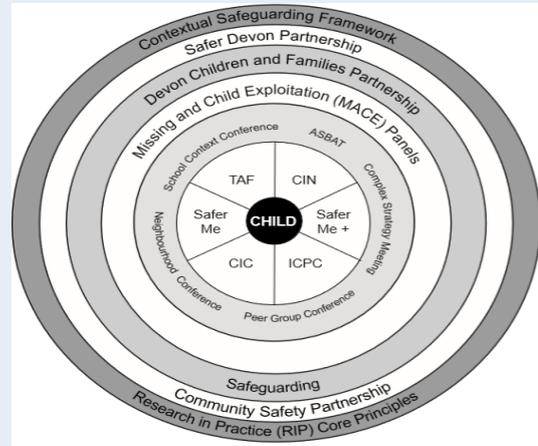


# Adolescent Safety Framework: One Minute Guide

## What is Contextual Safeguarding?

A child welfare approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of harm outside their families, within their communities; recognising they are vulnerable to abuse in a range of different social contexts (Neighbourhoods, schools, peer groups). Such as:

- Child Sexual exploitation
- Peer-on-Peer exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Modern Slavery & Trafficking
- Missing young people
- Radicalisation
- Gang Activity
- Online exploitation



The aim of the ASF is to provide a co-ordinated mechanism for professionals to effectively assess, plan and intervene through the lens of child welfare, in relation to contextual exploitation, by engaging a range of community partners to keep children safe within the spaces and places they live.

## How does the ASF aim to increase Safety for Children and Young People who experience harm outside the family?

The Adolescent Safety Framework (ASF) is a strength based multi-agency safeguarding approach to managing risk which is primarily found **outside** of the home, supporting young people aged 11-18 years (up to 25 years for Care Leavers) and their families to increase safety. The approach is focused on our collective capacity as professionals and communities, and not just the family, to keep young people safe from exploitation and harm.

A single and holistic approach to referral and assessment (via the **Safer Me Assessment**) of individual children, peer groups, neighbourhoods, locations or persons of concern. Assessment focuses on where the risk comes from and considers adolescent development, impact of trauma and collective responsibility to protect. Assessment analyses contextual risks outside of the family as well as identifying strengths to maximise the **participation of the young person, their families and social networks**. Practitioners complete relevant sections of the Safer Me Assessment appropriate to the pathway and/ or context they are concerned about and that they consider to have the widest impact on degree of safety.

The **Exploitation Hub** provides coordination through the MASH which will ensure timely individual safeguarding, threshold stability, analysis and support. This also enables different **contexts** (people, situations and locations) as well as individual children to be referred into Children's Social Care, with the same consideration to threshold.

The ASF uses existing safeguarding frameworks and thresholds within Early Help and Childrens Social Care to ensure safety planning via an **Individual Pathway**. It provides an alternative approach within TAF, CIN and CIC meetings (termed Safer Me meeting), and Child Protection conferences (termed Safer Me Plus Conferences) to focus on extra-familial harm. The meetings adopt a collaborative and strengths-based relational approach.

Intervention is targeted at a wider level on the context where the abuse has occurred. Creating, and increasing, safety in the places and spaces where young people spend their time through partnerships with the wider community and agencies. This is achieved through planning via the **Context Pathway** in Peer Group, Neighbourhood (Location) and School Context Conferences. Adult Persons of Concern will continue to be discussed via the MACE. These forums are not designed to focus on individual planning but intervening to increase the safety for young people by focusing on locations, environments, activity, groups and persons of concern

### **What do I do if I have concerns about an individual child or young person where the risks are external to the home?**

Individual assessment, planning and intervention will still take place for children and young people, but alongside responding to the needs within the family, there will be increased focus on risks and influence for that young person outside of their family. The **Safer Me Assessment** will be a key document in terms of understanding the broader picture of contextual risk. Where the risks to the young person are predominantly external, the home and parents/carers are doing everything they can to protect their child, a **safer me approach** will be taken.

- Safer Me TAF reflects an Early help approach to responding to need where the harm is identified as outside the family home.
- Safer Me Child In Need reflects a Child in Need Approach to responding to need where the harm is identified as outside the family home.
- Safer Me Child in Care Meetings are a response where the harm is identified as outside the placement home, for a Child in the care of the Local Authority.
- Safer Me Plus reflects a Child Protection Conference approach to responding to significant harm where the harm is identified as outside the family home.

The processes and procedures that underpin these different levels of response will largely remain the same. The difference will be the focus of the discussion to shift to the issues external to the home. That is not to say difficulties within the family should not be considered as there will be an interplay between the two that needs to be understood.

### **What do I do if I have concerns about a location/ peer group & the risks are external to the home?**

If your concern is about a location or peer group, you would refer the relevant context into MASH using the relevant section of the Safer Me Assessment. This will then be triaged by the Exploitation Hub and a decision will be made as to whether it needs to proceed to a context conference. The conferences are strategic and operational meetings to co-ordinate a response to enhance the safety of the school, neighbourhood or peer group from the exploitation issue.

In relation to **Persons of concern**, unless there is a clear need for a strategy meeting, persons of concern and disruption regarding these individuals, please complete the relevant section in the Safer Me Assessment and email to MACE at [childsc.missingchildexploitation-mailbox@devon.gov.uk](mailto:childsc.missingchildexploitation-mailbox@devon.gov.uk)

If you hold a Safer Me Meeting or any form of Context Conference can you notify the Safer Me Mailbox so that activity can be collated - [childsc.saferme-mailbox@devon.gov.uk](mailto:childsc.saferme-mailbox@devon.gov.uk) Consultation advice can be provide via the **exploitation hub within the MASH**

## **Key Contacts, Resources and Links**

**MASH- Exploitation Hub:** Telephone ☎ 0345 155 1071 E-mail ✉ [mashsecure@devon.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gov.uk)

Referral form 📄 [SAFER ME ASSESSMENT](#) via the DCFP website or Eclipse for Children/ Young People already open to Childrens social care

**Early Help and MASH Consultation:** ☎ 0345 155 1071 Police (non-emergency): ☎101 If you feel a child is in immediate danger please contact **999**

**For the Safer Me Assessment please go to:** <https://www.dcfp.org.uk/training-and-resources/policies-and-procedures/adolescent-safety-framework-safer-me/> Resources include: Safer Me Assessment Guidance, Meeting Agenda's & Guidance's, Participation resources, Leaflets for Families, Intervention resources.

**For more information about Contextual Safeguarding please go to:** <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

If you are completing the Safer Me Assessment for the purpose of a MACE submission, please complete the relevant section and email the Safer Me Assessment to [childsc.missingchildexploitation-mailbox@devon.gov.uk](mailto:childsc.missingchildexploitation-mailbox@devon.gov.uk) and refer to the MACE guidance on the DCFP website.