

A GM Adolescent Safeguarding Framework

Reducing and responding to the risk of extra-familial harm
(sexual, physical violence, criminal and emotional)

September 2022



Contents

Development	03	Design and leadership	12	Empowering and engaging	21
Introduction	04	Designing and commissioning services	14	Engaging young people at a strategic level	24
Rationale for the Framework	05	Supporting practitioners	15	Engaging young people in design of services	25
Purpose of the Framework	06	Supporting a shared and co-ordinated approach	16	Engaging young people in delivery of services	26
Principles	07	Evidencing	17	Engaging young people in learning and adapting	27
Developing the underpinning principles	09	Anticipated Framework outcomes	18	Implementation	28
Principles relationships	10	Principles adopted in practice	19	Appendix	30
Principle posters	11	Proposed measures for evidencing impact	20		



Developing a Greater Manchester Adolescents Safeguarding Framework

Introduction

Rationale for the Framework

Purpose of the Framework





Introduction

This Framework was commissioned by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to share information across Greater Manchester about how best to support adolescents, particularly those that are most at risk of, or experiencing, extra-familial harm. This framework has been developed for anyone who works with young people.

This Framework is underpinned by 6 key principles. These principles have been agreed through consultation across Greater Manchester as part of the development of the GM Children and Young People's Plan.

To understand how these principles can manifest in practice, and improve the offer for adolescents we conducted workshops with just under 140 practitioners from all 10 GM Authorities and across all partners (see Appendix A for further details), and conducted interviews with young people to understand their experience of interacting with adolescent services.

Whilst the principles are young-person focussed, we invited practitioners to consider how they can incorporate place-based, contextual and transitional approaches to support adolescents.

For each principle there is a separate practice guide on how it can be incorporated into the way adolescents are protected (these practice guides are contained in a separate document). These practice guides are expected to be dynamic and encourage local flexibility with real-time evaluation of practice happening - they are not a model of how to do things, nor do they prescribe solutions. Rather they provide a more coordinated approach to supporting adolescents.

Delivery for these principles sits at the local level.



Rationale for the Framework

Greater Manchester (GM) has identified the need to improve responses to extra-familial harm and enable young people to thrive.

A number of reviews in Greater Manchester have highlighted that young people experience harm as a result of serious youth violence, gang activity, sexual and criminal exploitation and substance misuse, as well as being victims of crime and being involved in offending behaviour.

The normal child protection procedures and interventions are **not designed to address these forms of harm** and so different approaches to engaging and working with young people and their families and communities are needed.

Local and national evidence highlights the need for:

- A more **strategic, and preventative** approach
- A more **consistent offer** for young people that builds on the best current practice in GM
- A **shared approach** to be used by everyone who comes into contact with young people
- Services and practice to be designed **with young people**

Purpose of the Framework

Each local area has its own mix of services for working with adolescents, including some of the Bright Spots identified through this project.

Development of a strategic approach to practice with young people needs **to be owned and led by each local area**, as well as to connect into the wider GM and national context.

This context includes the youth justice transformation programme, the development of family hubs and whole-family support, place-based community and early help strategies, the emerging SEND Green Paper and the recommendations of the Care Review.

The Practice Framework:

- Provides a foundation for a more consistent approach across the 10 authorities and their partners
- Builds on the Bright Spots across GM
- Supports local areas in developing their own approach to safeguarding young people
- Aligns with the wider GM and national context



Six underpinning principles for the Framework

The six practice principles

Developing the principles

Principles relationships

Posters





The six practice principles

Tailored support recognising adolescents are not a homogenous group

Strengths-based approach where young leaders also develop peer-to-peer actions

Practice which is non-judgmental, trauma-informed and restorative

Key workers will be relational, persistent and consistent for adolescents

Adolescents have agency and decision-making power on the support they would like and when

The role of parents and carers is valued and they are supported to improve young people's wellbeing.

Collectively the six practice principles aim to inform a shared approach for all professionals. Detail on each of these principles is included in accompanying practice guidance.

Developing the underpinning principles

The six principles were developed and agreed by stakeholders across Greater Manchester as part of the development of the **Greater Manchester Children and Young People's Plan**. To understand how these principles are being, or can be, applied in practice, we held **ten multi-agency practitioner workshops** (one per GM locality).

During the workshops we:

- **Collected examples** that demonstrate how this way of working is already in place (these examples of bright spots are in the a separate document), and what might help or hinder their further adoption.
- We also asked localities to consider where they are against these principles. Whilst different agencies and areas scored differently there was **commonality across most of the principles** whilst acknowledging some are more embedded in practice and others are more challenging to adopt.

