
The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - Joy Johnson



Who is in the MASH?

- 5 Team Managers
- 2 Senior Practitioner
- 9 Social Workers
- 5 Children and Families Workers
- Domestic Abuse Support Officer
- Professional Support



What other agencies make up the MASH?

- Police
- Health
- Education
- Probation



What does the MASH do?

- Triage of all contacts – application of Right Help, Right Time
- Domestic abuse triage
- Advice line – not recorded as contacts
- MASH assessments
- Strategy Discussions
- Information requests and inbox



MASH data

- In 2022, Coventry MASH has received around 2200 contacts relating to children in any given month
- Of these, 17.5% have progressed to referrals to Children's Services (level 4) (11.9% with a completed MASH assessment) and 16% have been diverted for Early Help support (levels 2 and 3)
- 220-280 a month are contacts from the Police as there has been a reported incident of domestic abuse within their family
- In June – September 2022, 13.8% of these were referred to Children's Services (level 4) and 17.1% were referred for Early Help support (levels 2 and 3)
- Domestic abuse is consistently the most recorded presenting issue for all referrals to Coventry MASH, followed by parenting support, emotional abuse, mental health and substance misuse



Advice calls

- Any professional or parent can call MASH for advice about their concerns for a child
- Professionals will be asked whether the family have given consent for contact to be made with Children's Services
- If no consent has been sought, advice will be provided on the scenario given and the name of the child will not be taken
- An advice call could result in the need for immediate action or for advice that a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) should be completed in which case the child's name will be taken
- All advice calls are recorded on a spreadsheet but not as contacts on the Children's Services case management system unless the concern will be progressing for further triage



Consent



Referrals

- If a professional feels that the level 4 threshold has been met, then a referral to MASH should be made on the same day as concerns are identified
- All referrals must be made using the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF)
- Decisions not to make the family aware of the referral and why must be recorded on the MARF
- On receipt of the MARF, MASH will provide a reference number and a copy of the submission
- Once a referral has been made, MASH should make a decision as to how to proceed within 24 hours
- Referrers will receive written feedback on the outcome of their referral if they submit a Multi-Agency Referral Form
- Any disputes should be dealt with using the CSCP Escalation and Resolution of Professional Disagreements policy
- For more information, google 'Top Tips for making a MASH referral' on the CSCP website (www.coventry.gov.uk/cscp) or click the link - (<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/33433/top-tips-for-a-mash-referral>)



Good referrals

- Include names, dates of birth, addresses and contact numbers of all family members
- Have consent or clearly state why it has not been possible to gain consent/would put the child at risk of harm if consent were sought
- Clearly and succinctly state the reason for concern and who it relates to with sufficient detail
- Include views of family members including children and young people if possible
- Include information about support that has already been offered to the family and details of any other professionals involved



What would you do? – 6 Scenarios

- You are a professional who has been called to visit the family for the first time. You are told by a neighbour that the mother uses the window to get in and out of the property.



What would you do?

- You work in a school and a child that you have never previously had concerns for has not returned to school after visiting Africa in the holidays. Parents did email school to say that the child had contracted malaria but now you can't make contact with them.



What would you do?

- You are a teacher and a relative of a 12 year old pupil has told you that the child witnessed their dad assault their mum and grandmother last night. Their mum was said to be badly injured and property was damaged. The child will not say anything.



What would you do?

- You are a Police Officer who has visited a man who has been attacked and you are worried that he is being caught up in crime. He tells you that his children are no longer living in the UK and have returned to their country of origin as they did not settle. You speak with the children on Face Time and confirm that they are now in the care of their grandmother abroad.



What would you do?

- A child tells you that they were hit by their mother with a belt last night. They show you marks to their back.



What would you do?

- You are a professional who made a home visit to a family today and the house smelt of urine.



Thank you, any questions?

