

Safeguarding in Education;

Making Quality referrals seminar

Brent Lumley & Jatinder Matharu



Seminar outcomes



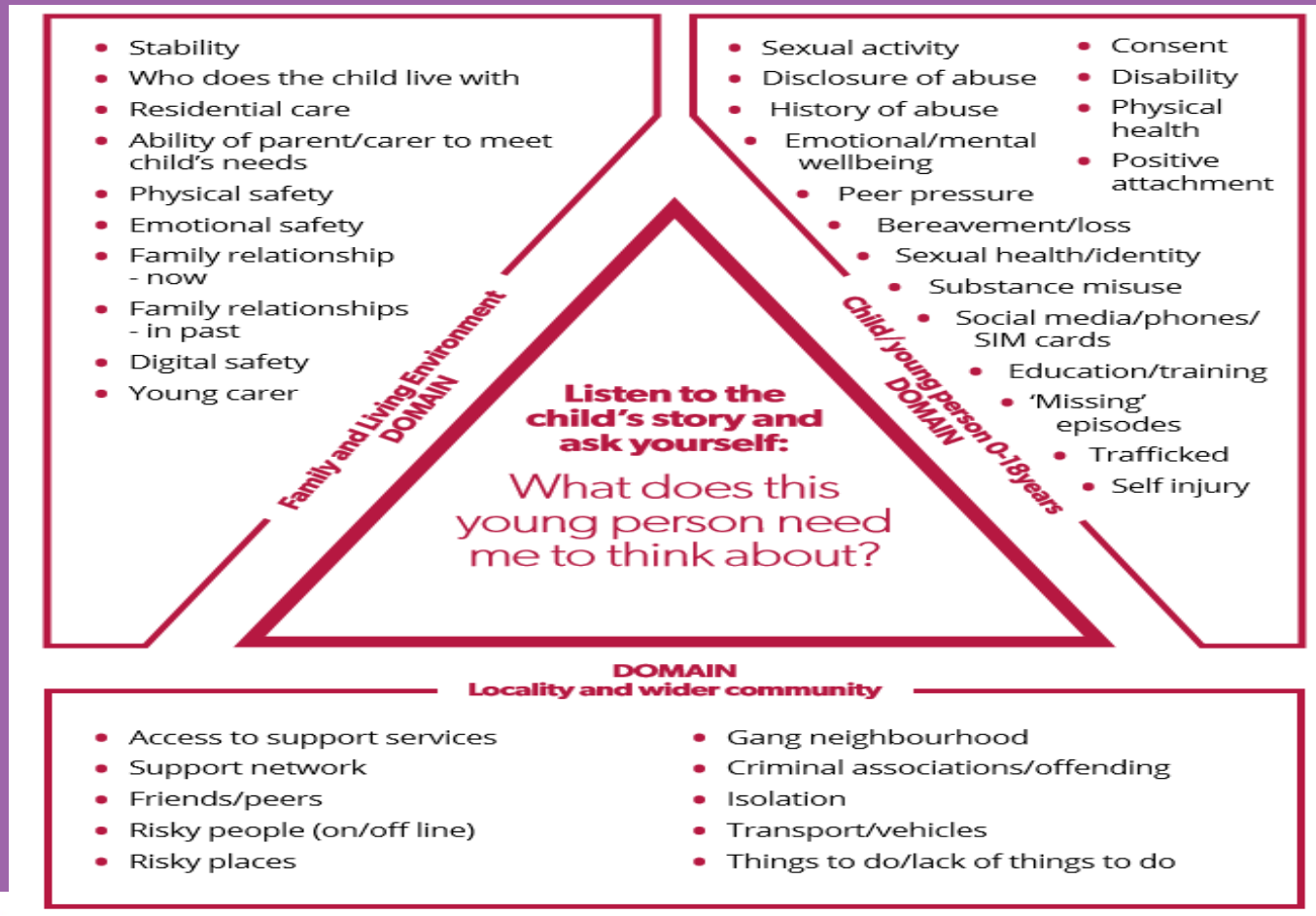
Aim:

To support professionals produce succinct, concise, factual quality referrals by exploring:

1. The presentation of the child and the parent's perception of risk
2. How to separate fact from opinion and emotion.
3. The use of tools to assist in capturing and recording concerns by collating evidence, hypothesis and providing an analysis of harm.
4. Having professional curiosity

The sessions will be practical sessions to help DSL's and DDSL's to construct a good quality MARF by demonstrating how they met the threshold and using professional curiosity to collate information. A range of tools and best practice guides will be provided.

Referrals: Assessment triangle



Making a good referral.....