The principle on **relational workers** is most embedded, whereas the **role of parents** is least well embedded and an area that needs to be considered as part of the wider whole family approach in the development of Family Hubs.

We recommend these principles are adopted across the GM system, whilst noting that there can be tensions and interdependencies across the principles, as detailed overleaf.

Each of the principles are **interconnected**, **interdependent** and can be **in tension** with each other

Interdependencies:

Agency of adolescents underpins all. Adolescents want to feel they have control over the support they receive or they are less likely to engage.

By developing trusted and long-term **relationships** with adolescents, **relational workers** can be **trauma-informed**

Relational workers are more able to develop a **tailored offer** for adolescents and build on their hopes and aspirations



Tensions:

Agency of adolescents includes the right to decide how involved their parents are in their support, but without **parental engagement** support can be limited

Not every service working with young people can be fully **relational** nor fully **tailor** their support, due to statutory requirements.

Local areas should consider all the principles holistically to see how they fit in their own local systems.



Putting the principles into practice

Six posters have been developed which set out how to adopt each of the principles.

1 Tailored support recognising adolescents are not a homogeneous groups

To consider for your practice

- Think of the young person as an individual, not a member of a group. Tailored support is not a one-size-fits-all approach. It is about understanding the individual young person and their needs, and then providing support that is tailored to them.
- Think about how young people develop, and how their needs change over time. Support should be tailored to their current needs, and also to their future needs.
- Consider who the best person to build a relationship with the young person that understands their individual needs and identity issues. This could be a peer supporter, a mentor, or a professional.
- Look out for signs of stress, which you need to respond to in a professional manner, or a lack of engagement and motivation.

To watch out for

- There is a one-size-fits-all approach to support. Young people have different needs and experiences, and support should be tailored to their individual needs.
- Young people are not a homogeneous group. Support should be tailored to their individual needs, and not based on assumptions about their needs.
- Support should be tailored to the individual young person, and not based on assumptions about their needs.

How you know it is making a difference

- Young people are engaged in their support, and are able to articulate their needs and what they need to move forward.
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Where can you find support with this?

- Local OI and peer support
- Advice and support from the voluntary sector, including groups such as the OI and the OI.
- Ask young people about their needs, and what they need to move forward.

2 Strengths-based approach where young leaders also develop peer-to-peer actions

To consider for your practice

- Identify the strengths and skills of young people, and build on these. Support should be tailored to their individual strengths, and not based on assumptions about their needs.
- Support should be tailored to the individual young person, and not based on assumptions about their needs.
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To watch out for

- Supporting young people to identify their strengths and skills, and build on these. Support should be tailored to their individual strengths, and not based on assumptions about their needs.
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6 The role of parents and carers is valued and they are supported to improve young people's wellbeing

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Designing and leading services for adolescents

Introduction

Commissioning services

Supporting practitioners

A shared approach





Designing and leading services for adolescents

Putting the principles into practice is complex and practitioners across GM told us that they need support from decision makers to do it well. This includes having the right systems and processes, the right team structures and support in understanding the difference they make for young people.

Over the next few pages are some things to think about when leading and managing a service that comes into contact with young people anywhere in GM.





Designing and commissioning services

In designing and commissioning services, we encourage decision makers to consider:

