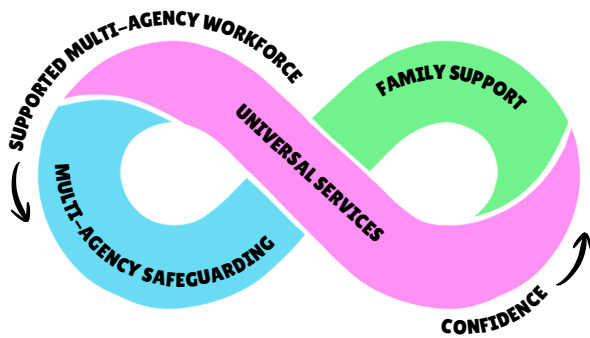




Professional Curiosity and Unknown Adults

More than 1 in 10 children have been sexually abused by the age of 16.

It is estimated that across Merseyside 12,000 children are sexually abused each year (CSA data insights hub 2024/25)

Survivors of Child Sexual abuse told us:

Professional curiosity is the ability to notice, question and explore what may be happening in a child's life. It means being willing to look beyond surface explanations and consider whether sexual abuse could be a factor, including alongside other harms such as neglect, adult substance misuse or domestic abuse. This involves asking respectful questions, reflecting on patterns of behaviour, and remaining open to possibilities rather than dismissing concerns too quickly. Curiosity supports better decision-making.

1

Children need us to think the unthinkable, notice and act.

Always consider that child Sexual Abuse maybe a possibility, even if the present worry is about something else

2

Work together across agencies to understand the child's lived experience, while recognising and supporting parents' and carers' own histories of trauma

3

Think Systemically: Family, Peers, Education and Community

Do we all know who is in the family or around the family and how that effects the child's home or life.

Are we curious about the motives behind the behaviour presented by adults around the child?

Utilise ego grams to explore family members and relationships dynamics



St Helens
Safeguarding Children
Partnership

