



## CASE SCENARIO - BILLY

### Notification criteria

Road accident (serious injury).

### Age

6 years

### Theme

Neglect, lack of care and supervision, parental substance misuse.

### Case Scenario

Billy was involved in a road traffic collision, and the Police and Ambulance services attended the incident. He had suffered a significant head injury and the ambulance crew needed to support his breathing at the scene of the accident.

Billy also suffered a fracture to his left leg and was admitted to paediatric intensive care. He required surgery and medical treatment for the injuries he had sustained.

He was known to Children's Social Care and an urgent strategy meeting was held.

In the meeting, the social worker reported that Billy's mother, Maureen, had a long history of substance misuse, and that there were three children within the family. All children were on a Child Protection Plan (CPP) after the birth of the youngest sibling. As part of the CPP, Maureen was referred to the substance misuse services to help her meet the health needs of the youngest child. Children's Social Care had difficulty completing an assessment and actioning a risk management plan. Professionals were unable to persuade Maureen to access services to

address her longstanding drug problem.

The Police had previously responded to two incidents when Billy, and other children, were found on the busy dual carriageway unsupervised. The Police returned the children home and gave Maureen advice about safety and supervision. A referral was made to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on both occasions, but it was assessed as not meeting the threshold for statutory intervention.

Following the second incident, the Early Help team initiated an early help assessment which focused on Billy's behaviour, concerns for the safety of the children, parenting capability, and the family's finances.

Maureen approached school around the same time, because she was concerned about Billy's behaviour at home. She said he was not listening to her, playing away from the house, and getting into fights. The school allocated a Parent Support Advisor (PSA) to give practical advice on good parenting, for example, how to set clear boundaries for behaviour. The PSA also provided Billy's mother with a 'golden book' so she could record positive comments about Billy. This was to help reinforce good behaviour and encourage adherence to the newly established boundaries. However, the book was never completed.

Prior to the last incident, the Family Practitioner had found Billy with two younger children 'wandering' unsupervised. The family was no longer open to the Early Help team due to Maureen withdrawing consent. Billy was returned home and the worker spoke with Maureen and advised her that she would make a MASH referral, which she did the same day.

When it was assessed that the referral did not meet the threshold for statutory intervention, it was passed to the Early Help officer in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) who supported the school to organise a Road Safety Officer to work with Billy either on a 1:1 basis or in a group at school. It was also suggested that the school forge links between the Police, Road Safety Officer and Maureen.

Billy's behaviour both at home and school continued to deteriorate. He had poor focus in class and started to arrive at school tired and with dark circles under his eyes. Prior to the road accident, he had been observed to be unsupervised on the dual carriageway and was seen in the company of three older boys.