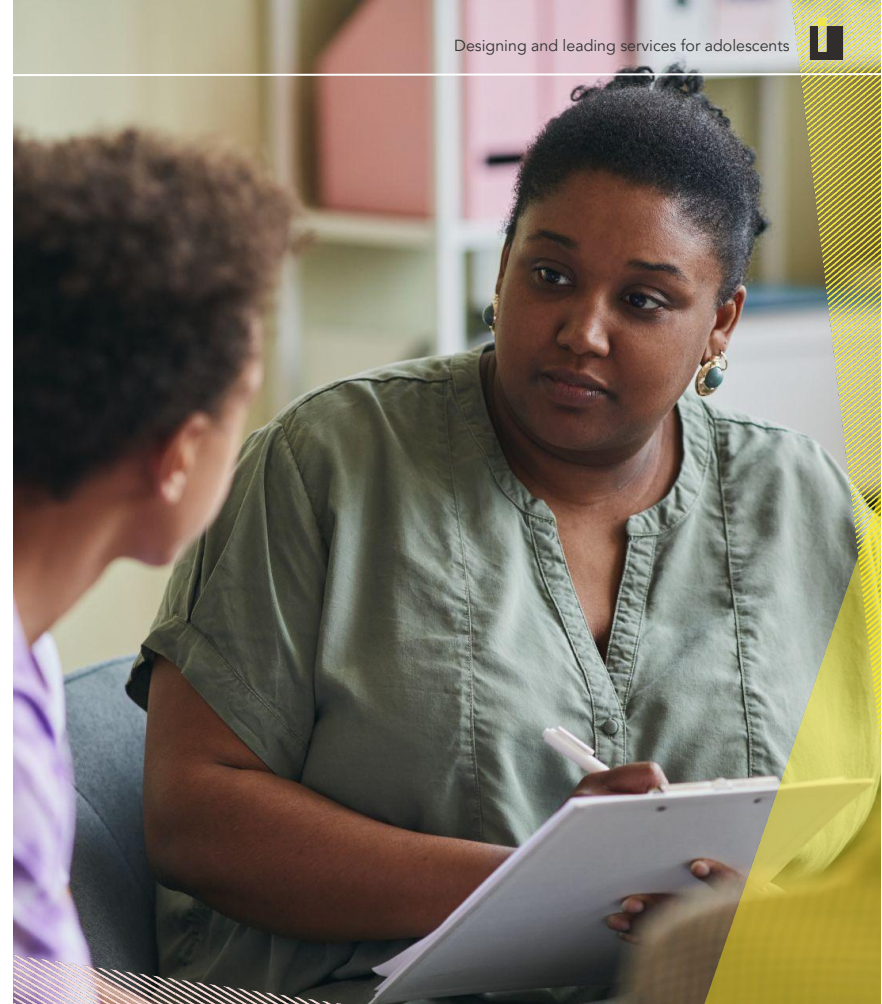
- Co-location with practitioners from **different disciplines** (especially mental health, speech and language)
- **Access to expert advice** on mental health and exploitation
- **Options for positive activities**, community support and suitable care placements
- Tools and processes that promote **reflection and use of trauma-informed and strengths based principles**
- Arrangements for peer-to-peer support for young people and parents



Supporting practitioners

In supporting practitioners, we encourage decision makers to consider:

- **Training** to develop new skills, including coaching
- **Access to peer support** and communities of practice
- Reflective supervision
- Emotional containment for staff, including access to psychological support
- Permission to use **flexible and creative approaches**
- Caseloads reflecting level of **bespoke** support
- **Management support** for risk management approaches
- Process for **continuity of support** out of hours and when staff leave
- Feedback on impact and **quality of experience** for young people



Supporting a shared and co-ordinated approach

In supporting a shared and coordinated approach we encourage decision makers to consider:

- **Shared and consistent** training programmes
- **Purposeful** multi-agency meetings, including for triage, planning and early identification of young people
- **Alignment of contacts**, key workers and support with other services
- Processes for **sharing information and shared IT**
- Formal and informal contact between services to **share learning**
- Shared data and other evidence of **need and impact**
- Co-ordinated approaches to understanding and intervening in **contexts where young people are at risk of harm**





Evidencing the Impact of the Framework

Anticipated Framework Outcomes

Principles adopted in practice

Proposed measures for evidencing impact



Anticipated Framework outcomes

The Framework aims to deliver the following 4 outcomes:

1. A more stable, confident and responsive workforce.

People working with young people will understand the 6 practice principles and how to apply them in their work. They will work in teams and organisations that support them in putting principles into practice. As a result, staff will feel more effective and staff retention will improve.

2. Better outcomes for young people

Young people across GM will experience support in line with the 6 practice principles, consistently and from everyone who works with them.

As a result, they will have better relationships with professionals, carers and peers and opportunities to build on their strengths. This will contribute to young people experiencing less harm in the community and helping young people be more resilient / recover more quickly when they do experience harm.

3. A more cost-effective system

Support for young people will be coordinated across organisations and services who come into contact with them. All organisations and services in GM will apply the 6 practice principles and design services for young people in line with the framework. This will reduce duplication and promote quicker, more joined-up responses to risks to young people, through improved communication and understanding between professionals. This will reduce costs associated with repeat referrals and interventions and costs associated with crisis responses and high-cost care placements.

4. A more equitable and ethical use of resources

A consistent application of the practice and design principles will lead to a shift of resources towards prevention, rather than crisis, and support rather than enforcement and punishment. Monitoring of equalities data at every level will ensure that these shifts address the current disproportionate responses to black and ethnic minority groups identified by research within GM.



