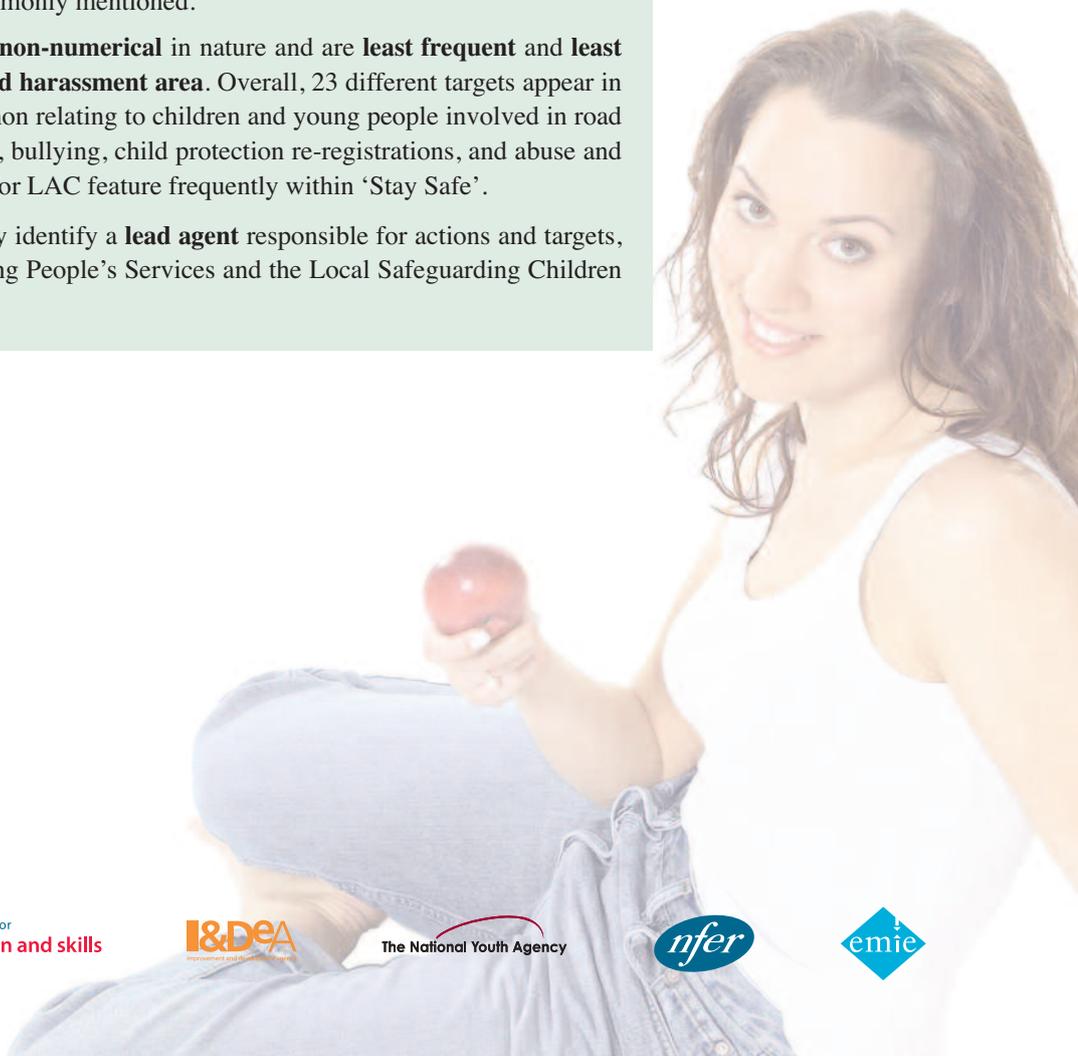# Every Child Matters: Stay Safe

This paper is one of a series of 12 that presents the findings from NFER's analysis of Children and Young People's Plans (CYPPs) from a representative sample of 75 Local Authorities.[1] It sets out how 'Stay Safe' features in this sample of plans and includes illustrative examples. Areas covered are:

- Priorities
- Actions
- Key Groups
- Targets
- Lead Agencies.

Summary of findings

- **Priorities** for 'Stay Safe' include four main areas: maltreatment, neglect and abuse; safer local communities; Looked-After Children (LAC) and bullying and harassment. Coverage of the sub-areas that make up each priority area varies.

- Most frequently cited **actions** include: the development of cross-agency working/partnerships, and the development of strategies, initiatives, services and policies.

- LAC are the most frequently mentioned **key group** as part of 'Stay Safe'. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD) and black and minority ethnic (BME) groups are also commonly mentioned.

