

# Baby p – college essay



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Peter or 'Baby P' as the case became known as suffered horrendous injuries for a prolonged period of time at the hands of his mother and mother's boyfriend unfortunately eventually leading to his death. Although being seen at regular intervals by social workers and health professionals there were many people and organisations that let him down. There was an obvious high level of concern for the child's welfare but the actions seemed to lack urgency and thoroughness. Social workers and police failed to sufficiently challenge the parent about his injuries, that the paediatrician had stated appeared non accidental.

It would appear that as 'Baby P' was placed with a friend of the family by social workers and the police the mother was given the wrong message and thought the authorities were not 'too concerned' about the injuries to Peter and wanted if possible to keep the child with his family. Agencies were far too willing to believe the mother about the life she led with her children and the people she had living in the house. The mother was hoping to get away without admitting to hurting her child herself or disclosing the identity of the person that had caused the injuries.

Peter's mother continued to deny that her boyfriend lived with her or was ever left alone with any of her children. Unfortunately background checks were not carried out on the boyfriend as there was a failure to establish his identity. On a visit to a GP, who thought Peter was in a 'sorry state' failed to take any action and alert others to his concern. He assumed others would have similar concerns and would be in a better position to take action as the GP knew that Peter had an appointment at the Child Development Centre in a few days.

Professionals should trust their feelings when they believe children to be suffering and not leave it to someone else. It is far simpler to lift the telephone than to live with the regret of not having done so. On one occasion after being arrested for allegedly harming Peter, his mother is the focus of a police investigation, even social workers are unbelieving of her account' yet she leaves her home with all of her children without warning or permission.

The police are not informed and it does not appear as if she is asked for the address where she is staying so that local authorities can establish the children are safe. She is not warned of possible consequences when she returns. The mother obviously did not want to risk not being given permission or the possibility that checks would be made. The day before little Peter died he was seen at a hospital although serious injuries including a broken back and broken ribs were likely undetected. A day later his mother was informed that she would not be prosecuted over the alleged harming of Peter.

The following day an ambulance was called and Peter was found in his cot he was pronounced dead at 12. 20pm on August 3rd 2007. The child protection services of Haringey and other agencies were widely criticised. A nationwide review of social service care was launched. The General Social Care Council looked into potential breaches of its own code of practice. Too many authorities had failed to adopt reforms introduced following a review into welfare following a death of another unfortunate child in 2000.