Principles adopted in practice

In order to demonstrate the outcomes are being delivered through the Framework, localities will need to evidence the principles have been adopted and are making a difference for adolescents.

Local areas can use a **range of sources** of evidence to understand whether the principles are being put into practice, and whether through the adoption of these principles they are **making a difference for young people and their families**.

Local areas told us how they **triangulate** evidence from different sources and use them to learn and develop their services.

Local areas draw on support from GMCA and share learning across the 10 through shared data analysis and peer reviews.

Building on a **collaborative** approach to evidence collection that the Framework will make a difference for young people, the following slide presents a suggested number of measures that may be adopted to **demonstrate impact**.

This list is not comprehensive and you may have local data, QA activities and participation work that will help you to understand local practice. Consider which of these sources of evidence are available for your service, and how you might develop new sources of evidence to demonstrate the impact the adoption of the Framework is having for young people in your area.





Proposed measures for evidencing impact

Approach and principles	Data	Case audit	Feedback
Coordinated approach across professionals	Attendance at multi-agency meetings (CSC) Take-up of multi-agency training (LSP) Agency participation in Weeks of Action (CS)	Agency contributions to meetings / actions Language used in referrals	Contact with different agencies Experience of support
Tailored and equitable support	Characteristics (ethnicity /gender /disability) of young people known to services (YJ /CS) and of professionals working with young people	Identity and other cultural needs in assessments and in plans	Connection with worker
Strengths-based	Young people accessing diversionary activities (YJ) Young people accessing positive activities (CS)	Strengths and aspirations recorded in case files	Quality of mentors / activities
Non-judgemental and trauma informed	Needs and adverse childhood experiences of young people known to service	Trauma-informed language in case files	Safety of environment Feelings of safety
Relational key worker	Changes in social worker Staff turnover Training in relational approaches	Young person's preferences of where and when to meet, activities are recorded	Quality of relationship with worker
Young people's agency	Young people achieving goals they set themselves	Young person's views and wishes recorded	Involvement in decision-making
Involving parents and carers	Parent training sessions	Parent attendance at meetings and contribution to plan	Feedback from parents



Empowering and engaging young people

At a strategic level

In design

In delivery

In learning and adapting



Taking a strategic approach to participation

Greater Manchester has adopted the Lundy Model of participation, taking a strategic approach to where and how young people express their views, who is listening to them and how those views are acted on (Space, Voice, Audience and Influence).

- SPACE
 - Providing a safe and inclusive space for children to express their views
- VOICE
 - Provide appropriate information and facilitate the expression of children's views
- AUDIENCE
 - Ensuring that children's views are communicated to someone with the responsibility to listen
- INFLUENCE
 - Ensuring that children's views are taken seriously and acted upon, where appropriate

The GM child's voice group provides supports organisations across GM to put the Lundy Model into practice.

Across GM, partnerships are doing one or more of the following. All of these should be part of designing and delivering a new approach to safeguarding young people.

- Dedicated time for young people to engage with leaders at key decision points
- Ring-fenced funding to support co-design processes, including budgets for employing young people and community events
- Access to expertise in supporting participation, including young people with special communication needs
- Embedded pathways for young people to influence decision-making, e.g young inspectors
- A differentiated approach to give young people a choice about how to engage and to consult with as many young people as possible, as well as opportunities for in-depth participation
- Processes for feeding back to young people about the changes made as a result of their input

Mainstreaming participation

Young people should be involved at every stage of developing a new approach to adolescent support.

This includes thinking about participation activities while you are:

- Developing strategy
- Designing services
- Delivering support
- Learning and adapting

This section provides a key provocation and things to consider at each stage.

Strategy

Do you hear perspectives from all young people at a strategic level?

Design

Do you gather insights and design your services with young people?

Delivery

Do you empower young people in the community to help keep their peers safer?

Learning

Do you systematically gather feedback from young people using your services?

Engaging young people at a strategic level

1. Do you hear perspectives from all young people?

- Young people are not a homogeneous group. A single channel for participation risks some missing out. Children in Care councils and Youth Cabinets, the most common channels for young people to participate in decision-making, are not representative of the diversity of lived experiences in the community. Think about how these established groups can be supported to reach a wider and more diverse group of peers.
- Missing from home young people, those living in placements outside of Greater Manchester, those living in custody and UASC and home educated young people are less likely to be routinely consulted. Specific projects might be needed to hear from these groups.
- Involving young people in the recruitment and training of senior decision makers can help them influence strategic priorities from an early stage. Young people can be involved in elected member induction, senior manager recruitment and training for senior staff.
- Not all young people can reach the Town Hall or other civic building. They might be placed out of area, not be able to afford travel, or be limited by their disability. Think about how you can use digital means to involve as many young people as possible in sharing their views.