- **Targets** are predominantly **non-numerical** in nature and are **least frequent** and **least specific for the bullying and harassment area**. Overall, 23 different targets appear in 'Stay Safe', the most common relating to children and young people involved in road traffic accidents and deaths, bullying, child protection re-registrations, and abuse and neglect. A range of targets for LAC feature frequently within 'Stay Safe'.

- Over half of plans explicitly identify a **lead agent** responsible for actions and targets, chiefly Children's and Young People's Services and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Local Government Association

department for education and skills

I&DeA

The National Youth Agency

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'Stay Safe' priorities in the CYPPs

This analysis shows that, across the CYPPs, priorities found under 'Stay Safe' can be grouped into four main areas (see Figure 1) representing an adaptation of the ECM aims for 'Stay Safe'. Reference to the four priorities varies across plans, as does the coverage of the sub-areas that make up each priority.

Figure 1 Coverage of 'Stay Safe' priority areas
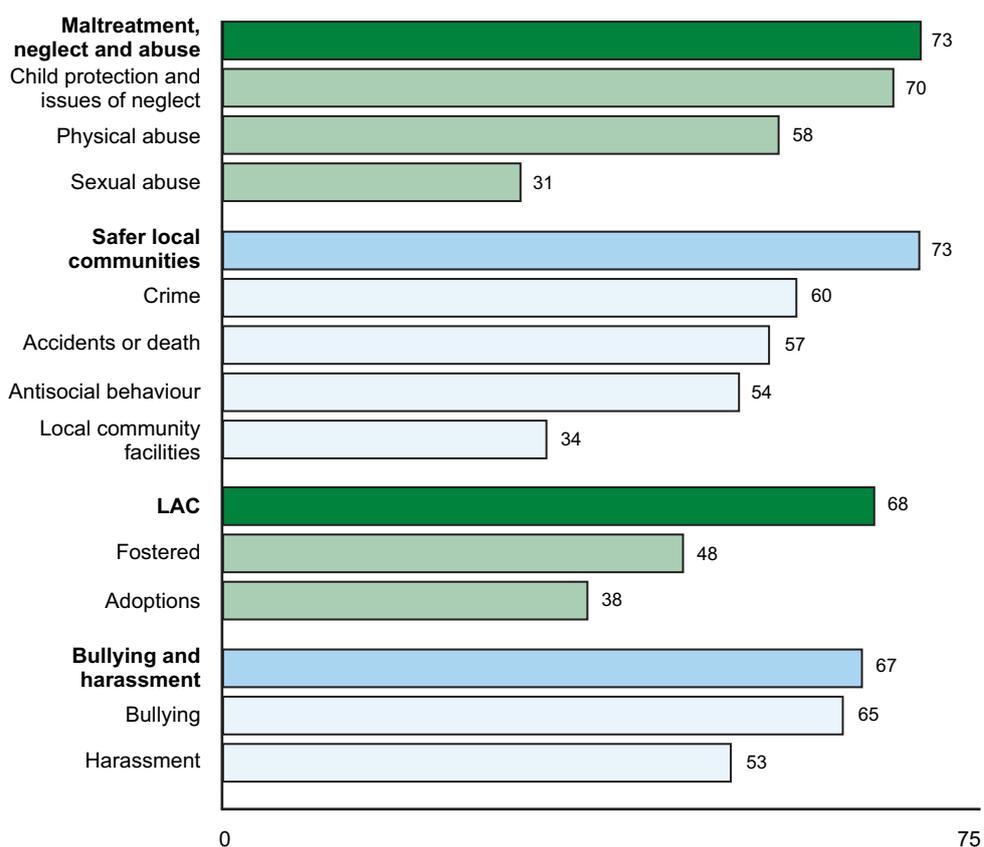
As shown above:

- within **maltreatment**, **neglect** and **abuse**, issues related to child protection and neglect are most commonly cited, whereas less than half the plans contain references to sexual abuse

- within **safer local communities**, issues related to negative behaviours, including crime, accidents and deaths and antisocial behaviour, are most frequently cited across CYPPs, whereas references to local community facilities are covered in less than half of plans analysed

- within **bullying and harassment**, bullying is the main focus of reference within plans, whilst harassment receives less coverage and emphasis

- within **LAC**, general references to those in care and fostered are most common, whereas issues related to adoption are much less apparent.

Actions

The 75 plans analysed specify a variety of actions in relation to the 'Stay Safe' arena. These actions range from those that are focused upon strategies, policies, services and initiatives to those directed at particular groups such as professionals, children and young people or parents and carers.

