7 minute briefing

Safeguarding ENFIELD

Further information:

[Social Graces: A practical tool to address inequality | BASW]

[Intersectional Models | Research in Practice]

[One Minute Guide Safeguarding and Social GRACES | Coventry Safeguarding Adults Board]

What are the Social Graces…

The Social GGRRAAACCEEESSS model is a reflective framework created by John Burnham, Alison Roper-Hall and colleagues. It helps us notice identity, difference, power and privilege in professional relationships.

G: Gender, Gender Identity, Geography, Generation
R: Race, Religion
A: Age, Ability, Appearance
C: Class, Culture, Caste
E: Education, Ethnicity, Economics
S: Spirituality, Sexuality, Sexual Orientation

It is not a form to complete and there may be additional factors you identify. It is a prompt for curiosity, humility and better safeguarding conversations.

Why it matters in safeguarding

Safeguarding adults should be person-led, proportionate and rights-based. Social Graces adds a practical lens for asking what may affect safety, trust, access to support, voice and choices.

It supports culturally curious practice without making assumptions or reducing a person to one characteristic. All the Graces interact – some may be an advantage and others a disadvantage depending on the circumstances.

Applying Social GGRRAAACCEEESSS in Safeguarding and Professional Practice:

Supervision and team discussions: Can be used as a framework in reflective supervision to explore unconscious biases or blind spots.

Assessments: Encourages a holistic understanding of a person's background, identity and lived experience.

Partnership working: Helps practitioners recognise the need for culturally competent and inclusive approaches when working across agencies.



An important reflection… How do your GGRRAAACCEEESSS impact you and how you perceive your role?

Everyone will have their own combination of factors that affect how they interact with others. Being aware of your own biases can help you to counteract them.

It may also be that our own experiences prevent professionals from recognising where we may have (or be perceived to have) power. How we come across can be impacted by a number of visible and invisible factors and it is vital we consider power dynamics in our work.

Social Graces challenge the idea of a 'fixed' identity or personality. They are fluid and may differ depending on time, place and culture.

Different aspects of identity may impact the individual differently depending on the situation or who else is present (and their perceived power or identity).

Visible/Invisible & Voiced/Unvoiced

Social Graces may be visible and invisible, voiced and unvoiced.

Visible Graces are aspects of identity that are easily noticeable or apparent to others, whereas invisible Graces are often not immediately obvious to others unless they are explicitly told.

Voiced and unvoiced Graces tend to encompass aspects of people's identity or experiences that are actively discussed or remain hidden/unspoken about.