



WORCESTERSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

Learning & Improvement Briefing 5 - May 2015

Serious Case Review GW

GW died tragically in December 2012 at the age of three months old following breathing difficulties. Medical examinations revealed head injuries, bleeding in the eyes and some rib and leg fractures, some of which were historic. At the time of GW's death the family had involvement with a number of local agencies.

The father of GW pleaded guilty to manslaughter in 2014 and was sentenced to nine years in custody. GW's mother was found not guilty of cruelty, however there was a hung jury for 'causing or allowing the death' of GW. The Mother was retried for this offence and was found guilty in December 2014. She received a suspended sentence of nine months suspended for 12 months, and a 12 month supervision order. The Overview Report can be accessed ([here](#)) on the WSCB website in the SCR section.

The Review highlighted a number of learning points and recommendations for agencies in respect of:

- improving communication within and across agencies;
- the importance of providing effective, reflective supervision given the complexity of some family situations and to give practitioners and managers confidence to challenge families and each other;
- the importance of engaging all professionals in assessments to include those involved with adults within the family.

A short power point presentation can be accessed via your agency Safeguarding Lead. It is recommended that all agencies use every opportunity to use this presentation to review their practice and ensure that this learning is disseminated widely.

Consider	Why?
Any assessment and plan for support should equally consider both the mother and the father/male partner	Quote: <i>'My need for anger control sessions was the main missed opportunity'</i> (father)
Consider the history of the parents during assessment	In this case the mum had only ever known abusive relationships and this was what she accepted as the norm.
If you suspect domestic abuse in a relationship always ensure that you ask (and keep asking) the potential victim about this in a safe environment when the alleged perpetrator is not present.	Quote: <i>'I was asked on occasion if there was any violence but I always said no'</i>
Where to find further information about domestic abuse	
E learning available here Worcestershire Forum Against Domestic Abuse has a playlist on YouTube. Visit: https://www.youtube.com/user/WFADA/feed	

Handy Checklist on page 2

Learning from the SCR suggests that managers and practitioners need to consider the following:

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Have I discussed my concerns with my safeguarding lead?

Am I following the Inter Agency Procedures

Am I challenging this family as well as being supportive?

Has (is) everyone involved in the assessments?

Am I being over-optimistic about this family's ability to change?

Is there a Chronology?

Am I challenged in supervision?

Child under 12 months? Physical Abuse? Complete a full skeletal survey!

Are all Child Protection Medical Reports reviewed independently by a Consultant peer?

Am I checking back that my messages are being understood?

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