

# Serious Case Review: Siblings W and X

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# Methodology

- SCIE Learning Together Review
- Collaborative approach with review team
- Participative approach with staff through 38 data collection conversations + 3 group analysis / feedback opportunities
- Repeated attempts to involve family
- Repeated attempts to involve Mosques
- 2 meetings offered to members of the community
- Scope: January 2012 – October 2014



# Case Summary

## CONTEXT

- 18 year old W died in Syria in April 2014 and 17 year old X died in October 2014
- Understood to have joined elder brother P who left England in autumn 2013 and in 2014 also understood to be in Syria
- Police learnt over several weeks from their disappearance in late January 2014, that the brothers (and another friend) went to Turkey and then to Syria to join Al-Nusra Front

## OVERALL SUMMARY

- Overall summary of case review is the challenges for professionals in being able to provide effective help and support to children who have suffered trauma in their early childhood



## Family known to local agencies

- W and X part of large sibling group
- Family well known to local agencies because PRIOR to period under review history of:
  - ❖ Family, including children, suffered severe racism
  - ❖ Domestic abuse
  - ❖ Physical and emotional abuse of children: child protection plan until?
- Multitude of services provided at times



# Period under review: 2012-2014

- Educational attendance of 4 youngest decreased
- Anti-social and criminal activities up (4 youngest)
- No concerns about radicalisation or of travelling abroad to fight of these boys, or at the time of other children- except for one Channel Panel referral around anti-American comments of X (Autumn 2013)
- Following discovery boys went to Syria, agencies aware of potential risks to other young people in Brighton & Hove, particularly in the siblings peer group



# Working with High Risk Adolescents

## 4 FINDINGS (1,2,5 & 6)

**Finding 1:** Does the recent expansion of child protection processes to cover adolescents at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation or exploitation into radicalisation, adequately cover other types of adolescent risk of harm, such as that associated with truancy and involvement in anti-social, criminal or risky behaviour?

**Finding 2:** The current child protection processes distinguish between children who are missing in the UK and those who are suspected of being missing abroad; as a consequence the potential positive strategy involved in the formulation of a child protection plan is not provided for those who are suspected of being abroad



## Working with High Risk Adolescents:

**Finding 5:** In working with adolescents there can be a pattern of reactive crisis management as a means of handling the relentless stream of incidents; this minimises the likelihood of reflective thinking and analysis necessary to understand and tackle the root causes of the behaviour

**Finding 6:** The systems of collecting and sharing data about young people who come to police attention, in Brighton & Hove, do not consistently provide all relevant information to practitioners so as to assess, identify and address safeguarding needs?



# Working with Trauma

**Finding 3:** Professionals do not have effective ways to intervene in families who have suffered long standing trauma in the past and whose previous experience of professional intervention was not perceived positively. In such circumstances the chance of mothers or their children feeling able to trust professionals decreases and the risks of young people being vulnerable to exploitation increases





## Working with Minority Ethnic Groups

**Finding 4:** Does the multi-agency safeguarding system have the resources and strategies available to consistently help abused women and children from minority cultural backgrounds, if they fear that co-operating with statutory authorities could lead to the loss of support of their wider family and community?

193 **Finding 7:** Do practitioners have sufficient curiosity, knowledge, and skills to explore the role of culture, identity, religion, beliefs and potential divided loyalties experienced by some children & families?

**Finding 12:** Brighton & Hove statutory agencies have insufficient knowledge about, and understanding of, local minority ethnic and faith community groups and how best to work together to safeguard children, including those at risk of exploitation of local children into radicalisation



# Working with Children Vulnerable to Radicalisation

**Finding 8:** Professional responsibilities arising from the government's counter terrorism strategy are new, not yet fully understood by all relevant staff and subject to ethical dilemmas: this presents challenges in being able to reliably recognise both the risk of radicalisation and the potential links to safeguarding concerns.

194 **Finding 9:** Do practitioners understand and know how young people are radicalised in Brighton & Hove and how to counter the propaganda that influences them into extremist thinking?

**Finding 10:** The lack of a well-established working relationship between counter terrorism police officers and other agencies can lead to an atmosphere of suspicion between professionals of inappropriate confidentiality, which could compromise children's safeguarding.



# Working with Children Vulnerable to Radicalisation

**Finding 11:** Does the timely and constructive response of B&H to the newly identified safeguarding risks to children posed by radicalisation, represent a systems strength?

**Finding 13:** Efforts to help and support children so they are less likely to become vulnerable to exploitation into radicalisation, do not seem to adequately address all the core issues, as perceived by community members



# Safeguarding is Everybody's Business

