**Case Study 2**

This is not a real case but contains some elements from different cases that have been part of a Rapid Review carried out in Telford and Wrekin.

**Background information**

3 year old boy named Zach

Zach lives with his mother and step mother, they met on a dating app approximately 1 year ago

Zach has 2 older siblings; Holly (aged 10 years) and Lauren (Aged 12 years)

**Incident**

 Zach attends his nursery, he has been attending this nursery for about 3 months. He attended a previous nursery before this.

One day when arriving at nursery, the nursery staff noticed a bruise on Zach’s inner ear. When Zach was asked how he obtained this bruise, he told staff that he fell off his bike.

The nursery call Zach’s mother to say they have seen the bruise and the explanation from his mother was that Zach was fighting with his older siblings and this is how he obtained the bruise.

Half an hour later, Zach’s step mother comes to nursery to collect Zach despite his nursery session not being due to end for another couple of hours. Zach’s step mother says he got the bruise to his inner ear by walking into the kitchen worktop.

The nursery explained that they would like to make a referral for Family Connect and that they would prefer for Zach to stay in nursery for the time being so they can seek some advice. Zach’s step mother did not want Zach to stay in nursery and began shouting and “kicking off” before she took Zach home. The nursery did call the police about this, however this action was not logged or recorded by the nursery.

The nursery did not have an up to date address for the family as they had recently moved house and they were not aware which schools the older siblings attended.

During this time, Zach’s older siblings were collected by their step mother from school with little explanation given other than a relative was unwell and the children needed to come home. Lauren attended a school in Shropshire, Holly attended a primary school in Telford.

Family Connect were notified by the police about this incident at Zach’s nursery. A Strategy Meeting was held in Family Connect where it was shared that previous attempts to offer Early Help support were made as Holly’s were concerned about her behaviour, however parents declined and refused to engage with this support. Family Connect did not hold up to date details on the nursery that Zach attended as his online portal from nursery had not been updated. The health team in Family Connect were able to provide an up to date home address for the family. A joint Section 47 Enquiry was agreed and police attended the home address.

When at the home address, the children were seen to be safe and well with their mother and step mother. The social worker requested for a paediatric child protection medical examination to be completed for Zach which was completed. The doctor who completed this stated that the injury observed to Zach’s inner ear was compliant with falling off a bike. Zach’s mother and step mother said that Zach had sustained multiple minor bruises from falling off his bike, walking in to the kitchen work top and fighting with his older siblings. The case was closed with no further action required.

2 months later, Zach was brought to A& at Princess Royal Hospital with a broken arm. His mother said he had fallen off his bike. Hospital staff noted that Zach appeared scared of his parents. Due to the significant fracture to his arm, Zach required surgery to correct this. Whilst Zach was being prepared for theatre, theatre staff noticed several bruises all over Zach’s body. The hospital reported these concerns to Family Connect and another Strategy Meeting was held.

During this Strategy Meeting, it was shared that the police had attended the home a couple of times recently due to domestic abuse incidents where mother and step mother had been arguing loudly. Family Connect were aware of this and had requested a Strengthening Families Practitioner to complete a duty home visit, however when these attempts were made there had been nobody home.

Family Connect requested both primary and secondary schools to complete wishes and feelings work with Holly and Lauren. During this, Holly disclosed that her parents argue a lot and that Zach tries to defend their mother. Lauren also said that her parents argue about Zach and his behaviour and he is the ‘problem child’. They also said that Zach has been roughly handled by their mother such as being dragged upstairs, causing injuries and leaving him alone in his room crying.

A repeat top to toe medical was performed on Zach which revealed more injuries. Zach also disclosed at this time that it was his mother who had hurt his arm. Both mother and step mother were arrested. The children went to live with maternal grandmother under a Section 20, however this was later revoked by their mother.

**Outcome**

This incident met the criteria for a Rapid Review.

Please use the criteria for Rapid Reviews and the resources available (as well as any additional resources you may use in your service) to identify the learning from this case and how this could be implemented into practice.