**Surrey Safeguarding Children Board Annual Conference 2018**

The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) held its third annual conference with the title ‘Acting Early to Improve Outcomes for Children in Surrey’ on Thursday the 29th of November 2018 in H.G. Wells Conference Centre in Woking, Surrey. The conference was very well attended by approximately 500 delegates that ranged from strategic leaders to front line practitioners from different organisations.

The day started with Claire Burgess, the SSCB Independent Chair, opening the conference and Dave Hill, Surrey County Council (SCC) Director of Children, Schools and Families, presenting SCC’s vision for children and families in Surrey.

Following that, nationally renowned experts, young people and local strategic leaders spoke about neglect, early help and fabricated and induced illness. Specifically, Kerry Littleford spoke compellingly about her personal experience of neglect during childhood, whereas Dez Holmes gave an engaging presentation on humane, evidence-based practice focusing on neglect and early help. Donna Molloy outlined the importance of early intervention in improving outcomes for children and Jacquie Burke and Lisa Burshill gave an overview of the Early Help offer in Surrey. Chris Hickford, CEO of the Eikon charity, summarised the services available by the organisation and Chloe, a service user, spoke about hers and her peers’ personal experiences and the positive impact Eikon practitioners had in their lives. Gina Munday and Isaac Bury, gave a powerful presentation about their experiences and their involvement with the CAMHS Youth Advisor service and the Rights and Participation team of SCC. Finally, Dr Danya Glaser gave an informative presentation on fabricated and induced illness.

At the end of the day, each delegate was asked to evaluate how helpful each presentation was for improving their practice on a scale 0 – 5, with 0 being ‘not at all’ and 5 being ‘extremely’. They were also encouraged to include comments and suggestions for future events. 137 feedback forms were returned and all presentations received marks between 3 and 5 mostly. Therefore, the majority of practitioners felt that their practice can benefit from attending this learning event. The comments included remarks such as: brilliant speakers, relevant to my practice, insightful explanations, excellent presentations, fascinating stuff, etc. In regard to future events, most delegates suggested learning events on contextual safeguarding, children with disabilities and events focusing on specific age groups, e.g. early years, primary school age, etc. They also suggested that the conference format should revert to a combination of plenary presentations and themed workshops.