

New data available from government on child abuse linked to faith or belief

VCF – The Victoria Climbié Foundation UK welcomes data released by the Department for Education, in November 2017. The Children in Need Census, ending 31 March 2017, includes a new category for child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB).

Initial indications show 1,460 cases across England, where the assessment of a child's needs identified CALFB as a possible factor.

Mor Dioum, VCF Director and former Chair of the National Working Group on Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief, is clear that the focus on this issue must remain.

“For the first time we have access to specific CALFB data, yet the true prevalence may still be unknown. Whilst the numbers are low on the spectrum of abuse cases, they are significant when compared to previously reported figures. Therefore, it is appropriate that child abuse linked to faith or belief is now being considered.”

VCF continues to raise awareness within the community with a view to increase the reporting of harmful practices. We would urge practitioners to adopt holistic approaches with children and families when dealing with abuse that does not fit the norm.

In 2014-16, VCF worked with Dr Lisa Oakley to explore practitioner knowledge of CALFB in search of effective intervention. Research findings were based on a survey of over 1,300 individuals from police, health and social care, as well as faith communities.

The census data will help us to prioritise the rollout of a comprehensive training programme for children's services, informed by our collaborative research and related work; to include consultation on the current definition for Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief.

The full census information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2016-to-2017>

(See Excel Tables, C3 for CALFB statistics)

See also:

The National Working Group on Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief

<https://vcf-uk.org/services-vcf/national-working-group-on-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief/>

Latest CALFB Research – preliminary findings

<https://vcf-uk.org/new-research-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-and-belief/>

VCF work on Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief

<https://vcf-uk.org/services-vcf/vcf-and-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief/>

