

# MARS

## Multi-Agency Resource Service

helping keep children safe

Edition 2, December 2009



### Visit [www.mars.stir.ac.uk](http://www.mars.stir.ac.uk)

Alongside the SCCPN, we launched our website on 1 December 2009. Our online presence will provide information for anyone working in the child protection community in Scotland. Over the next few months the content of the website will change frequently as it evolves. We will be updating the site to keep you informed about the growth of communities of expertise, how to participate in child protection events, and in order to bring you news about current issues.



### Keep informed

Anyone can access the MARS website to find out more about our aims and ongoing work. Our news pages will bring you reports and articles relevant to all professionals working in child protection. You can also visit our events page for information about child protection events across Scotland. We are also interested in publicising events in your area. Please send information about events and training to Scott Reid at [scott.reid@stir.ac.uk](mailto:scott.reid@stir.ac.uk).

### Contacting the MARS

The MARS is a resource to share information and advice for those who work in child protection across Scotland. For specific cases our primary contact will be with agencies rather than individuals and local child protection committees have been asked to identify an individual to act as your MARS contact to simplify communication. Our website's About Us and FAQ pages will provide a good starting point for initial enquiries.

### Developing communities of expertise

The MARS has begun the important process of building communities of expertise across Scotland. These communities will be available to frontline practitioners, middle or senior managers and local policymakers who identify a lack of expertise when addressing a particular issue. Sharing the expertise of others will help to fill these gaps.

### Establishing contact

Initial contact has been made with members of the previous community of practice (shared space) that was set up during the life of the R27 Working Group. All members of the new community of expertise that will provide advice and support to others will be asked to provide evidence of expertise, a reference and the authorisation of their employing organisation. The MARS has also approached HMIE with a view to inviting Associate Assessors and Associate Inspectors to become part of this community of expertise.

### Short life working group

At the last meeting of CPC chairs, lead officers and the Scottish Government it was agreed that the MARS would facilitate a short life working group (SLWG) on significant case reviews (SCRs). This working group will not review the guidance, but is looking at best practice in conducting SCRs in order to produce practical aides and increase capacity for local CPCs in conducting SCRs.

The SLWG will also consult with a range of stakeholders and

make recommendations to Scottish Government. The membership, remit and schedule of meetings will be provided on our website.

### Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)

Child protection issues need to be resolved sensitively and within a framework which clearly sets out the principles of engagement between all parties. If you require assistance that involves a third party, the MARS will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with your organisation.

The MOU is not intended to be a legally binding document but a set of principles or agreement between all parties about what will be delivered. The first section of the MOU sets out the general principles and objectives of mutual understanding and the second section, if required, includes the terms of reference for individual projects or cases and will be developed in partnership with the organisation requesting the service.

### New MARS team member

In October we were delighted to welcome Scott Reid to the MARS team as our business manager. You can contact Scott on our main office number **01786 466320** or by email at [scott.reid@stir.ac.uk](mailto:scott.reid@stir.ac.uk).



### National Child Protection Committee coordinator

This new post will be based within the MARS and we will be recruiting in early 2010.

MARS, Department of Applied Social Science, Room 4S16, Colin Bell Building, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA [www.mars.stir.ac.uk](http://www.mars.stir.ac.uk) 01786 466320

# SCIPN Scottish Child Care and Protection Network

Connecting research and practice Edition 2, December 2009

## Visit [sccpn.stir.ac.uk](http://sccpn.stir.ac.uk)!

In December 2009, we launched our website. Currently containing background information about the SCCPN, it will frequently be updated to include information on new developments and projects. In future, we will include publications produced via the SCCPN.



### Search our index of studies

A key component of the SCCPN website is a searchable index of studies. The index draws together information on research and evaluation studies undertaken in Scotland. It can be searched by topic, year of publication or first author. We hope it will assist researchers, policy makers and practitioners to become aware of existing research evidence directly relevant to the Scottish policy and practice content.

### Share information

On the linked SCCPN and MARS websites you will find listings of news, events and connections (existing organisations and initiatives) of interest to the child care and protection community in Scotland. The website is a resource that can be used to share information of interest to others working in child care and protection research, policy and practice. Contact us with any suggestions.

## Learning from Child Deaths and Serious Abuse

Whilst there is a wealth of information on child deaths and significant abuse cases in England and Wales, there is far less published information available in Scotland. This new publication by Sharon Vincent from the University of Edinburgh/ NSPCC Centre for UK-wide Learning in Child Protection addresses this gap. It extracts the key themes from high profile cases in Scotland and considers what we can learn from such cases. A useful resource for anyone working with, or training to work with, children and young people and their families. Visit [www.dunedinacademicpress.co.uk](http://www.dunedinacademicpress.co.uk) to order a copy.



## Noticing and Helping the Neglected Child

A team of researchers, including Brigid Daniel (DASS), Julie Taylor (University of Dundee) and Jane Scott (MARS) have recently undertaken a review of research on child neglect as part of the Safeguarding Children Initiative. Their findings focus on how children and their families signal their need for help, how practitioners are equipped to recognise and respond to neglect, and if responses could be swifter. Visit our website's news section to read a briefing on their findings.

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[www.sccpn.stir.ac.uk](http://www.sccpn.stir.ac.uk)

## Join the network

If you want to keep up to date with our activities, join the network mailing list. Send your email contact details to [sccpn@stir.ac.uk](mailto:sccpn@stir.ac.uk)

## Spotlight on recently published studies

A Stafford, S Vincent, C Smith and M Grimes (2009) **Evaluation of the Scottish Government Children's Services Women's Aid Fund**. Full report available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/09/29160758/13>

A Stafford and C Smith (2009) **Practical guidance on consulting, conducting research and working in participative ways with children and young people**

**experiencing domestic abuse**. Full report available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/09/16093124/0>



B Stradling, M MacNeil and H Berry (2009) **Changing professional practice and culture to get it right for every child. An evaluation of the early development phases of Getting it right for every child in Highland: 2006-2009**.

Full and summary report available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/20094407/0>

York Consulting LLP (2009) **Evaluation of the child protection national line. Edinburgh: Scottish Government**. Full report available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/24142249/0>

## Effective responses study

SCCPN have appointed Research Fellow, Sandy Cabrita Gulyurllu, to take forward the development of a funding proposal for a longitudinal study exploring the most effective responses to children in need of care and protection.

