### Website content

**Learning from Reviews across Southend, Essex and Thurrock**

The Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Boards have noticed a common theme appearing in multiple reviews (Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews) across both the children and adult sectors, and that is the concept of ‘Think Family’.

**Think Family**

Think Family means securing better outcomes for adults, children and families by coordinating the support and delivery of services from all organisations When an individual first has contact with any service they should receive a welcome into a system of joined-up support and safeguarding together with coordination between adult and children's services.

In order to achieve this, services working with both adults and children should take into account family circumstances and responsibilities. Families do not exist in isolation, they are part of a wider network and Think Family aims to promote the importance of a whole-family approach, ensuring practitioners work in partnership and collaboration with families recognising and promoting resilience and helping them to build their capabilities.

The [Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) website](https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide30/introduction/thinkchild.asp?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIod3MpYqV8wIVB-vtCh0SdA9xEAAYASAAEgI-FfD_BwE) talks in more detail about the concept of Think Family.

**The Family Network**

Families can be complex and could mean many things to different people, for example it could be blood relatives, it could be community, cultural or religious groups or it could be friends. It’s about learning who is involved in an individual’s everyday life and working out the links between the different people, using genograms for example, bearing in mind there may be influential people in the family circle who don’t visit regularly (if they live abroad for example).

**Cross-generational issues**

Evidence from reviews continue to highlight cross generational issues, including where family relationships and dynamics have been factors. For example:

* Families where dementia has changed the family dynamics and family members are struggling to cope
* Aging parents unable to continue to care for their vulnerable adult children
* Parents trying to support their adult children with significant addiction issues or mental health issues
* A domestic abuse victim who attempts to end an abusive relationship, resulting in custody disputes over children. Children can also be victims of domestic abuse.
* Stalking behaviours from an ex -partner and consideration of the potential for multiple and secondary victims.

**Best practice**

* Have an identified lead professional who co-ordinates the agencies involved especially where there are complex needs
* Ensure carers are offered appropriate support including recognition that the carer may be caring for multiple family members
* Early help may occur at any point in a person’s life and should include interventions for emerging issues to support people to achieve the best outcomes for them
* Work together, share information and have a mutual respect
* Have open and honest communication with the person you are working with and listen to the family

**Think Family Resources**

To help practitioners better understand the concept of Think Family we have created a suite of resources which can be used individually or in team meetings/development sessions toenhance the work you do and the outcomes for the people you work with.

**Podcast:** The Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards across Essex, Southend and Thurrock, alongside the SET Domestic Abuse Board are pleased to launch their first joint [podcast](https://escb.podbean.com/e/set-think-family/?token=d12555593958f6c38e20dc0c4de9df89) - a real multi-agency approach with seven boards represented, featuring:

* Alison Gilmour, Head of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Partnership
* Cheryl Gerrard, Associate Designated Nurse Safeguarding (Mid Essex) Safeguarding Team
* Louise McSpadden, Safeguarding Service Manager for Essex County Council
* Ruth Murdock, Strategic Lead - Quality Assurance in Thurrock Children’s Services

The [podcast](https://escb.podbean.com/e/set-think-family/?token=d12555593958f6c38e20dc0c4de9df89) covers the concept of Think Family, what reviews have taught us and what good practice looks like.

[Podcast transcript.](https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2661/set-think-family-podcast-transcript.pdf)

[**Think Family video**](https://youtu.be/6PBNlGZB_Mk)

**Partner websites**

Safeguarding information can be found on all Board websites as follows:

[www.escb.co.uk](http://www.escb.co.uk)

[www.thurrocklscp.org.uk](https://www.thurrocklscp.org.uk/)

[www.safeguardingsouthend.co.uk](http://www.safeguardingsouthend.co.uk/)

[www.setdab.org](http://www.setdab.org)

<https://www.essexsab.org.uk/>

<https://www.thurrocksab.org.uk/>

