



Radicalism and Child Protection; working with the community

(Abstract)

VCF – The Victoria Climbié Foundation UK provides emerging themes from its advocacy casework service to highlight how child protection is currently failing children and mothers in cases linked to radicalism, and the overarching threat of not engaging with a voluntary programme, which they are informed is aimed at suspected terrorists or supporters of terrorism.

VCF is the leading independent organisation addressing child abuse linked to faith or belief across all ethnicities, and uses its *Safeguarding Children across Culture and Faith* protocol to ensure that these and related themes are embedded within strategic policy guidance and operational procedures with the view to improve justice for all.

This paper is not intended to position for or against the aims of the government's Preventing Extremism programme, merely to inform what we are seeing in practice as a result of this policy, (which, in our view, did not go far enough in consulting with the community during its development), and to share our advocacy-based experiences within child safeguarding processes.

Nor is it intended to comment on persons or individuals who are involved in counter-terrorism measures, or are currently under surveillance, though it is clear that the circumstances surrounding these individuals can provide the entry point for child protection.

In its submission, VCF seeks to provide a community perspective and grassroots view of what is happening as a result of the government's 'extremism' policy, and wider focus on radicalism and radicalisation through local authority child safeguarding practice.

VCF seeks to explore why child protection may be at odds with radicalism, any legal considerations or action, whether mothers are being disproportionately targeted, and severely disempowered within the conflict between supporting counter-terrorism and effective parenting.