social services were involved, seen by professionals but nobody seemed to care and do something to save the little boy. His mother and stepfather were imprisoned, the mother killed herself in the cell and his stepfather was found death in prison six months after. (The Guardian, 2016).

BBC (2021) sustained that there is high increase rate on domestic abuse cases and the suspects are not being charged. BBC suggests that police should prioritise violence and abuse problems as soon as possible, in order to prevent crime. children exposed to domestic abuse is count as an emotional abuse and cause of neglect which can have a long-term impact on their development and overall health.

Abuse rises but fewer people charged



Source: FOI requests from 30 police forces in England and Wales

BBC

Image 5. Huge rise in domestic abuse cases being dropped in England and Wales. (BBC,2021).

CONCLUSION

Summarising the concepts, abuse and neglect have been defined and discussed, such as emotional, sexual, and physical abuse, as well as neglect, warning signs help identify the types of abuse, causes and impact explain the reason parents may lead to abuse their children and their impact in child development and overall health.

Abuse and neglect can have a long-term effect on children development, brain and overall health, including diabetes, cancer, stroke, brain damage and early mortality. Neglect also can have a long-term impact on child, such as brain developmental problems, alcohol and drug use, difficulty to maintain healthy relationships and criminal or anti-social behaviour. (Children's Bureau 2019).

Sexual abuse statistics shared by Office for National Statistics (2020) in England and Wales showed a proportion of 65.68% of sexual abuse towards children aged one year in less, with a 76% of indecent images.

The family structure section showed how family structure has changed over the years and finally the effectiveness and failure of social care services was explored.

Safeguarding guidelines has been introduced to improve the effectiveness of social care services in partnership, but there have also been failures, such as brutally murder children as a result of abuse including Peter Connelly.

BBC recommend that police should prioritise domestic violence as the number of cases are hugely increasing and the charges are very small numbers. Also, Bradshaw (2016) recommend that UK should "produce a regular review of the wellbeing of its children" and that the Office for National Statistics should be responsible for it.

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