Table 1   Ten most commonly cited actions in 'Stay Safe'

Action	Example
Increase collaborative and cross-agency working	*'Develop, implement, monitor and evaluate a multi-agency Anti-Bullying Strategy (to include a single City-wide monitoring system), which addresses all forms of bullying including homophobic and racist bullying.'* (Unitary LA)
Develop and/or implement strategies, initiatives or services	*'Implement the Prevention strategy – specifically the introduction of integrated children's locality hubs, Sure Start children's centres and extended services in and around schools supported by the Common Assessment Framework.'* (Unitary LA)
Develop and/or implement policies, procedures and systems	*'Developing of contracts and placement agreements for use with independent fostering providers or residential provision.'* (Unitary LA)
Awareness raising and promotion of issues and/or strategies and initiatives	*'Raising schools' awareness of strategies to combat racist bullying and harassment by offering training for headteachers/managers and young people.'* (County LA)
Education and training for professionals	*'Training midwives, health visitors and Connexions staff to provide Level 1 sexual health services to teenage parents and in domestic violence screening.'* (Unitary LA)
Establish baseline and/or monitoring and evaluation	*'Establishing baseline, specific target setting and developing strategies relating to multi-agency work with identified responsibilities for contributing to the reduction in accidental injury and death from April 2006, led by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.'* (County LA)
Maintaining, extending and /or improving support to children and young people	*'To identify those young people involved with, or at risk of, being involved with crime and to provide diversionary and support programmes which will prevent the onset of offending and stop repeat offending.'* (London borough)
Planning, reviewing, mapping and/or auditing	*'Completing the Children with Disabilities Review and draw up timed action plan by May 2006.'* (County LA)
Development, piloting and/or implementation of a Common Assessment Framework	*'We will develop systems to ensure that a Common Assessment Framework is implemented by September 2006.'* (London borough)
Recruitment and employment practices	*'Ensure all agencies working with children and young people adopt safe recruitment practices.'* (Unitary LA)

The two least commonly referenced actions are:

- activities to improve and/or support the transition to adult services, for example, 'improve transition arrangements from children's social care to adult social care services' (Metropolitan LA)

- maintaining/extending/improving support to foster carers and/or adoption parents, for example, 'increasing the range of and level of support to foster carers, including extending the out of hours support service and respite services' (Unitary LA).

Other actions cited within 'Stay Safe' include:

For children and young people

- Education/training/skill development for children and young people.

  'Delivering cycling proficiency training to all primary school children.' (Unitary LA)

- Work with, and the involvement of, children and young people

'We will ensure that a robust framework and associated standards are in place to enable the voice of children and young people to influence their care and safety.' (Metropolitan LA)

For parents, carers and families

• Education and/or training for parents and carers.

'We will establish a parenting programme for the parents of young children who commit, or are at risk of committing crime and anti-social behaviour.' (London borough)

• Maintaining/extending/improving support to foster carers and/or adoption parents.

'Increasing the range of and level of support to foster carers, including extending the out of hours support service and respite services.' (Unitary LA)

• Maintaining/extending/improving support to families, parents and carers.

'Improving the level of support that parents receive to keep children safe and secure.' (London borough)

For schools

• Maintaining/extending/improving support to schools.

'Supporting schools in updating anti-bullying policies and developing zero tolerance through a range of activities.' (Unitary LA)

• Education/curriculum developments.

'Route in domestic violence education programme in more schools.' (London borough)

• Education and/or training for schools.

'Offering training for headteachers /senior managers in relation to anti-bullying strategies.' (Metropolitan LA)

Resources and ICT

• Information systems (ICT).

'Introduce a web-based integrated service directory of children's services.' (Unitary LA)

• Resources – road safety; refuge centres/accommodation; community facilities/provision.

'Implementing safer routes to school schemes.' (Unitary LA)

'Building the capacity of homeless households to sustain future tenancies.' (County LA)

'Work with safer and stronger communities, the Play Partnership and Arts, Heritage and Leisure department to provide more safer play areas.' (Metropolitan LA)

Level of detail of actions

The level of detail of actions presented varies across CYPPs, for example, between plans that detail actions in the form of low-level statements, characterised by a basic outline of proposed intentions, and those that provide high-level action statements, which often provide information related to what they are proposing, explicit operational details, an attached timescale and a lead agency responsible for the action.

Examples of **low-level statements** include: 'establishing systems for identifying children missing from education and care' (Unitary LA) or 'publish leaflets and… establish safeguarding promotional activity…' (Unitary LA).

