

Feeling the heat

It's probably been inevitable that many of our conversations with friends and family in the past week or so have probably been about the weather. 'How have you been coping?' 'Are you drinking enough?' and the like. And if it's not been the weather, it may well have been the football, and the travails of England or Scotland whichever team you favour.

The trouble with committing to writing a monthly safeguarding blog is that you tend to try to shoehorn an observation about safeguarding into a commentary on what's happening in the world, unless of course the story in the headlines is a safeguarding one of course. Then it speaks for itself. So, in the spirit of trying to introduce the topic of safeguarding into the recent heatwave and perhaps the one to come, can I remind you to stay out of the sun, keep the curtains closed, drink plenty of water and don't exercise too much! Keep safe from the harm the sun and its heat can cause.

More, or perhaps equally seriously though, the warm weather can have an impact on how we plan and deliver summer activities at our churches. It adds an extra dimension to the risk assessments we must prepare, whether it's protecting children from sunburn or ensuring older members remain hydrated (I'm writing this as France and Sweden enjoy a hydration break in New Jersey). But if we take our activities outside the confines of our building, we should be prepared for some of those who pass by to want to get involved in what's happening and not necessarily in a good way. A piece of work I was involved with recently and elsewhere started when a stall was set up outside a church on the spur of the moment to provide community outreach and refreshments and a chance encounter took place in that setting that led to an older church member being exploited and manipulated into giving a significant amount of money away, and feeling physically threatened.

So, the moral of this story is to be prepared for any and all kinds of contingencies in hot weather and not just those that are climatic.

In other news the District Safeguarding Group are having an awayday on 14th July at Ruskington MC near Sleaford. This will be my first visit to this area, and I am looking forward to it. Our purpose in meeting is to make plans for the year ahead as we focus on the learning from the recent audit. It promises to be both a reflective and forward looking gathering, if that's possible! In the August blog I'll provide a summary of what we will have discussed and then we will publish our plans for 2026/27 more formally in the early autumn.

Enjoy the summer if it doesn't get too hot.

Grahame Snelling
District Safeguarding Group Chair
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