

# CREATING A CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM THAT IS EFFECTIVE FOR DEAF AND DISABLED CHILDREN

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*'CREATING KNOWLEDGE AND CHANGE WITH A PUBLIC PURPOSE'*

“Without dialogue we stand still, without communication we are overlooked”

**With sincere thanks**

The hard work and knowledge sharing of the NSPCC, Bradford Talking Media (BTM), the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) and the National Working Group of Disabled Children (NWGDC) has made this presentation possible

# CREATING A CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM THAT IS EFFECTIVE FOR DEAF AND DISABLED CHILDREN

Deaf and disabled children are at increased risk of abuse yet barriers exist at all stages of the child protection system.

Risk factors and barriers need to be addressed to ensure deaf and disabled children are afforded an equal level of protection and in order to meet statutory requirements.

Safeguarding policy and guidance requires effective practice and implementation.

This includes a multi agency commitment at all levels and a commitment to the resources and training for practitioners to enable them to undertake their duties effectively.

Communication is fundamental along with a different approach to ensure the child's needs and circumstances are understood and acted upon.

Every deaf and every disabled child has a right to be safe. Effective practice in safeguarding deaf and disabled children can inform safeguarding practice for other children.

A child protection system that is effective for deaf and disabled children is one that should be effective for all children.



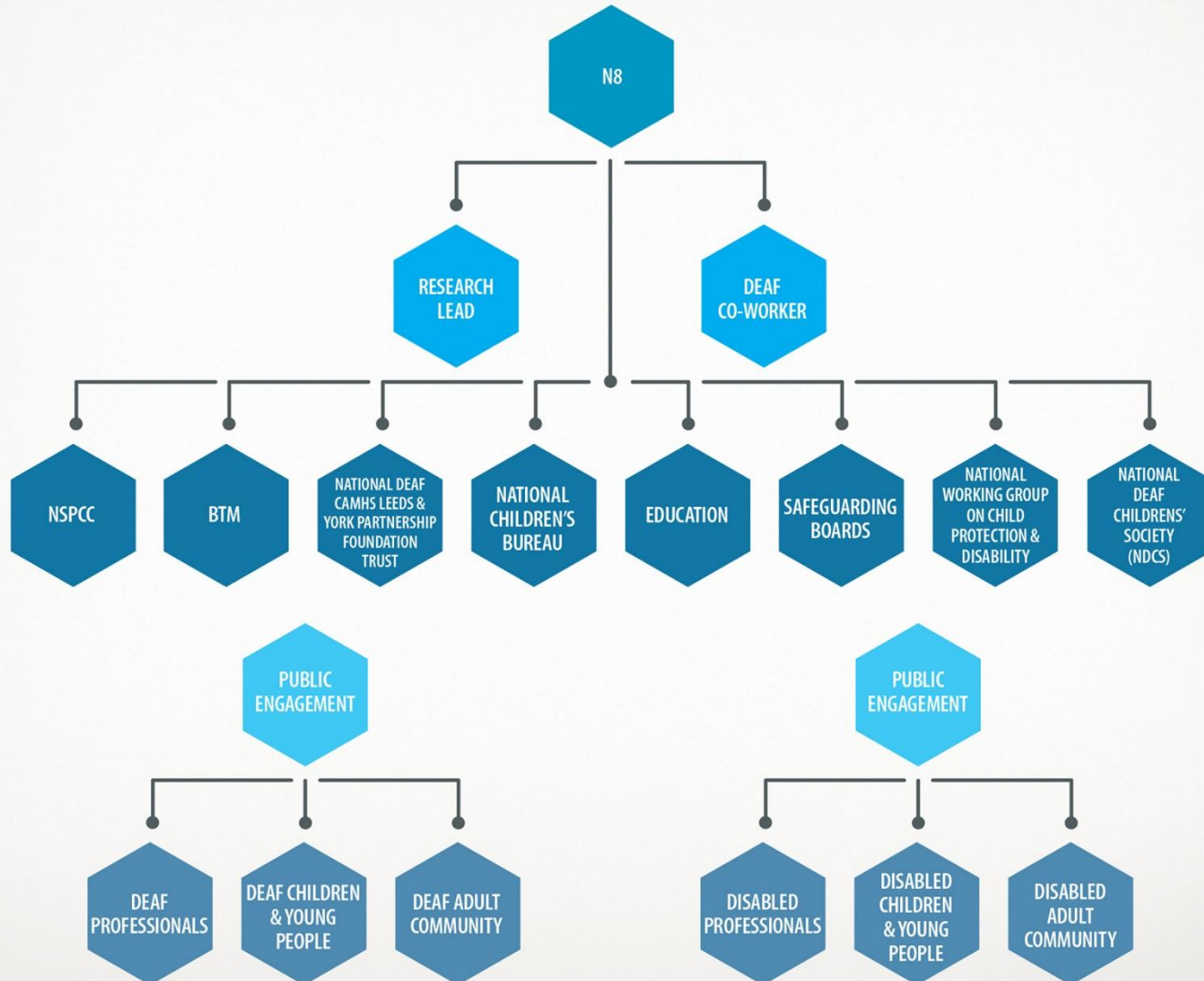
# CREATING A CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM THAT IS EFFECTIVE FOR DEAF AND DISABLED CHILDREN

Sullivan and Knutson, 2000 found that disabled children were 3.4 times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children.

