

British Transport Police and Railway Children

TIDieR

NAME? Safeguarding on Transport

Why? BTP identified that some children were coming to their attention repeatedly despite being referred to services within their Local Authority. Railway Children wanted to work with these vulnerable children and use their strong relationships within the industry to support this. Both parties felt there may be need that was not being identified and that there was a need for awareness-raising as well as intervention.

Main aim?

To make young people safer by:

- intervening with children who are repeatedly putting themselves at risk and coming to BTP attention
- improving the identification of and support to vulnerable children generally

Who with?

Children aged 10-17 who are referred by BTP as they have been identified as vulnerable (CYP1 form submitted by an officer) and live in an area where Railway Children has a project.

Information was sent out to over 500 young people last year. Not all need or choose to engage with the service.

A project worker's caseload is around 10. If young people only need short-term support this can be completed quickly. There are 2 project workers per project. Long-term cases can include family work. Numbers reached depends on the balance between short-term and long-term support.

What?

Initial contact is made and a visit organised where possible. At the visit, workers assess need and agree with the young person and/or caregiver whether they want ongoing support. The focus in early sessions is relationship-building. When trust has been established, the young person and worker will agree some goals and review progress at approx 8 weekly intervals. Currently this is done using the Teen Star. Parents are supported to address any issues they may have (for example, poor mental health) and to improve family communication and functioning.

Who by?

Initial referrals come from BTP officers who have received training on vulnerability. The Vulnerability Unit in BTP, comprising trained staff, add additional relevant information from PNC, PND and Social Care, make a risk assessment based on research conducted and decide where to send referrals. The project response is led by staff in the voluntary sector with youth work or social care backgrounds and extensive experience of working with vulnerable young people.

How?

Referrals are received electronically. Response to the young person is usually initially by phone, or by letter if contact numbers aren't given or there is no response. Support work and family work generally takes place face-to-face on a one-to-one basis. There is no groupwork currently.

MATERIALS?

Materials used depend on the young person's needs, so there is not a set programme that is followed.

Where?

Support work takes place at the family home, or at school, or in public spaces like cafes and parks, subject to a satisfactory level of privacy being possible.

When and how much?

Short-term support work may comprise only one or two visits. Long-term support work and family work will usually be weekly, tapering to fortnightly if the young person and/or parent is making good progress. There is no set time limit and there is considerable variation in the duration of support. The longest case to date was around 18 months, though this length is not typical. An average is 6-9 months..

Tailoring?

The support work is always strengths-based and young person led, centring on issues that the young person identifies as wanting to change and building their resilience so that change is sustainable when support ends. The young people can decide where meetings are held etc, which gives them some control and ownership of the intervention. Although there are guiding principles about the way Railway Children work, there is no set programme.

Monitoring?

Railway Children use a case management system called Lamplight, where work records, profile information, outputs and outcomes are documented.

Regular liaison takes place with nominated staff at the BTP Vulnerability Unit. This is usually focused on young people who are repeatedly coming to BTP attention and presenting themselves as a risk on the rail network.