



Learning Lessons Briefing 'Amari'

The Review

Background Summary:

Amari and his siblings were involved in a serious incident that resulted in significant safeguarding concerns. During the incident, one of the children's carers was subjected to a violent attack while the other carer and the children were present. Following the incident, the children were placed under police protection and subsequently accommodated by the local authority. This was not the first occasion on which the children had been exposed to serious violence involving a carer.

Learning:

- Agencies did not consider the cumulative impact of multiple incidents when applying thresholds for intervention; incidents were often viewed in isolation.
- Professionals were sometimes over-optimistic due to the carers professional background, education, and articulate presentation.
- There was a lack of a professional curiosity and the Think Family approach across agencies – risks associated with the carers criminality and its impact on the family were not consistently considered and therefore not identified.
- Communication between professionals and agencies was not always robust, leading to missed opportunities to share information that could have changed risk assessments or intervention thresholds.
- There was a lack of the child's voice throughout interventions and assessments, this was a missed opportunity for earlier intervention and understanding of the cumulative harm experienced.

Recommendations:

- Agencies should adopt a holistic approach when assessing incidents, considering the cumulative impact of multiple incidents rather than viewing them in isolation. This will ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the risks and needs involved.
- Agencies should consistently apply the Think Family approach, ensuring that risks are recognised and acted on, regardless of the background of the family, i.e. occupational bias.

- Improve communication channels between professionals and agencies to ensure robust information sharing.
- Agencies to ensure that the voice of the child is sought, heard and acted upon – taking into consideration non-verbal communication e.g. behaviour, attitude and relationships.

How can you make a difference?

Key messages from the learning to ask yourself for your practice are: -

- *Can I make changes to improve my own practice?*
- *Do I need to seek further support, training, or supervision?*