High-level action statements include: 'Implementing the Workforce Development Strategy in relation to foster care with 80 per cent of approved carers completing mandatory training courses by 31st March 2009' (County LA) and 'Using Children's Fund programme to enhance preventative work on bullying for 5–13 year olds in 30 schools by 2008' (County LA).

Amongst the actions cited, some appear mainly, or even almost uniquely, within a priority area. Examples include:

- **for maltreatment, neglect and abuse** – the provision of education and/or training for professionals

  'We will ensure that the children and young people's workforce, including volunteers and carers, are adequately trained to identify and respond to safeguarding worries.' (Unitary LA)

- **for safer local communities** – the education, training or skill development of children and young people themselves

  'Prevent accidents by raising awareness of road safety by: providing teachers with relevant training and materials to equip them to teach Road Safety; ensuring that all primary schools have Junior Road Safety Officers to provide peer-to-peer Education; and promoting the 'Keep Ya Wheelz' young drivers course to all sixth forms, colleges and workplaces.' (County LA)

- **for bullying and harassment** – the establishment of baseline information or the development of monitoring and evaluation systems.

  'Baseline identified of fixed term and permanent exclusions which are related to bullying, examining recent historic data, and key schools for support work prioritised.' (London borough)

Key groups

The CYPPs analysed make reference to 34 different key groups of children and young people when presenting priorities, actions and targets. Across all the five ECM outcome areas, as shown in Figure 2, the three most commonly mentioned key groups are, in order of frequency: LAC, children with CLDD and BME.

Examples of actions for the most frequently and specifically mentioned key groups in relation to 'Stay Safe' are presented in Table 2.

Figure 2 Key groups of children and young people

LAC	68
CLDD	45
BME	29

0   75
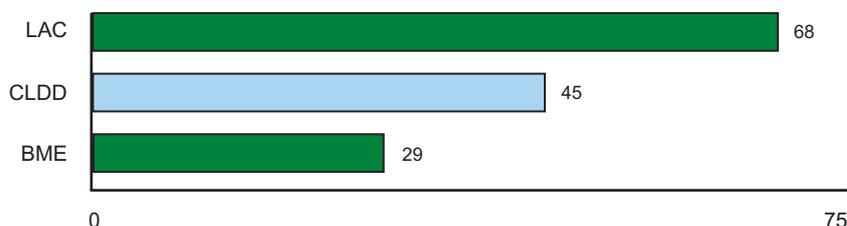
Table 2   Most commonly cited key groups in CYPPs in relation to 'Stay Safe'

Key group	Example of actions cited
Looked after children (LAC)	*'Develop and deliver a LAC involvement strategy.'* (London borough)
Children with learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD)	*'Increase capacity of staff to recognise signs of abuse in disabled children and intervene appropriately.'* (London borough)
Black and minority ethnic groups (BME)	*'Promote the use of racist incidents reporting systems to tackle racially motivated harassment.'* (Metropolitan LA)
Vulnerable groups/children and those in need	*'Ensure vulnerable young people have access to a Connexions PA.'* (Metropolitan LA)
Homeless/missing/runaways	*'Ensure access to safe accommodation for young people aged 16–18 who are homeless.'* (Unitary LA)
Young offenders/those at risk of offending	*'Provide diversionary and support programmes which will prevent the onset of offending and stop repeat offending.'* (Unitary LA)
Gay/lesbian/those at risk of homophobia	*'Improve the reporting and recording of bullying, racial and homophobic incidents and discriminatory behaviour against children and young people…'* (Metropolitan LA)
Children of parents with issues (e.g. mental health/substance abuse/prison)	*'Improve training and information for staff working with substance abusing parents.'* (Unitary LA)
Substance misusers (e.g. drugs, alcohol)	*'Commission early intervention/prevention and targeted services for substance misuse and domestic abuse.'* (Unitary LA)
Those subject to/at risk of domestic violence/abuse	*'Develop a programme of work to bring together the work of voluntary and statutory agencies to increase support to children who have witnessed or experienced domestic violence.'* (London borough)

Other key groups mentioned in 'Stay Safe', although to a much lesser extent, include young carers, young people from faith communities, refugees and asylum seekers, key stage 1 pupils, children and young people in deprived areas, young people from Traveller/mobile or migrant populations, and children and young people on the Child Protection Register.