Engaging young people in the design of services

2. Do you gather insights and design your services with young people?

- Adolescents know their communities and have insight into what type of support they need. Identify key decision points and design processes where young people's insight could be asked for. This might include designing physical spaces or digital communications.
- Young people with experience of extra-familial harm are some of the most difficult to engage in participation activities. Think creatively about how you can tailor opportunities for them, building on their relationship with a key worker, or working with a peer group.
- Designing inclusive and engaging co-design activities for young people requires a range of specialist skills. Think about how you can draw on the expertise across the local system to design and deliver the process, including involving the voluntary sector, youth workers and special educational needs specialists.
- Young people can learn new skills and gain valuable experience from being involved in a good design process. Consider how you can build in skill development and recognition for young people involved in the process.

Engaging young people in the delivery of services

3. Do you empower young people in the community to help keep their peers safer?

- We know young people are more influenced by their peers than by adults, particularly professionals. Providing opportunities for young people to hear from, and be supported by, other young people is a powerful tool that is currently underused.
- Empowering and supporting young people who want to make a difference in their communities builds their capacity to lead now, and into the future. This already happens in GM and can take various forms like peer to peer campaigning (for example, to reduce bullying in school), but also peer to peer support (such as buddying system) or peer to peer research.
- Young people providing support to peers need to be supported too. Think about how young leaders are supported with their emotions, safeguarding, skill development and reflection. Consider how to compensate them for their time and expertise.

Engaging young people in learning and adapting

4. Do you systematically gather feedback from young people using your services?

- Gathering insight from young people after support has ended can provide important insights about impact, and learning for the future. Consider how you can contact young people after the support has been delivered so that they can reflect on what worked for them.
- Feedback conversations are an opportunity for the young person to tell you what worked well; what could have been better, etc. They are not about reviewing the young person's personal plan or their progress. Think about how the conversation should feel different for the young person and how it might feel for you as a practitioner.
- Involve young people in deciding how they can give feedback. Some are more comfortable giving feedback in writing, when others will prefer having a conversation. Similarly, some will prefer anonymity when other will want to talk to someone they have a trusted relationship with.
- Young people benefit from seeing the impact of their feedback. Identify the pathways to change your service as a result of what young people tell you.



Implementing the Framework across Greater Manchester





Implementing the Framework Across Greater Manchester

Whilst this Framework sets out how, through the adoption of the principles, adolescents could be better supported from extra familial risks, it needs to be contextualised within the wider infrastructure that already exists across GM.

There is value gained from working collaboratively across the sub-region to support adolescents.

To implement the Framework there needs to continue to be senior advocacy and oversight by the current GM governance structures. The specific governance for tracking the monitoring of the Framework needs to be agreed.

Recommend the Framework is reviewed annually and bright spots continue to be shared.

GM projects and resources

- Adolescent Delivery Hub Action Plan
- Youth Justice transformation
- Greater Manchester Police
- GM Integrated Care Partnership

Complex Safeguarding Hub

- Impact and Insight Framework
- Peer Review
- WISE assessment project
- Equalities project
- Multi-agency data framework

Violence Reduction Unit

- VRU dashboard
- Advice and guidance for schools

Child's Voice Group

- Participation advice and guidance

Shared challenges across GM

- Peer-to-peer support
- Developing tailored approaches to meet the needs of particular groups (neuro-diversity, ethnicity, gender)
- Adopting the principles across the wider contextual safeguarding system (environmental health, community safety)
- Transitions / support offer for young adults
- Developing support for parents (universal and specialist)
- Developing a whole family approach through the evolution of Family Hubs



Appendix A

List of practitioners involved in developing this Framework



Appendix A

Practitioners involved in developing this Framework

In total 10 workshops have been held across Greater Manchester.

Whilst the representation was slightly different from each locality, the following contributed to the development of this Framework:

Complex Safeguarding teams	Social work locality teams	Children's social workers including MFH, Edge of Care, Residential, Care Leavers	Education - Schools, Alternative Provision and inclusion	Police	Youth Services
Youth Justice	Speech and Language	CAMHS	Environmental health and licencing	Substance misuse services	Voluntary sector
Adult social care	Community safety	Neighbourhood managers	Early help practitioners	Family support workers	Adolescent health services
Commissioning	Quality assurance and performance	Housing	Prevent		