MULTI-AGENCY REFERRAL FORM

FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SERVICES

New Referral Tel: 01753 875362

New Referral Fax: 01753 690801

Secure email: child.protection@slough.gcsx.gov.uk



- Making a timely referral
- Understand the thresholds
- Phone in for advice (**hypothetically)
- Consider content
- Have parents been informed?
- Is the information factual?
- Have you included your professional judgements?
- Have you included any historical information and support you and other services have been provided?
- Are there any screening tools you can attach as evidence to support your professional judgement?
- Have you thought about the discreet intelligence such as do they have a child minder? Who collects the child?



Making a referral: Considerations

- How risk is described in the referral? The language used to express your concerns?
- Is the information factual and does not carry any personal value based opinion?
- What will be the outcome if no intervention is put in place for this CYP in the long term?
- What has worked? Not worked? Length of your intervention?
- Chronology of activity/interventions and other services involved?
- Has there been an appropriate level of challenge with family to explore solutions including volatile parents?

Think about the child:

- Attendance – CME
- Mood changes/behaviours
- Academic functioning
- Relationships in school/language used
- Demeanour & appearance
- Parent engagement comments
- Injuries/marks & explanations for PE etc..

Top tips

- It is imperative that a synopsis of the child's/family background is provided for a context.
- Keep it factual and remove any references to emotions.
- Think about the language used to describe your concerns. Do not use 'looks like a mark made by a particular item such as a belt, tape' but instead describe the size, colour etc.
- Be assertive and clear about what's changed; adding facts, the child's presentation, interaction peers and other adults (staff. Parents/carers).
- Use the threshold document to help make a direct connection with your concerns.
- Think about structure in your referral; what's factual known?

Reflection

Reflect:

- Are you professionally curious?
- What do the conversations with the child and parent (*where safe to do so*) tell you?
- What's deteriorated?
- Are there any trends/patterns emerging on CPOMs or your internal safeguarding discussion?
- Talk to SENCO, DT, Attendance Officer, and class teachers/others to build a holistic picture.
- What is the trajectory of concerns? (*Have they got worse? If so, how and what's changed?*)

What next?

- Collect your evidence of harm
- Hypothesis your findings
- Analyse your information; connect your data, behaviour, attendance and conversations
- Complete your MARF using the threshold document to structure your concerns. Be mindful of emotive language used

Activity 1

Using the MARF form provided please read and discuss in your groups:

1. Is all the information present? If not, what is missing?
2. Does the MARF highlight the main risks?
3. Does the MARF hear the voice of the child?
4. How can you improve the MARF? What would you change?

You have **10 minutes** for this activity. Please identify a lead person to share your group discussions back to the wider group.

Seeing the bigger picture

‘Seeing the big picture’ means appreciating the wider context. It’s easy to jump to conclusions before you realise that you are only hearing one, limited perspective.

Whilst focusing on details is important, it is also good to take a step back and think about the situation in the round. Looking at the bigger picture also helps to give you a clearer vision of what you need to do next.

Taking a broader view, seeking to work out what’s really going on and considering the various risks and protective factors are often referred to as ‘professional curiosity’.

