

# Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood (SUDiC) Information for Professionals



## What is a CDOP review and why is it needed?

Government legislation (*Chapter 5, Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015*) requires that a review of all deaths of children who resided in the Merseyside area takes place with a view to learning lessons and trying to prevent future deaths of a similar nature. This is achieved through the CDOP multi-agency review process.

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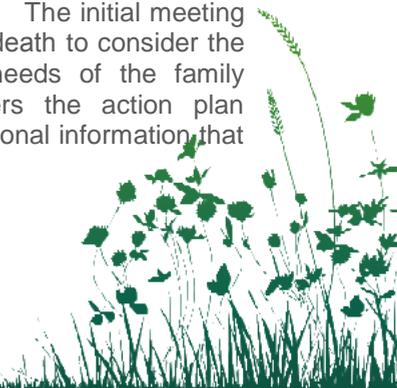
## Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood (SUDiC)

If the death is sudden and unexpected there is an additional process that has to occur prior to the Child Death Overview Panel review, which is a rapid response arrangement, as established within the Merseyside SUDiC Protocol. It is a multi-agency process and defines what each agency should do in the event of a sudden death of a child.

The definition of sudden (unexpected) death is: *‘A death that was not anticipated as a significant possibility 24 hours before, or where there has been a seemingly unexpected collapse, leading to or precipitating the events that led to death.’*

Following a sudden death key agencies, Police, Hospital, Social Care and Education (if the child is of school age) will usually hold a strategy discussion within 24 hours of the child’s death to plan for investigation. This could include a criminal and/or child protection investigation and considers if there are any safeguarding issues for surviving children. This may include, for example, peers within school or nursery as well as family members and friends.

There follows multi-agency strategy meetings, an initial and review meeting (sometimes known as a SUDiC meeting) to share information relating to the child, circumstances of death, details relating to family members and any other information that is relevant. The initial meeting should be held within 3 working days of the child’s death to consider the circumstances and the well-being and support needs of the family members. The review strategy meeting considers the action plan developed at the initial meeting as well as any additional information that may be available.



## How can you contribute?

If you are invited to attend a SUDiC strategy meeting, it is to enable you to provide information that your agency holds on this child or their family. This could include the sharing of historical information.

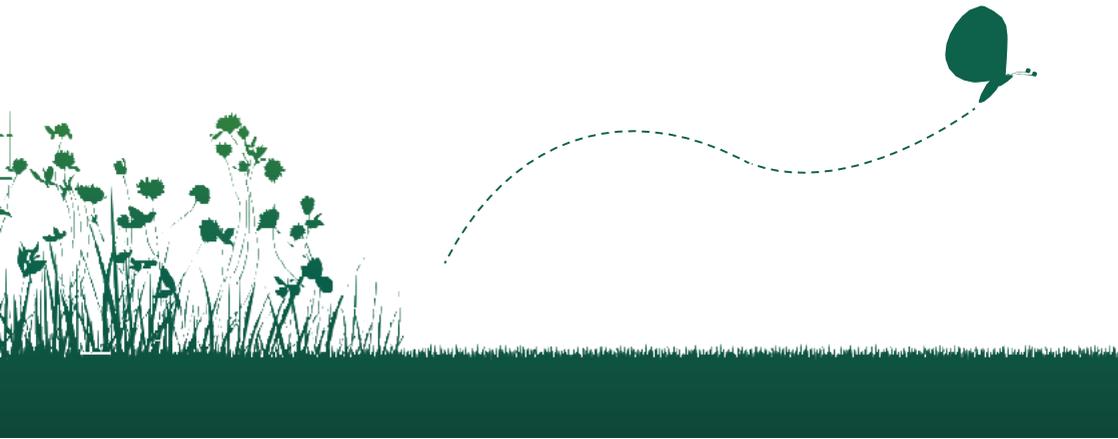
The primary aim of this meeting is to determine the scope of the investigation, whether any other processes need to be invoked (e.g. Serious Case Review, Critical Incident Review) and to address the needs of all involved, including staff members.

Within the strategy meeting a nominated person will be identified to liaise with the family and inform them of the process.

There will follow a review strategy meeting to consider the progress of any action plan determined and participation in this meeting is equally essential. It is important to stress that any information provided is strictly confidential and should not be shared without the permission of the Chair.

Given the nature of some deaths the details shared could be distressing. Staff should seek support through the arrangements within their own agency if applicable. Should staff have difficulty listening to the medical information in situations where a child's death has been traumatic they can excuse themselves from the meeting for the time period this is being shared. In these circumstances they should advise the Chair of the meeting.

Support resources for anyone affected by the death of a child are available and the details are provided overleaf.



## Useful resources

### **Alder Centre** **0151 252 5391**

Support for anyone affected by the death of a child of any age (pre-birth to adult). Offers counselling, support groups, befriending, and provides holistic therapies, remembrance book and therapeutic breaks

### **Child Death Helpline** **0800 282 986**

[www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk](http://www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk)  
National freephone – a helpline for anyone affected by the death of a child. Calls are answered by bereaved parents.  
Mon – Fri 10.00 – 13.00  
Tues and Weds 13.00 – 16.00  
Every evening 19.00 – 20.00

### **Liverpool Bereavement Service** **0151 708 6706**

[www.liverpoolbereavement.co.uk](http://www.liverpoolbereavement.co.uk)  
Liverpool Bereavement Service has been supporting people experiencing loss and bereavement since 1998 and has developed a free, sensitive and effective service and is available to all to access.  
Included within it is a resource specifically for children:  
**Oakleaf** provide bereavement support and counselling to children and young people aged 4 to 18 years of age, to help them cope with their loss and to promote the health and well-being of each individual.  
**0151 236 3932**

### **Child Bereavement Charity** **01494 446 648**

[www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk)  
Support, information and training to all those affected when a child dies, or when a child is bereaved.

### **Winston's Wish (Support for bereaved children) 0845 203 0405**

[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk)  
Helpline open Mon – Fri 09.00 – 17.00  
Provides support and guidance to bereaved children, their families and professionals.

## LSCB Websites



Knowsley Safeguarding Children Board



**Knowsley:** [www.knowsleyscb.org.uk](http://www.knowsleyscb.org.uk)

**Liverpool:** [www.liverpoolscb.org](http://www.liverpoolscb.org)

**Sefton:** [www.seftonlscb.co.uk](http://www.seftonlscb.co.uk)

**St Helens:** [www.sthelenslscb.org.uk](http://www.sthelenslscb.org.uk)

**Wirral:** [www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk](http://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk)

