

Book review

Review DOI

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A refreshing change to the information giving approach. A very engaging and fun learning experience which enabled delegates to think through and discuss safeguarding issues.

This a board games in which two to four small teams throw dice and land on a square which directs them to a question either from pack of information questions or a smaller pack of “enabling questions” about what to do next when a concern arises. One team wins by reaching the top of the board first and the competition is accelerated by going up or down ladders. Our trial group consisted of two teams of three people from Norfolk Library Service. This small group enabled all delegates to feel comfortable to contribute and ask questions in a safe learning environment, something they had not felt comfortable to do on previous larger group training. The questions enabled attendees to stop and think and discuss issues in the depth they chose before moving onto the next. Rolling the dice and moving up counters up and down the board produced an element of fun and informality which produced a high level of energy in the room and an enabled openness to consider some challenging topics.

The facilitator was knowledgeable and experienced in safeguarding and was able to validate the group’s contribution, ask further questions and input additional learning which the delegates felt was invaluable. They felt that the learning experience would be less useful if teams asked each other the questions. Some of the questions were repetitive and a facilitator may wish to choose which questions to include in the pack on the day and consider the order the questions to put to group. It may not be appropriate to start with the questions on a topic as sensitive as sexual abuse. There are far fewer “enabling” questions which the group felt they learnt from most. They commented that they need to know what to

do when safeguarding concerns arise in Libraries as well as be able to know the types of harm and the indicators of abuse. The game would benefit from some scenario type questions getting attendees to consider a safeguarding/potential safeguarding situation and how they would approach them. Likewise, the group suggested some variation in the approach would be good such as setting up a debate between the teams. The degree of learning depends on how fast a team wins the game which can mean that many of the questions will not be posed to the group and some topics will not be discussed. Many of the questions ask about the impact of harm on “people” which seemed to mean child or adult, but it would be good to strengthen the distinctions between child and adult abuse and the indicators of harm. There are no questions on the legislation which the group were keen to know about.

This is an innovative way to engage people in learning about safeguarding which would be useful for update or refresher training but not for staff coming to safeguarding for the first time. The session needs to be led by a knowledgeable facilitator who can set up a safe learning environment, including an understanding of confidentiality and recognition that some people in the group may have experienced abuse as a child or adult or know someone in their family who is being harmed. The group involved in the trial enjoyed the element of competition, but some delegates may find the concept of winners and losers in safeguarding uncomfortable.

Norfolk County Council Library Service

Norfolk Library Service has a whole system approach to safeguarding with a committed safeguarding lead, up to date policies and procedures that are well understood by staff. Safeguarding is highly visible to staff

Surrey County Council’s Innovative Approach to Safeguarding Children and Adults Training

and visitors with posters and statements about safeguarding in evidence in all buildings. Staff attend safeguarding adults and children training every three years which is crucial as Libraries in Norfolk are a community resource providing advice support services and group activities to

vulnerable children, families and adults who may be at risk of harm. All participants in the trial of the game were LIBA.

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