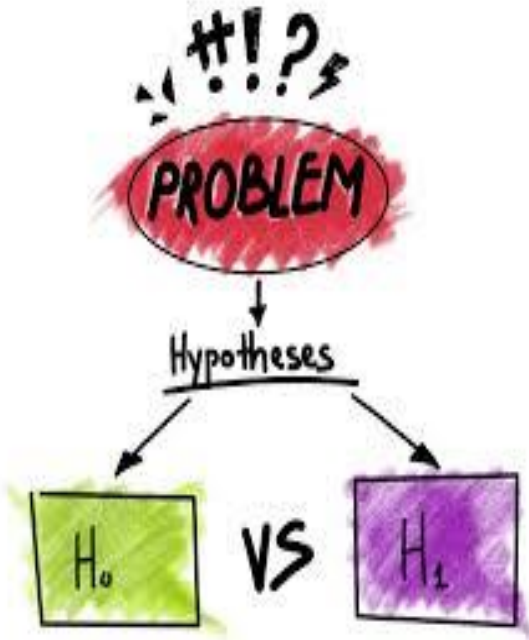
Key ingredients; Professional Curiosity



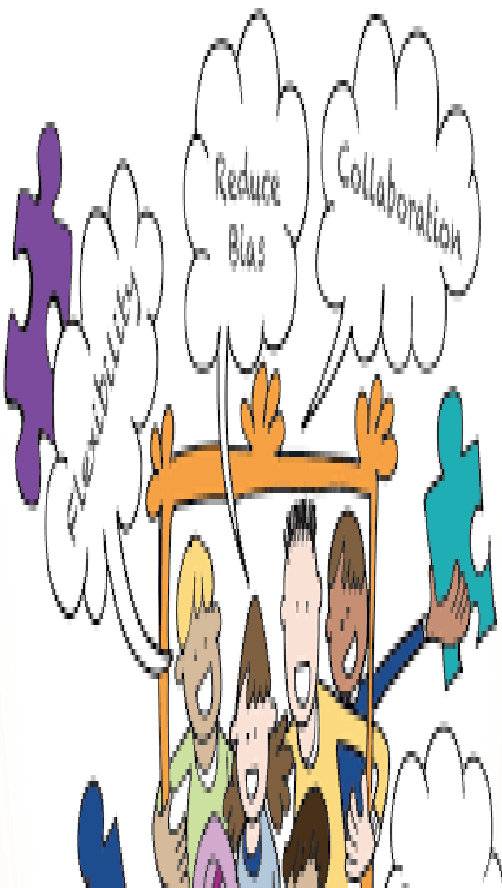
- Looking, listening , asking direct questions, checking out and reflecting on information received
- Being genuinely interested in what families are saying and doing
- Triangulating
- Testing out assumptions about different types of families

Professional curiosity

- Checking out hypothesis
- Not taking things at face value, seeing past the obvious
- Not giving up until you have got to the bottom of something
- Using all this to reach a view about the here and now, what is past and what the future might hold



Why is it important?



- Being genuinely fascinated by individuals and families gives them the message that you are interested/care about what happens to them
- Responding to presenting issues/concerns or taking things at face value can lead to missed opportunities to understand the reality of children's lives and keep them safe
- Serious Case Reviews tell us this time and time again

Tips for practice



- Be in tune about your feelings and state of mind:
Are you rushed, tired, feeling unwell, still thinking about your last incident, worried about something at home?
- Be in touch with your own assumptions / bias about how families and individuals should function
- Know when you are being over optimistic

Difficult conversations

- Be ready for difficult conversations and interactions-be alert to the well-rehearsed techniques families use to 'back off'
- Give firm but kind messages about your commitment to safeguarding and the rights of the child. This sets the scene from the start.
- If you are worried about how a hostile or obstructive family might react to you ,talk to some one about this. Explore how you will deal with it though reflective supervision.

Learning from Case Reviews

Thinking the



Unthinkable

- Make sure you can recognise disguise compliance.
- It is ok to be respectfully curious, quizzical, sceptical, even suspicious at times
- Understand coercive control and how this affects behaviour
- Understand how families can project their dysfunction/anxiety onto the professionals who are trying to help them
- Make space for reflection-we all need space to think about our impact on families and their impact on us

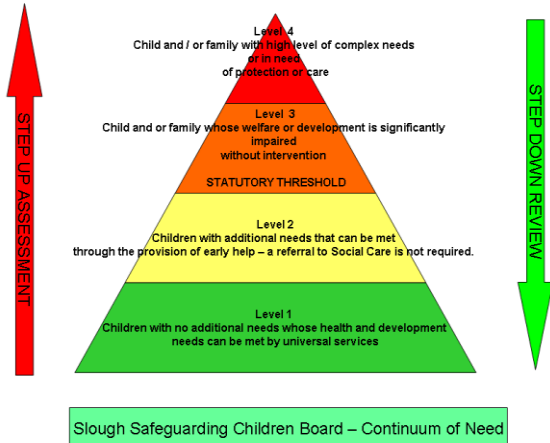
Activity 2:

Using the information shared about making a good quality referral.

In your groups please complete the MARF to articulate your concerns.

You will have **15 minutes for this activity**. Please identify a lead person to share this back in the wider group.

Toolbox/Resources



- Thresholds [Threshold document](#)
- Neglect Screening Tool [Neglect Screening tool](#)
- CE screening Tool [CE Screening tool](#)
- Young Carers Tool
- Wellbeing Tool (*launching shortly*)
- Berkshire Procedures on line Manual <https://berks.proceduresonline.com/slough/index.html>
- The LINK <https://thelink.slough.gov.uk/user/register>

Slough Support

Early Help –

Schools will be able seek advice from Early Help about services available to support pupils in need of additional support and also to refer pupils and families deemed to be at Level 2 to Early Help. Referrals on a MARF to

sloughchildren.referrals@scstrust.co.uk 01753 476 589

Front door for children a risk of harm:

If there are any concerns of significant risk of harm to children, the Front Door (Trust) must be contacted via telephone: 01753 875362 | Out of Hours: 01344

786543 | sloughchildren.referrals@scstrust.co.uk

Slough thresholds document

The publication of refreshed Threshold guidance can be accessed here:

<https://www.sloughsafeguardingboards.org.uk/lscb/lscb/training/threshold-seminars>

Any questions