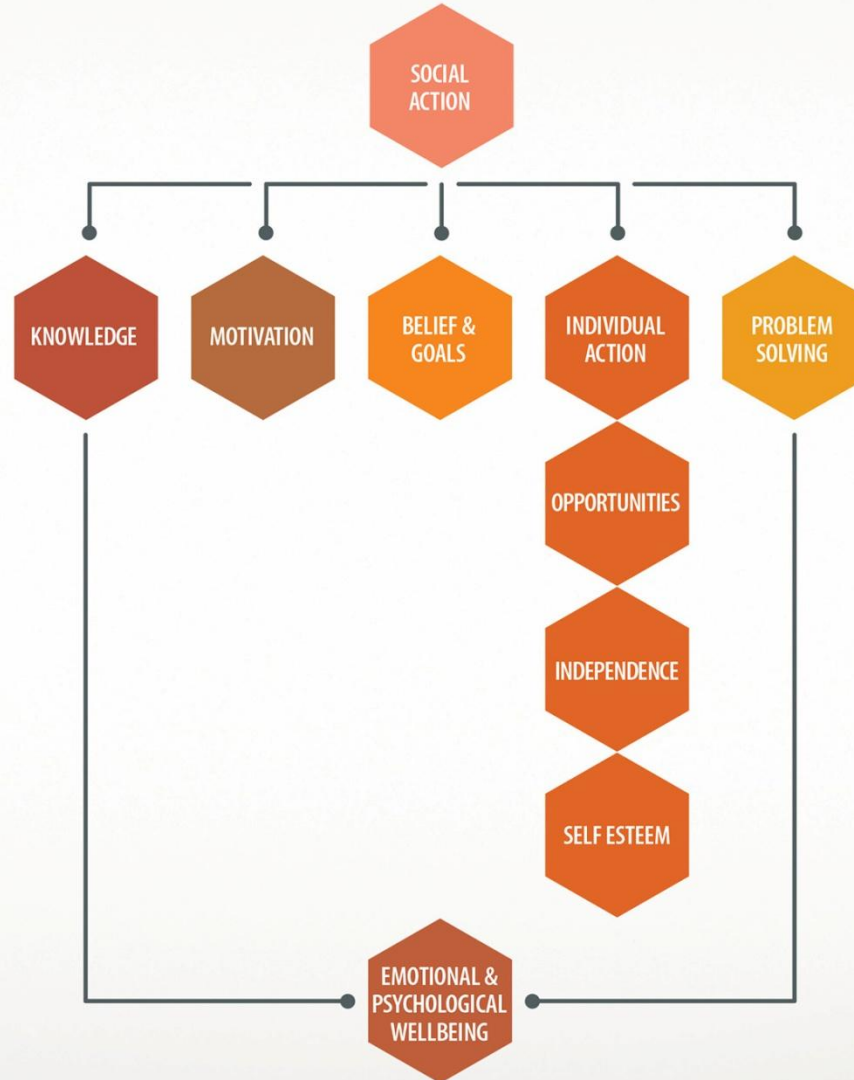
International research consistently shows that deaf and disabled children are three times more likely to experience abuse.



# PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE



# POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE INDIVIDUAL





# PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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# THE WAY FORWARD

Address both risk factors in relation to abuse of deaf and disabled children and young people and barriers that exist within the safeguarding process.

## 1. ADDRESS RISK FACTORS

- Teach Deaf and disabled children and young people personal safety skills.
- Empower and enable them to seek help should they need to do so.

## 2. EMPOWERMENT

- Access to help should then be available in ways that suit the child's and young person's level of understanding and means of communication.
- This should be achieved in consultation with deaf and disabled children and young people.
- Look at new ways of children and young people communicating their feelings.

## 3. COMMUNICATION

- Be aware of deaf and disabled children and young person's experience and perspective
- Professionals need to recognise and respond to the deaf or disabled child's safeguarding needs.

## 4. SAFEGUARDING NEEDS

- Encourage and facilitate and multi-disciplinary teams to create an effective model for service delivery.
- Evaluate outcomes and create knowledge exchange platforms.

## 5. MULTI AGENCY WORKING



# SUMMARY



• Establish the current 'effectiveness' of the existing child protection system in addressing abuse of deaf and disabled children

• Potential to create a National Strategy for Safeguarding deaf and Disabled Children

**1. NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE**

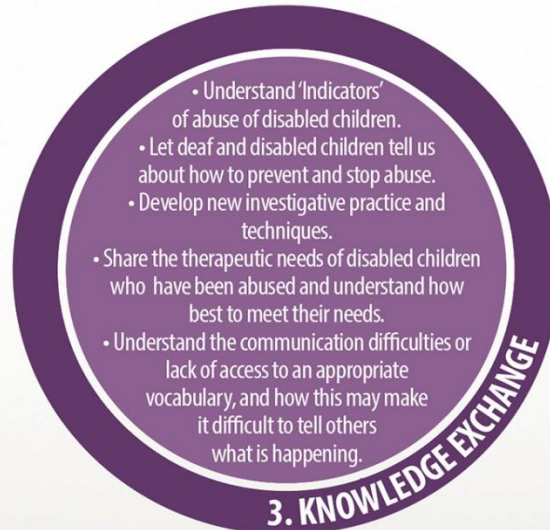


• Drive change in policies, procedures and resources to address the barriers that get in the way of using civil and criminal proceedings to address allegations of abuse of disabled children.

• Develop comprehensive and multi-agency assessments and planning which protects the child's welfare and identifies early indications of possible abuse.

• Ensure that professionals are equipped to promote the safeguarding of disabled children and to respond effectively to specific child protection concerns.

**2. STRATEGIC POTENTIAL**



• Understand 'Indicators' of abuse of disabled children.

• Let deaf and disabled children tell us about how to prevent and stop abuse.

• Develop new investigative practice and techniques.

• Share the therapeutic needs of disabled children who have been abused and understand how best to meet their needs.

• Understand the communication difficulties or lack of access to an appropriate vocabulary, and how this may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

**3. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**

**Thank you for listening**

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