

THE Herald
THE VOICE OF PLYMOUTH



Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer spoke candidly at a special seminar which aimed to help other police forces, councils and local safeguarding children boards in England and Wales see Operation Encompass rolled out.

The seminar, organised by the creators of the scheme, former police sergeant David Carney-Haworth and his wife, Torpoint Nursery And Infant School headteacher Elisabeth, played host to representatives from numerous police forces and organisations, including Dorset Police, Kent Police, Surrey Police, Metropolitan Police and Thames Valley Police as well as South West Ambulance Service, Hampshire children services and the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.

Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer spoke passionately and openly about his experiences of domestic abuse as a child and his aim to see Operation Encompass put in place in Devon and Cornwall.....

The scheme quickly garnered praise from a number of chief constables, the city's MPs and councillors, government ministers, Plymouth City Council's director of children's services as well as experts in the field of domestic violence and child psychology.

Chief Constable Sawyer accepted his own force had not taken up the scheme as positively as other forces, such as Merseyside, Cleveland and Cheshire, admitting it was "inexcusable".

He told the guests at the seminar, held in Exeter, the scheme was "genius", but revealed IT problems with the force's replacement computer system had made introducing the scheme problematic.

He admitted that while it may take more than a year to overcome the IT issues, he would endeavour to see the scheme finally brought back home to Devon and Cornwall.

Describing the scheme as "fantastic" and "beautiful", Zoe Billingham, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary's lead on domestic abuse, said she hoped police officers at the seminar debated with themselves about whether to introduce the scheme in their force area "for a nanosecond".

She said: "It's an absolute no-brainer. Why wouldn't you support it. I don't think I've ever come across a scheme so simple and have so profound an effect on a child."

She added that a forthcoming series of HMIC inspections regarding all England and Wales police force's response to domestic abuse would see them specifically asked whether they had introduced Operation Encompass or an equivalent and "if not, why not?"

Sian Hawkins, of Women's Aid said her organisation was "absolutely delighted" to be partnering Operation Encompass and was proud to lend its considerable experience and skill to assisting forces, councils and schools roll out the scheme in their areas.

During a question and answer session, a representative from Cornwall's primary headteachers' association queried why Devon and Cornwall Police had previously said it was "committed" to Operation Encompass, but he had seen "no evidence of it".

In response, Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer assured the headteacher that despite facing hugely difficult IT hurdles he would see the scheme introduced, adding: "We will not fail a second time."



Operation Encompass

In every force, in every school, for every child

Patrons

Dame Esther Rantzen



Dame Vera Baird QC, PCC



Operation Encompass is an official partner with Women's Aid



Operation Encompass is the reporting to schools before 9am on a school day when a child or young person has been involved or exposed to a domestic abuse incident the previous evening.

The information is given to a school's Key Adult to enable support to be given dependent on the needs and wishes of the child.

Witnessing domestic abuse is as harmful to a child as being directly on the receiving end of the less serious variety of physical violence since there is no emotional refuge for a child who has one care giver a threat and the other frightened' (Building Great Britons page 8 2015)

Professionals realise that being exposed to domestic abuse is classed as an adverse childhood experience and that the more adverse childhood experiences a child has impacts negatively upon their mental health and well-being





In April 2016 Operation Encompass was fully validated by the Centre for Excellence in Outcomes for children and young people (C4EO) and classified as 'Effective Practice'

The European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC) cites Operation Encompass. EPIC is used to collect and disseminate innovative and evidence-based practices that have a positive impact on children and families in EU Member States.



Operation Encompass is cited on the Children's Commissioners website under the heading; 'It's time to recognise the effect domestic violence has on child witnesses – and to protect them from harm'

Prof David Gadd, Professor of Criminology, Manchester University said " such a cleverly simple intervention that inverts the common assumption that the solution is to get information to the police, rather than get it back to those in a position to make a difference to young people's lives. Remarkable work."



HMIC support the implementation of Operation Encompass in every police force. (Zoe Billingham HMIC with responsibility for Domestic Abuse)

'Operation Encompass is the best thing that the police have ever given to education' (HMIC report 'Increasingly Everyone's Business')

The Current Joint Targeted Area Inspections focusing upon the support given to children exposed to Domestic Abuse are asking whether or not the area has Operation Encompass in place



AUGEO EMPOWERS

Augeo, the influential children's charity in The Netherlands, launched Operation Encompass in three areas of Amsterdam and created its Trauma Sensitive Schools programme, Handle with Care, around Operation Encompass.

Operation Encompass is referenced in the Guidance for Maracs '5 steps to more effectively safeguard children at Marac'



Professor Eamon McCrory, Professor of Developmental Neuroscience and Psychopathology, (University College London) stated in a live broadcast with the creators of Operation Encompass that this scheme is 'exactly what these children need'



Operation Encompass is cited in the 'Major investigation and public protection' investigative development document.

Dr John Devaney , Director of Research for Social Work, Queen's University Belfast said that 'Sharing information between professionals whenever a child has experienced some trauma in their lives is central to ensuring that the child has both immediate and ongoing understanding and support.'



"Operation Encompass, which is a very simple idea beautifully enacted, ensures that teachers are supported to provide that emotional and physical security that children who have experienced domestic violence need.

After parents and immediate family, teachers are the main carers for most children, especially in the early years.

Both personal accounts and research have demonstrated the central role of schools and teachers in helping children through difficult times in their lives – Operation Encompass can make that possible."

Prof Eileen Munro cites Operation Encompass in her Government commissioned report 'Munro Review of Child Protection'

