

Post Hearing Report:



After the death of Victoria Adjo Climbie on February 25th 2000 at 15:15pm at Saint Mary's Hospital in London there was a public inquiry headed by Lord Laming, to discover why this young 8 year old died with 128 separate injuries on her body after the abuse she suffered at the hands of her Aunt Marie Therese Kouao and her boyfriend Carl Manning, even though Victoria was known to many services including

Enfield, Brent, Ealing and Haringey Social services, there were three housing associations, two main hospitals, Central Middlesex and North Middlesex Hospital, two child protection teams, two Metropolitan Police Department and a department headed by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Lord Laming's main purpose was to undertake an inquiry to discover the faults in the services leading up to Victoria Adjo Climbie's death and to propose changes to the system to ensure instances like this one did not happen again. The Government published a paper named, Every Child Matters, and also passed the Child Act 2004.

The Child Act 2004

This new act, The Child Act 2004 was a development from the Child Act of 1984, it reinforced that all people and organisations working with children have a responsibility to help safeguard children and promote their welfare. The guidelines set out in this act allow for anyone working in an educational or non-educational setting and working with children to know how a child should be looked after in the eyes of the law. **(Ihasco. (2019)** The new Child Act 2004 also replaced child protection registers and decided to bring in new and improved protection plans and created an Integrated Children's Computer System therefore it was a more secure and reliable system so it was less likely for a repeat of Victoria Adjo Climbie's case. Lord Laming proposed that those holding senior positions, from the government down to local services are to be held accountable for any failure to protect vulnerable children. In addition, a cabinet minister

should chair a children and families board to consider the impact of all government policies on children and families. A national agency for children and families, possibly led by a children's commissioner could advise the board on the impact of proposed policies; scrutinise legislation and guidance; advice on implementing the UN convention on child rights; ensure that policy and legislation are implemented at local level; and review serious cases of abuse. So that children all over the United Kingdom would be safer and it could prevent any further such issues in the future. (**Dan Batty, *The Guardian*. (2003). Q&A: Victoria Climbié inquiry.**) Furthermore, a common assessment framework was created so practitioners within health, education and the police could instigate better support for families not deemed to reach child protection thresholds. Local safeguarding children boards were also set up taking on the responsibility for multi-agency child protection training and investigating the causes of deaths and incidents of serious harm which may have been preventable in their area. (**Community Care. (2005)**)

A Quote from the Inquiry

discovered numerous instances where Climbié could have been saved, noted that many of the organisations involved in her care were badly run, and discussed the racial aspects surrounding the case, as many of the participants were black. The subsequent report by Laming made numerous recommendations related to child protection in England. Climbié's death was largely responsible for the formation of the Every Child Matters initiative; the introduction of the Children Act 2004; the creation of the ContactPoint project, a government database designed to hold information on all children in England,, and the creation of the Office of the Children's Commissioner chaired by the Children's Commissioner for England. (**Child Protection Resources. (2015). *A system in continual crisis – what happens when all you do is try to shift the blame?.***)

Bibliography

- 1) Ihasco. (2019). *What is the Children's Act 2004?*. [Website]. Available: <https://www.ihasco.co.uk/blog/entry/2508/what-is-the-childrens-act-2004>. Last accessed 25 July 2020.
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- 3) Dan Batty, The Guardian. (2003). Q&A: Victoria Climbié inquiry. [Website]. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2003/jan/30/1>. Last accessed 22 July 2020.
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