

# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

## Background

City Parochial Foundation (CPF) and Trust for London (TFL) are funding four organisations addressing faith-based child abuse linked to a belief in spirit possession. The initiative was established in response to concerns raised by African community groups about the need for support at a grassroots level.

## Aim

To develop and/or strengthen community-based preventive work to protect the rights of children enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and to ensure the safety, well-being and positive quality of life of African children living in London, with a particular focus on tackling faith-based abuse linked to a belief in spirit possession.

## Objectives

- **Work with Families** - to raise awareness of child protection issues, the needs of children, and positive approaches to parenting and discipline among families, and to provide support as appropriate and to increase the accessibility and availability of information and support in relation to disabled children.
- **Work with Children and Young People** - to strengthen the voice of children within local communities and encourage work that ensures children are listened to.
- **Work with Places of Worship** - to increase the knowledge of children's rights and implementation of child protection policies, safe recruitment procedures, good practice guidelines and children's rights legislation, and to increase the awareness of child development, among faith leaders and congregations.
- **Policy Work** - to assist local community groups in raising awareness among statutory services and the large children's charities, concerning the needs of the community in relation to safeguarding children, and so to influence services.

**Timescale:** Grants agreed: August 2007. Funded work to be undertaken between September 2007 and January 2011.

**Amount allocated:** £505,000 (CPF: £365,000 & TFL: £140,000)

## Organisations Funded

**AFRUCA** (Africans Unite Against Child Abuse [www.afruca.org](http://www.afruca.org)) - **£123,200** to employ a Policy Officer, to deliver a specialist training programme for frontline staff, establish an African Children Safeguarding Network of African community organisations, and collaborate with local Safeguarding Children Boards to strengthen existing guidance for practitioners

**UK Congolese Safeguarding Action Group** - **£107,500** for this partnership of six organisations, led by Bantu Welfare Future Builder, to employ a Co-ordinator and to create a Family Centre for Lingala-speaking families in north London. The Centre's activities includes parenting classes, a youth forum, one-to-one support to parents and children, and a fortnightly broadcast on Congolese community TV in the UK.

# Special Initiative: Safeguarding Children's Rights

**Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service** ([www.ccpas.co.uk](http://www.ccpas.co.uk)) - **£100,000** to continue and expand its work helping African places of worship in London to address safeguarding issues through the development of policies, good working practice, training, written information for leaders and congregations and one-to-one advice via the CCPAS helpline and individual contact.

**Victoria Climbié Foundation** ([www.victoria-climbie.org.uk](http://www.victoria-climbie.org.uk)) - **£108,000** to support work in five London boroughs to strengthen links between statutory services and African communities, including to improve identification of vulnerable children and understanding of the beliefs and practices which can lead to child abuse.

## Evaluation

An external evaluation is being undertaken by the Centre for Social Work Research, Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust. The evaluation was commissioned in May 2008 and will be completed by May 2011. A baseline report will be produced in September 2008, followed by interim reports in May 2009 and May 2010.

An evaluation framework is available with anticipated outcomes.

## Advisory Group members

Baroness Valerie Howarth (Chair)

Amma Anane-Agyei, Children's Services, LB Tower Hamlets

Chris Bourlet, Borough Commander, Merton, Metropolitan Police

Christine Christie, Manager, London Safeguarding Children Board

Maggie Baxter, Chair, CPF Grants Committee

Albert Tucker, CPF Grants Committee

The Venerable Peter Delaney, TFL Grants Committee

Representatives of all funded groups.

**Lead CPF/TfL Officer:** Rachael Takens-Milne, supported by Mubin Haq.

## Media coverage

Announcement of the grants in September 2007 was covered in:

- BBC Radio 4 in extended news bulletin on Today programme at 7am and 8 am
- BBC Radio 5 Live on breakfast show at 6.30am
- BBC News website at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/7003534.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7003534.stm)
- BBC World Service
- LBC Radio including live interview with Bharat Mehta (Chief Executive)
- BBC West Midlands including live interview with Bharat Mehta
- The Sun website at [www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article294278.ece](http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article294278.ece)
- Community Newswire at [www.communitynewswire.press.net/article.jsp?id=2379020](http://www.communitynewswire.press.net/article.jsp?id=2379020)
- Trust and Foundation News article, December 2007