

4 December 2008

Dear Lord Laming

Lord Laming Review of Safeguarding Practice



Following the tragic death of Baby P, the *Community Sector Partnership for Children and Young People* (CSPCYP) welcomes this opportunity to endorse the response and recommendations submitted by the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) to your review of safeguarding practice.

The CSPCYP is a strategic partnership that brings together seven key national organisationsⁱ that aim to influence the children and young people's policy and practice agendas, both nationally and through its members locally, in order to ensure that community sector organisations are able to play their full role in the local planning and delivery of services for children and young people.

Safeguarding is a critically important issue for this partnership as our members provide services, support and local spaces for children, young people, families and adults. As such, voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations can and do play an important role in the intervention and prevention of neglect and abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Both independently, as national umbrella organisations, and through the CSPCYP, we are committed to contributing to the Every Child Matters agenda, improving outcomes for children and young people, and multi-agency working. Much progress has been made since the publication of the Victoria Climbié report. However, the recent Audit Commission report - '*Are we there yet?*'ⁱⁱ – found that although almost all Children's Trusts had voluntary sector representation, these representatives felt the least valued and understood. Given the importance of improving outcomes for children and young people whilst safeguarding them in *all* contexts, we strongly support and endorse the recommendations made by NCVYS. In particular, we endorse the recommendation that more needs to be done to build the capacity of VCS organisations to fully engage in safeguarding, especially with regards to partnerships, training and information sharing.

The safeguarding of children and young people is central to the wellbeing of families and to the strength of communities as a whole. The CSPCYP are working together to ensure that local VCS organisations are informed, trained, supported and equipped to be fully engaged in safeguarding policies and practices. Should you wish to discuss this with us in any more detail, please do not hesitate to be in touch as we would be keen to assist in your review and any subsequent policies and practices that are put in place to safeguard and improve outcomes.

Yours Sincerely,

David Tyler, Chief Executive, Community Matters and Chair, Community Sector Partnership for Children and Young People

12-20 Baron Street, London N1 9LL t 020 7837 7887 f 020 7278 9253
e info@communitymatters.org.uk w www.communitymatters.org.uk

ⁱ The members of the CSPCYP are:

- *Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)* is active in promoting the interests of rural communities. It also acts as the national umbrella organisation for 38 Rural Community Councils throughout England
- *British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres (bassac)* is the national network of multi-purpose community based organisations, dedicated to tackling the causes and effects of poverty, exclusion and discrimination.
- *Community Matters* is the National Federation of Community Organisations with over 1,200 member organisations across the UK. We play a key role in promoting and supporting action by ordinary people in response to social, educational and recreational needs in their neighbourhoods and communities.
- *National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)* is the national voice for local voluntary and community sector infrastructure in England. Their 360 members work with 140,000 local community groups and voluntary organisations which provide services, regenerate neighbourhoods, increase volunteering and tackle discrimination
- *National Council for Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NCVCCO)* is the umbrella body for Children's charities in England; working with central, regional and local government to strengthen relationships and cross sector working for the benefit of children, young people and families
- *National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS)* is the only national independent voice of the voluntary youths sector in England; working to inform and influence public policy., support members, and raise the profile of the voluntary and community sector's work with young people.
- *Rural Youth Network (RYN)* is a national network of voluntary, community and statutory organisations which aim to make a difference on the issues that affect young people and those who work with them in rural areas through a framework of support, learning and exchange of good practice.

ⁱⁱ The Audit Commission report – '*Are we there yet? Improving governance and resource management in children's trusts*', published, 29 October 2008; available online: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=&ProdID=17AEBDA5-657E-4ef7-80BB-92214D4C04FF>