Targets

The analysis shows that, where mentioned across the CYPPs, targets for measuring progress in 'Stay Safe' are:

- **mostly non-numerical** in nature, as characterised by statements referring to 'improvements' or 'reductions' but without any quantification given or baselines and projected figures set down, e.g. 'We will reduce the number of children and young people killed or seriously

injured on our roads' (County LA). Where numerical targets are specified, they include statements with a percentage or figure attached and those that set a baseline, and feature chiefly in relation to safer local communities and maltreatment, neglect and abuse. For example, 'Reduce the number of children and young people given care placements with non relatives by 22 per cent' (Unitary LA) and 'develop a domestic violence education pack and promote to schools and youth clubs. Baseline – education programme is under development. Target for 2006/07 – 60 per cent of schools achieved' (Metropolitan LA).

- **least frequent and least specific for the bullying and harassment area**, reflecting again that the collection of baseline data relating to bullying and harassment is a common action for this priority and thus specific 'measurement' data is yet to be established.

Overall, 23 different targets appear within 'Stay Safe':

- The **most common** of these relate to children and young people involved in road traffic accidents and deaths; bullying; child protection register (CPR) re-registrations; and abuse and neglect (where a range of measures include decreasing incidences of domestic violence, increasing the number of domestic violence incidences reported, and 'increasing the number of domestic champions' (County LA) are cited). However, these all feature in between one-quarter and just under a half of the plans – i.e. targets within Stay Safe are not quite as common across plans as those within other ECM outcomes, such as 'Be healthy' and 'Enjoy and achieve'.

- Targets relating to **victims of crime** and **fear of anti-social behaviour** each appear in 'Stay Safe' in around a quarter of the plans. These particularly include targets around children and young people as victims of crime, e.g. 'the proportion of children and young people subject to offences against them' (County LA), and their reports of feeling safe: 'Proportion of young people who report feeling safe or very safe in X (Resident Attitude Survey, 2007)' (London borough).

- A range of targets for **LAC** feature frequently within 'Stay Safe', with almost half the plans referring to the stability of placements, more than a third to adoptions, and just over a fifth to distance placed from home and the specific participation of LAC in reviews and conferences.

- Targets for **other key groups** within Stay Safe include those for BME (six plans, for example, focus on the percentage of children from BME on the CPR compared with the local population). For CLDD, in five plans, for example, the 'ratio of disabled children on CPR compared with the local population' (London borough), as well as 'short term breaks for disabled children are increased by 2009' (Unitary LA).

Lead agencies

Overall, just over half of the CYPPs explicitly identify a lead agent responsible for specified actions and, although this identification is common across all three 'Stay Safe' arenas, it is most frequent in relation to safer local communities, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 'Stay Safe' priority areas where lead agent responsibilities are specified

Priority area	Value
Safer local communities	40
Maltreatment, neglect or abuse	39
Bullying and harassment	32
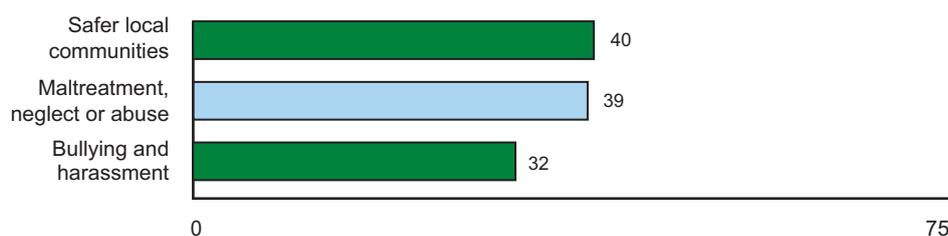
Plans specify a range of lead agencies in relation to 'Stay Safe'. The lead agencies most commonly mentioned in relation to 'Stay Safe' are shown below in order of frequency:

• Children and Young People's Service/Children's Trust

• Local Safeguarding Children Board

• Police

• Community Safety Partnership/Safer Partnership

• Youth Offending Service

• Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

• Social Services

• Education

• Health

• Road and Safety Partnership.

Specific lead agencies are referenced in relation to each priority area: education (sic) in relation to bullying and harassment; the Police and Community Safety Partnerships for safer local communities and social services (sic) in relation to maltreatment, neglect and abuse and also LAC.

Other lead agencies specified within 'Stay Safe' but to a lesser degree include: the Youth Service, voluntary agencies, Learning and Skills Council, Housing, education business partnerships, and Connexions.

Notes

1 When interpreting these findings from analysis of 75 plans, it is necessary to bear in mind that LAs had freedom to draft their CYPPs in order to meet their needs and circumstances best. Therefore, there would be no imperative for every plan to include all the pieces of information and detail discussed in the findings in this paper.

The full series of papers are available from www.nfer.ac.uk/emie: