

Protecting Children - A Critical Contribution to Policy and Practice Development

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents six documents as a synthesis of the author's contribution to child protection policy and practice from the late 80's to the present day. The work provides a critical reflection on child protection social work policy and practice informed by research of documentary evidence from survivor's accounts, legislation, policy, practice guidance, academic texts and media reporting. It is argued that the refocusing agenda of the mid 90's generated a policy shift that was detrimental to child protection systems and processes. The originality of the author's approach lies in the presentation of six themes, five of which have to be combined at the forefront of policy and practice. The first theme is a child rights approach which includes hearing the voices of children, adult survivors of abuse and professionals who work to protect abused children. The second theme is a concept of prevention as an essential strategy in the protection of children from harm, which thirdly, emphasises the importance of joint work with the police as well as, fourthly, the involvement of the community in the investigation of abuse and targeting of perpetrators. The fifth theme advocates the positive use of the media whilst the sixth reflects the author's professional experience of being silenced.

The author presents a challenge to the rationale for the prevention approach as defined in policy agendas since the mid 90's and accelerated through the *Every Child Matters* agenda. That rationale included the argument that over zealous professionals were implementing an incident-led approach which represented excessive and expensive state intrusion into family life. The author concludes that, by the late 00's, these very features had emerged as a result of policies supposedly designed to achieve the opposite, the prevention agenda having damaged child protection systems by devaluing professional investigative skills and through punitive approaches to child victims. It is argued that social workers in late 00's, in compliance with a universalist approach and over-burdened with mechanistic child in need assessments, were intervening in family life at the level of concern rather than significant harm, leading to extensive regulation and surveillance of children and parents as the dominating characteristics of children's services. Central to this thesis is the evidence of the author's work as a social work activist and her methodology. Particularly through her publications and use of the media, she has brought to professional, political and public attention the complexities and importance of specialist, proactive child protection social work practice.

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Introduction

This thesis presents six documents as a synthesis of the author's contribution to child protection policy and practice development from the late 80's to the present day. As a team manager in the London Borough of Islington, from 1986 until 1992, the author's experience of protecting children during the Islington child abuse scandal provided the basis for her subsequent work. Key themes were progressed throughout the author's twelve years as a child protection and training manager in the London Borough of Harrow, her academic role as senior lecturer in children and families social work at London Metropolitan University and through the contribution she has made as consultant to the media, professionals and child abuse inquiries. The impact of these documents is further reflected both in Appendix B (the author's publications spanning academic work as well as television, radio and print media), and Appendix D (publications which the author has informed and influenced which have brought contemporary issues of child protection to the forefront of public attention).

The interrelated core themes are as follows:

1. A child rights approach which includes hearing the voices of children, adult survivors of abuse and professionals.
2. Prevention and protection seen not as alternatives but as two essential strategies in the protection of children from harm
3. The central importance of joint work with the police in the investigation of child abuse
4. The involvement of the community in raising and reporting concern about abused children
5. Working positively with the media in seeking justice for children
6. The experience of being silenced

The author worked in London authorities when child protection was defined by some as being overzealous and over forensic and when the refocusing of children's work towards prevention was being implemented (Thorpe 1994, Gibbons et al 1995, Bilson 1997, Horwarth 2001, Houston and Griffiths 2000). Parton has referred to dominant concerns about protection as a reaction to the child abuse inquiries of the 70's and 80's resulting in deleterious outcomes for children and families (1997:3) and Munro referred to professionals preferring to overestimate the risk of abuse (Munro 1999:119). The author presents a contrasting perspective suggesting that the systems of the mid 80's to mid 90's represented effective child protection practice grounded in joint working between social

workers and police, within the practice model of 'Working Together' in relation to all forms of child abuse including organised and institutional (Gallagher 1998, Wolmar 2000, Bibby 1996). The author's work includes a critique of refocusing, challenges the definition of prevention as an alternative to protection and examines the acceleration of this policy through the '*Framework of Assessment for Children in Need and their Families*' (DoH 2000) and the '*Every Child Matters*' (ECM) agenda (HM Treasury 2003). The author has been significantly influenced by writers who have presented a critical perspective on contemporary child protection policy including Calder (2003, 2004, 2007, 2008), Munro (2002, 2003, 2005), Nelson and Baldwin (2002) and Nelson (1997, 2002, 2004, 2008). In order to inform this thesis the author conducted an analysis of relevant literature post-2000 (Appendix C) as it became apparent to her that many academic texts omitted key aspects of child protection practice.

Prevention and protection have all too often been presented as an either/or decision. It is as if whilst we can opt to drain the lake some of those most in need may drown while we do it or we can save the drowning but leave the lake (Action for Children 2008:1). This perspective denies the complexity of the work of protecting children which the author presents as requiring both prevention and protection as a single protective strategy. An acceptance of the either/or approach also failed to examine the factors which led to academic and government support for the implementation of this division in child protection practice which, in the author's view, led to the demise of an effective UK child protection system and a breach of the child's right to be protected, 'from abuse, neglect and being harmed by the people looking after them' (UN 1989, Article 19).

The rationale for a prevention approach as presented in the mid 90's was to challenge over zealous professionals, excessive state intrusion into family life, a reactive incident-led forensic approach and financial resources deemed to be wasted on 'unrequired' investigations (Horwath 2002, Cleaver and Walker 2004). However, it was exactly these features which, by 2009, emerged as a result of policies supposedly designed to achieve the opposite. The prevention agenda had progressed to mark the destruction of child protection systems (Munro and Calder 2005, House of Commons 2009), a devaluing of professional investigative skills (Lonne et al, 2009:60), punitive, pathologising approaches to child victims (Parton 2006:144) and to those professionals who represented the voices of vulnerable children (Fairweather 2008a, Ahmed 2007, Waugh 2007). Social workers in 2009 in compliance with a universalist approach and over-burdened with assessments, were intervening in family life at the level of concern rather than significant harm, leading Parton to comment on a reconfiguration of the relationship between the state, professionals, parents and children with

regulation and the surveillance of children and parents as a dominating characteristic of children's services (Parton 2006:139 and 171) resulting also in increased expenditure and privatisation (Davies 2006).

The ECM agenda led to costly databases and universally applicable services which became the subject of much criticism (Davies 2006, Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust 2009, Anderson et al 2006). The universal approach has led to incidents becoming lost among numbers of low level referrals, leading to the tragic consequences now apparent from analysis of serious case reviews (Munro 2008).

The author's perspective on social work is rooted in principles of human rights and social justice (IFSW 2004), grounded in the voices of children, survivors and practitioners and informed by knowledge based in and developed through practice experience (Davies 2005b). Since 1994 the role of the social worker, in seeking protection and justice for abused children, has been steadily undermined leading to a situation, in 2009, where many social workers believe that the statutory task is unachievable (Unison 2009, Channel Four 2009). A devaluing of professional knowledge and a 'squandering of the collective intelligence about how to protect children' (Campbell 2008) has led both to the unnecessary removal of children (false positives) and to inadequate intervention to protect abused children (false negatives) (Lonne et al. 2009:176, Waldfogel 2000b:315). This thesis, through an analysis of the six documents, collates and presents the author's work in raising public and professional awareness about the impact of contemporary children's policy on the safety of vulnerable children.

Structure

The thesis presents the methodology and rationale followed by presentation of six interrelated themes and a conclusion which relates these themes to more recent policy and practice. In Appendix A, the six documents are grouped within three chapters in order to set the content within their chronological context and to make linkage with specific government policy initiatives including related responses and critiques. Each document develops a critique and analysis of policy and practice experience. Documents 1-4 consider child protection work with regard to child interviewing, child protection investigation and intervention, prevention strategies, child sexual abuse and female genital mutilation. Document 5 relates to policy development post-Climbié and Document 6 draws together themes in

relation to child protection training within the context of policy development from the late 80's to the present day.

Methodology and rationale

The thesis represents a professional journey and the documents presented are a record of the author's professional career in protecting children from harm. Her career has included her role as social worker and child protection manager, academic, author and activist making use of professional, political and media channels in seeking justice for children. Throughout this journey the author's actions were based on critical reflection and lived practice experience. Reflection and experience have been informed by reference to relevant legal, policy and practice documentation, serious case review material, journal articles, academic texts and media coverage, networking with campaign groups, politicians and journalists and consultation with a wide range of professionals, practitioners and survivors. The thesis enabled the author to better understand the complexity of the process and issues in order to situate current events within a comprehension of the historical context of her activism.

Although predating the remit of this thesis, the author's journey began in 1972 when she completed her Diploma in Social Work specialism in community action at the London School of Economics. Her tutor, George Goetschius, had introduced her to radical perspectives in social work and particularly to the writings of Saul Alinsky (Alinsky 1971, Davies 2005b). She had coordinated the Campaign to Save Paddington Day Hospital therapeutic community, which, with her involvement, developed into the first mental health service user movement in the UK - the Mental Patients Union. This work has been documented by Helen Spandler at the University of Central Lancashire in her book 'Asylum to Action' (Spandler 2006) and by Andrew Roberts of Middlesex University through his mental health survivor history website (www.studymore.com). Whilst teaching mental health social work at Middlesex Polytechnic, the author wrote various articles and a Fabian pamphlet documenting this work (Appendix B). For a period of ten years in the 70's the author worked at grassroots level organising radical bookshops as centres for community action including women's groups, claimant's and squatter's unions. Between 1986 and 1992 she used her community work skills within the patch model of social work in the London Borough of Islington which had situated generic social work within a structure of twenty four neighbourhood offices. The experience of radical practice at the start of her career provided a theoretical basis for and empowered the author in her later specialism of child protection social work.

Alinsky wrote of 'seeing injustice and striking at it with a hot passion' (Alinsky 1969:21) and explored the role of an organiser having, 'unreserved confidence in one's ability to do what he believes must be done and accept, without fear or worry, that the odds are always against him He is a doer and does. The thought of copping out never stays with him for more than a fleeting moment; life is action' (1971:79). Frampton using similar terminology refers to 'warriors for children' fighting a 'child protection war' (Frampton 2009). The positive use of conflict is a theme throughout Alinsky's work and he stated that, 'conflict is the essential core of a free and open society' (1971:62). The author has used this model in presenting a challenge to policies and practices, which she considered were detrimental to the safety of children, as well as in confronting the perpetrators of crimes against children. The concept of change and change agents is littered throughout current government documentation, however, it may be the task of a social activist to resist change which poses a threat to the safety of children. The author has tried to halt the progress of current policy development in order to retain existing tried and tested systems of child protection.

Child abuse is essentially abuse of power and exploitation of the vulnerable by the powerful. Alinsky wrote about, 'change coming from power and power coming from organization. In order to act people must get together' (1971:113). He described how much of the organiser's work is in painting a tiny leaf but that what keeps him going is 'a vision of a great mural where other artists – organizers – are painting their bits and each piece is essential to the total' (1971:75). Although there is no specific organisational context to the author's work there is, in effect, a national network of professionals, academics, journalists, politicians and campaigners who actively and speedily respond to the experiences and needs of child victims of abuse, adult survivors and professional whistleblowers. The author has, since the early 90's, selected specific and often overlapping issues as a focus to her activism. In each instance she has utilized her networks to achieve justice for children and for those who represent their interests and importantly to challenge those who exploit children for their own interests or who through ineptitude, incompetence and/or self interest collude with them.

Munro explored the balance of intuition and analysis in social work and the use of self as an important social work concept. Intuition 'enables people to draw a conclusion from a vast range of variables almost instantly.. it draws on people's background knowledge that has been built up over a lifetime' and is, 'the backbone of people's ways of making sense of the world and each other..' (Munro 2003: 19-20). Schon wrote about use of 'artistic intuitive processes which practitioners bring to the situation

of uncertainty, instability and uniqueness and value conflict’ (Schon 1983:42), a theme also explored by England (1986). The processes illustrated in Table 1 demonstrate the author’s methodology of social activism in which intuition has played an important role. Documents 1 and 3 particularly illustrate how her initial perceptions about children being sexually exploited in Islington were derived from an intuitive response to the presentation and actions of the young people, the perpetrators and those colluding with the abuse network. Similarly, decisions to support particular whistleblowers were initially based on the author’s intuitive response to their cases as personally presented to her.

Judgments and hypotheses formed as a result of intuition must be tested through collation and analysis of evidence (Munro 2003:23). Alinsky stated that the organiser’s daily work is in ‘detail, repetitive and deadly in its monotony’ but important nevertheless (1971:75). Documents 1 and 2 demonstrate the author’s work in collation of evidence in mapping the detail of abuse networks and, in her serious case review analysis and expert witness work, every case involved creating detailed chronologies to facilitate analysis (Document 5). The author’s methodology is developed from the work of Kolb (1984) who described a reflection on lived experiences leading to the formation and reformation of ideas which become integrated to generate decisions and problem solving and which then feed into new experiences and lead to further reflection. Taylor (2006:191) emphasized the importance of practice wisdom, ‘practitioners are thus involved in creating knowledge about practice through experience rather than simply applying ready-made knowledge to practice’. The concept of an experiential cycle has informed Table 1. This table illustrates the processes by which the author’s actions and interventions were informed by reflection on experience gained from grounded knowledge and dialogue and the processes by which the actions themselves then informed future knowledge and formed the basis of further dialogue.

Table (1) Illustration of the professional processes involved in the author’s social work activism

Knowledge gained from:-	Dialogue with:-	Critical reflection on and analysis of knowledge gained and dialogue informed social activism. Analysis and action informed future knowledge and dialogue.
Professional experience as a children’s social worker and manager including direct work with children and families	Child victims and witnesses, families and communities	Representing the best interests of the children in seeking justice and safety from child abuse and crimes against children. Proactively targeting child abusers and bringing them to justice. Both child protection and perpetrator focused strategies Involvement of the community in protective and investigative strategies

Whistleblowing about child abuse issues	Other whistleblowers	Representing the interests of whistleblowers in order to represent the child's voice
Professional experience as Senior Lecturer in Children and Families social work and trainer	Social work and other students, colleagues	Undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, PQ courses, consultancy, monitoring student placements. Training social workers, police and other professionals. Online child protection courses. Website – response to issues raised by students, academics, professionals, politicians, the media and the public.
Survivor's perspectives	Survivors and Care Leavers - individuals and groups	Meetings, contribution to websites, case analysis and representation, consultancy, campaigning, co-presentation at conferences, provision of advice and legal, media, political and professional contacts/networking
Information from professional colleagues and organisations across different agencies	Professional colleagues BASW, BAPSCAN, SWAN, Trade Unions, LSCBs, MAPPAs, GSCC	Debate, policy analysis, consultancy, conference, publications. Reference to social work value base
Information from academic colleagues	Academic colleagues	Publications, journal articles, chapters, books, conferences, book reviews. London Metropolitan University writing group
Information from campaign groups	Children's rights campaigners	Consultancy, networking, publicity, policy development, case advice
Parliamentary processes	Politicians, researchers	Meetings, consultancy, briefings, parliamentary questions, debates, evidence to select committees, policy development
Serious case reviews and child protection inquiries	Lawyers, social workers and other professionals through expert witness work	Expert witness, consultation, extending networks of influence, policy development. Advice to whistleblowers and assistance through legal, political, professional and media contacts. Development of case law
Documentary evidence	Civil servants, authors	Campaigning, response to consultations, policy development. Feedback and evaluation through the media, political processes and publications
Research evidence	Academics	Evaluation, review and comment/feedback/debate
Media information	Journalists, Producers/Directors, researchers	Media: television – news and documentaries, radio, online, tabloids, broadsheets, online media, letters/comment. Networking with survivors, campaigners, professionals, academics and politicians.

Case example to demonstrate methodology

The author has consistently campaigned to oppose the abolition of the child protection register (CPR) and this is an issue raised throughout the Documents and published works (Appendices B and D). This case example explains the processes involved in one aspect of the author's activism to protect children. The CPR is described as a working tool in Documents 3 and 4 in relation to child sexual abuse and female genital cutting and in Documents 5 (34) and 6 (xxxi) where the author's concerns about the demise of the CPR are outlined. This case example demonstrates a process of social work activism based on critical reflection on professional practice informed by knowledge derived from research, documentary evidence, dialogue and policy analysis.

The author's knowledge of the child protection register as a tool for protecting children was grounded in sixteen years of practice experience as a social worker in the London Borough of Islington and as child protection manager and conference chair in the London Borough of Harrow. In Harrow, as custodian of the CPR, she implemented the system for the register to be accessed by emergency services. Following the murder of two children in the Dalson case in Haringey (McDonald 1994) where police had received alerts from neighbours, but had not realised that the children's names were on the CPR, it became important to ensure that all emergency services gained access to that information. The author trained over two hundred police as well as hospital staff in Harrow in order to teach them a proportionate and effective response to this CPR alert. Prior to leaving her Harrow post, the author's manager removed fifty children's names from the CPR without due process. The author was then aware that government performance targets were influencing authorities to reduce the numbers on the CPR in order to achieve star ratings. Various colleagues began to inform the author that the government seemed intent on abolishing the CPR and that they were under pressure to reduce numbers by following a 'child in need' rather than a 'child protection' approach. The author was herself managerially instructed prior to a child protection conference not to conclude that the child's name should be on the CPR which was an attempt to undermine her and her colleagues' professional judgment.

Concerned at these developments the author wrote a Guardian comment article, but in 2002 the editor did not consider it of sufficient public interest and it remained unpublished. She then alerted survivor campaigns and Phil Frampton, careleaver, assisted the author in gaining a column in the Big Issue (Davies 2004b). This article related the abolition of the CPR to the introduction of the databases for all

children. The author was in dialogue with Martin Calder, academic and practitioner, who invited her to speak on this subject at a conference (Davies 2004c). The author then became further informed about the development of the databases by Terri Dowty of the children's rights group ARCH (Action on Rights for Children) and Professor Eileen Munro, who were later co-authors of a report for the Information Commissioner (Anderson et al 2006). She attended a seminar at the London School of Economics in July 2006 (childrenoversurveilled.lse.ac.uk/programme.htm), participated in an academic work group on this subject and, in 2008, contributed to three ARCH You Tube videos (www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRQr2VrtX-0).

Whilst the author was acting as expert witness for Lisa Arthurworrey she became aware that one of the eleven charges against Arthurworrey was that she had failed to convene a child protection conference. A disciplinary judgment had inferred that Victoria may not have died if her name had been on the CPR. This view was reinforced by the author's knowledge of research by Reder et al (1993, 1999) which demonstrated that children who died from abuse were very rarely children whose names were on the CPR and therefore indicating that it acted as a protective device. The author consistently raised the contradiction therefore in Lord Laming's recommendations 13 and 17 in the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report, 'to replace the CPR with a more effective system' and to 'operate a national children's database' (Laming 2003:373). The author studied the government response to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry '*Keeping Children Safe*' which stated that 'the child protection register will become redundant' (DfES 2003:77). This document quoted, but did not source, the research which supposedly questioned the efficacy of the CPR. The author sought to ascertain from the DfES the source of the research but received no response. She then met with Annette Brook MP and prepared parliamentary questions and a parliamentary briefing with Terri Dowty from ARCH to inform Baroness Walmsley's child protection debate (Appendix G). The ministerial response obtained was that the register had been abolished on the basis of no research findings (Dhanda 2007), which reinforced the author's view.

Through study of government guidance (DfES 2006), the author realized that the CPR, in place since the 80's and formerly a cornerstone of the protection systems, had in effect been airbrushed out of policy. The only reference to the CPR on the DCSF government website was the guidance for authorities on how to proceed with technical arrangements for phasing out the CPR (DCSF 2007). The author noted the change contained within that document from a skilled professional social work Custodian of the CPR to that of an IT Designated Manager for providing information about the child (DCSF 2007). This shift reflected other aspects of deprofessionalisation of social workers following

the Climbié Inquiry and raised much concern about the range of people who would now have access to this highly sensitive information about child victims of abuse. The author also informed Tim Loughton MP (Shadow Minister for Children) of her concerns that, since the abolition of the CPR, hospitals no longer received the alert to children at high risk of harm. Through Freedom of Information requests Loughton ascertained that in a survey of 120 hospitals the majority stated that they no longer received information about whether a child was the subject of a child protection plan (Rose, 2009). Teresa Cooper, survivor of institutional abuse, asked the author to assist survivors' understanding of the importance of the CPR and of the significance of the abolition. In response, the author wrote an online article for the survivors' website (www.No2Abuse.com) (Davies 2008b).

Prior to his death, Peter Connolly's name was on the CPR in 2007 before the register was abolished in April 2008. This led journalists to enquire of the author what purpose the CPR had served because the protocol had not protected this child. The author explained to the media that the CPR in Haringey at that time was already in decline and proving ineffective. This point was strengthened by provision of the child protection register statistics which showed a substantial reduction over a ten year period in relation to physical and sexual abuse (Frost and Parton 2009:76). This debate was included throughout the author's media coverage at the time when she attempted to bring the complex professional implications of the policy to public attention. In an interview for BBC breakfast television she was asked to speak about the CPR and when informed of its abolition the surprised presenters abandoned the discussion of this topic (Appendices B and D).

The abolition of the CPR was a central symbol of the policy shift away from the protection of abused children and the author developed this single issue campaign in order to draw political, professional and public attention to the demise of child protection systems. Although making some criticism of the children's databases, neither the government response to the death of Peter Connolly (DCSF 2009a and b), Lord Laming's Progress report (2009) nor the Social Work Taskforce (2009) made any mention of the abolished CPR and the revised 'Working Together' (DCSF 2009c) did not reinstate the register.

Analysis and findings of a search of academic texts using key terms relating to child protection investigation.

Through secondary research the author became aware of infrequent reference to key aspects of proactive child protection policy and practice. She hypothesised that academic texts have, in a recent

ten year period, placed remarkably little emphasis on central components of effective child protection work. In order to test this hypothesis, 42 academic texts were selected as being significant contributions within this field which focused on child protection, safeguarding children, child care policy and practice and children's services (Table 2: Appendix C). The authors of the texts were mainly social work and social policy academics and other professionals but not all had a background in social work child protection practice. The texts were written between 2000 and 2009 representing a ten year period after the introduction of the assessment processes (DoH 2000) and the beginning of implementation of refocusing away from child protection systems of intervention to protect children.

The texts were analysed with respect to five terms;

- joint investigation
- police child abuse investigation team/unit
- Section 47 (Children Act 1989)
- strategy meeting
- child protection register/child protection plan

The terms were selected because in the author's view they signified coverage of child protection investigation relating to the joint investigation aspect of multi-agency child protection work as defined in the 'Working Together' statutory guidance (DfES 2006 and 2009) and the legislation within the Children Acts 1989 and 2004.

Each book index was checked for the five terms but the author also searched within related headings such as 'the Children Act 1989', 'working together' or 'inter-professional work'. The text was then examined in order to establish the context of the term referenced. Where text books were edited volumes the search related to specific chapters on child protection or safeguarding topics. The findings were listed as 'statistics', 'descriptive', or 'refocusing' according to whether the terms were related to statistical data, presented a solely descriptive account or used the terms in relation to refocusing. Any other context in which work with police was addressed in the text was also included. Texts which did not address joint investigation in child protection work did sometimes include statutory police powers of protection (CA, 1989), the police role in relation to youth crime, the police role in relation to adult domestic violence and the role of the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements.

The findings (Table 3: Appendix C) demonstrated that the author's hypothesis was correct in that authors had provided minimal coverage of these terms. The fact that a text did not include key terms related to intervention to protect children is not a criticism of any particular author or text but the analysis does provide an overview of how little attention has been paid by academics to the very basic

systems that work to protect children from significant harm and how, in the main, coverage relates to an historical account, a descriptive or statistical analysis or to assessment rather than investigative processes. Lord Laming commented that he was amazed that no-one in the agencies 'had the presence of mind to follow what are relatively straightforward procedures about how to respond to a child about whom there are concerns of deliberate harm' (Laming 2003:1.1). Academic texts are an important source of knowledge at qualifying and post qualifying levels and yet these findings demonstrate that this body of child protection knowledge has been scarcely available over the last ten years.

The key themes

1. A child rights approach including hearing the voices of children, adult survivors of abuse and professionals.

Anti-oppressive practice opposing childism, discrimination against children, is the foundation of all the documents in the thesis which address the rights of all children to be protected from harm (UN 1989. Article 19). This approach differs fundamentally from the ECM (HM Treasury 2003) outcomes which, including '*Staying Safe*' and do not place legal obligations on central government or give rights to children (CRAE 2006:1-4, Archard 2009:45).

The refocusing agenda, in the mid-90's, placed emphasis on prevention policies as early intervention to 'improve educational attainment and lower risk of juvenile offending' (Rose 1994:3). This approach marked the beginning of children's policy framed around the prediction of children at risk of becoming villains rather than as victims of abuse – a social investment model (Morris 2005) leading Goldson to comment that the 'deserving child is no more' (2002:690). Children devalued as 'becomings' not 'beings' were expected to be compliant with government prescribed outcomes and contribute as citizens to the existing social/economic order regardless of their experience of inequitable social and economic structures, oppression and discrimination (Littlechild 1998:121, Fawcett et al 2004, Farrington 2000, Hawkins 1992, Williams 2004:408). This approach was further developed with the policy '*Think Family*' (Social Exclusion Task Force 2007) and in response to the Peter Connolly case, Laming promoted a, 'remodelling' form of children's social work. This involved a systemic therapeutic family approach locating the causation of risk within the family and emphasising parental

control (Laming 2009:48, Davies 2009f)¹. Based on developmental rather than significant harm (CA 1989, Stevenson 1998, 2000) the focus of change was situated within the family rather than in structural change. Munro critiqued the evidence of the effectiveness of such programmes (2007:117).

Parton referred to the state shifting from a model of welfare which compensated people for the 'diswelfares' they may have experienced as a consequence of the market to one that invested in the quality of human capital to support engagement with the market (Parton 2009:71). The primacy of the market includes the continuance of the industry of child abuse and protection of the interests of those involved in or colluding with crimes against children. Within this model, the protection needs of children risk being defined as secondary to the need for a supply of children to the adoption market, for organ harvesting, domestic and sexual exploitation, trade in abusive images and trafficking for child sex abuse and ritual networks.

Prevention and family support strategies, initially defined as providing a response to children's needs, became a pivotal means of working with families in the control rather than protection of their children. This development provided the rationale for the 'either/or' approach. It was significant that the hub of agencies defined in ECM included not the police Child Abuse Investigation teams but the police in Youth Offending teams (HM Treasury 2003:54). Wattam was critical of '*Messages from Research*' (DoH 1995) for omitting a children's rights perspective, being paternalistic and lacking the inclusion of children's views (1996b:195 and 198). It was Calder's view that as child abuse victims were being merged into the category of children in need and the term 'safeguarding' introduced, child protection was no longer an accepted term and 'the very words of child protection, child abuse and risk have virtually disappeared from the language (Calder 2007a:521, Munro and Calder 2005:439, Parton 2004:92, Parton 2006:7, Tuck 2004:44). The author was critical of a 'safeguarding' research review from the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (Community Care 2010) which 'preached flawed and ill-informed approaches focusing on the assessment of need rather than the investigation of child abuse (Davies 2010b).

Document 1 evidenced early warnings that the refocusing approach was flawed and Rose, at the Department of Health, in pursuing a non investigative approach, acknowledged that the strategy included accompanying risks because a family support approach, 'could leave some children more vulnerable' and questioned what the political reaction might be to some 'hard-end cases being missed'

¹ Laming's example of 'remodelling' is based on the London Borough of Hackney restructuring entitled '*Reclaiming social work*' (Devo, 2008).

(Rose 1994:4, Robertson 1996 and Guardian 1997 cited by Littlechild 1998, Morrison 2000:367). There was concern that a family support approach used in child sexual abuse cases did not focus on intra familial abuse, did not confront power issues, left non-abusive families insufficiently protected and was more effective at protecting adult perpetrators than children (Pringle, 1998:166 and 175, Campbell 1995). Children's wellbeing became defined in terms of the educational needs of future citizens and children's social work was subsumed within education at every level of governance which was a trend well illustrated by the critique of a Director of Children's Services with an education background in the Peter Connolly case (Parton 2006:7, 2009:72, Reid 2008).

The author's work with adult survivors of abuse is documented in Appendix A with specific reference to Documents 3 and 4. The author's work to support professionals who struggle to represent the interests of children is addressed as the sixth key theme.

2. Prevention and protection seen not as alternatives but as two essential strategies in the protection of children from harm

The perception of protective child abuse as over-interventionist began to be enshrined in public policy with the publication '*Seen but not heard*' (Audit Commission 1994) which proposed a redirection of resources from child protection services to those of universal family support. Importantly, these were presented as distinctive practice models. It was suggested that this 'rebalancing' approach would reduce stress to families caused by child protection intervention by diverting them to community resources (Audit Commission 1994:14-15). The fact that, following referral, a percentage of children were screened out of protective processes was perceived as wasteful of resources and stigmatizing of families (Gibbons et al 1995, Thorpe 1994). Wattam, however, considered it impossible to adequately predict from the outset which cases would and would not turn out to be serious (1996a:12). The policy shift aimed to narrow child protection by reducing investigations by 60% (Bilson 1997:9). It was at this time that '*Messages from Research*' (DoH 1995), a collection of studies, rapidly gained the status of policy (Reder and Duncan 2004:104). The author attended refocusing 'road shows' (Jones and O'Loughlin in Calder and Hackett 2003:142) which vigorously discouraged joint work with police and promoted the family support model because too many children were being caught in the 'over-forensic' and 'incident-led' child protection net (DoH 1995:16). This policy directive was based on the work of Farrow in the US, who stated that, in a context of increased economic disadvantage and child maltreatment, a family support system created the possibility of stemming the flow of 'at risk' families

(1997:48). This shift in policy marked the beginning of a transfer of resources from 'expensive' statutory services to those universally provided by the private sector (Parton 1997:9, Rose 1994:1, Waller 1994:4).

It became evident that there were few resources available for early intervention strategies. Instead of a 'social distributionist' discourse of poverty and inequality there was a return to a 'social integrationist' model emphasising individual reform and the responsabilization of parents (Taylor 2009:33). Given the lack of reference to the social, economic or political context of children and family needs, it was questioned whether social workers, being asked to shift their perspective to family support, were expected to resolve problems well beyond their remit and responsibility and it was said that the failure of early intervention within an unequal society could only lead to an increase in the state control of children (Parton 1997:11, Platt 2006:271, Prout 2000:306).

Rose, was cited as saying that the primary focus of a social worker was not to find out whether a child has been abused or a crime committed but to make enquiries and be helpful (Stone 1994:16, Parton 1997:9). She recommended the use of Section 17 (CA 1989) child in need assessments rather than Section 47 enquiries as a lighter touch which avoided gathering evidence of a particular incident (Rose 1994:3, Wattam 1997 in Parton, 1997:109). Parton noted that the assessment of risk at referral and investigation stages had not been examined in *'Messages from Research'* (Parton 1996b:7, Calder and Hackett 2003, DoH 1995) and Calder, concerned at the shift away from protection predicted that, 'social workers will continue to engage with risk but in the context of official guidance that has nothing specific to say on the subject' (2003:46).

It is difficult for social workers to demonstrate the use of good judgment and to combine qualities of intuition and analysis within the target driven, proceduralised, social work that is the basis of assessment protocols (Munro 2003, Walker 2001:32). Parton argued that to keep both a child protection case and a family support case open and equally valid at the same time and to judge when the risk in a family support case has escalated requires a high level of skill (Parton 2002:4, Littlechild 1998, Platt 2006, Corby 2003:197). Waldfogel, in an American context, recommended a synthesis of protection and support services to avoid a 'one-size fits all' approach and suggested a customized or differential response requiring social worker judgment (2000a:47, 2000b:317, 2009:139).

In Document 6 the author explored the distinction between assessment and investigation and the confusion caused through the Working Together guidance (DfES 2006:5.60) which stated that a 'core assessment is the means by which a Section 47 is carried out'. A single agency, social work core assessment with a tick-box approach, limited timescales, possibility of delaying action to protect, a requirement for parental consent, absence of risk assessment and a lack of focus on known and alleged perpetrators is the wrong tool for social workers conducting a child protection investigation. Working Together (DCSF 2009c:5.62) repeated the same error although it also stated that a core assessment is part of a Section 47 (DCSF 2009c:15). The author sought clarification on this contradiction in the guidance from Jenny Gray, Professional Advisor to the National Safeguarding Delivery Unit, and received an unhelpful response which included that 'the guidance must be read in its entirety' (Gray 2010). The revised guidance added content about seeing the child alone and about the focus of an initial assessment including the word 'safety' as well as the prior editions phrase the 'welfare of the child' (DCSF 2009c:5.46). Yet the initial assessment protocol does not include a procedure for the investigation of abuse and seeing the child alone outside of an investigative context will not protect a child.

3. The central importance of joint work with the police in the investigation of child abuse

In 2004, Holland and Scourfield wrote that 'at first sight it can be difficult to conceive of any aspect of what is essentially a police role that might be seen as liberating' (2004:21). Yet, children will not gain protection without the targeting of perpetrators by law enforcement agencies. It is an example of childism that their rights are secondary to those of adults where the right to be protected from crime including violence and exploitation, would not be questioned. Waldfogel confirmed that there are 'good reasons for the investigative orientation of the traditional CPS response .. when an authoritative response is necessary' (Waldfogel 2009:141). It was a key conclusion of the Serious Case Review concerning Peter Connolly that, 'what was needed was an authoritative approach to the family with a tight grip on the intervention' (Haringey LSCB 2009: 4.1.12).

A lack of joint investigation of child abuse allegations risks flawed judgments in the context of both over and under intervention with consequential breaches of the right of children to protection. In Appendix C the author explores the lack of focus in academic texts to the subject of joint investigation and the role of the police. However, 'Baby X Britain's child abusers brought to justice' (Keeble 2010)

is an account of a Child Abuse Investigation Team police officer's work and, although written under a pseudonym, emphasised and described the importance of positive joint work with social workers.

The move away from joint investigation began in the mid-90's with the non-forensic approach. Rose argued that child protection services, 'caused anger and alienation, wasted resources and did not help children' (Rose 1994:4). This was a distortion of research findings which confirmed that those children who gained child protection registration also gained protection from harm (Gibbons et al 1995). A number of studies reflected both parent's and children's positive experience of child protection processes (Goldberg R et al 1996, Gleeson et al 2001 cited in Dale 2004, Spratt and Callan 2004, Dumbrill 2005, Dale et al 2005:109). In a recent chapter, Rose surprisingly commented that the child protection review, 'is an integral part of the work between professionals and families and should not be regarded as an unnecessary or unwelcome imposition on families and professionals' (Rose in Cleaver et al 2009: 253). She, however, omitted reference in this chapter to police or the police role in the investigation of significant harm, made no mention of possible criminal proceedings in the planning (2009:264) and referred to liaison with staff in other agencies but with no listing of the police.

The police role also declined with the shift from 'professionalism and community to managerialism and the market' (Pringle 1998:43, Parton 2009:70). With privatisation of assessment services child protection specialist social work teams, which had a history of joint working, were closed down. Following Laming's recommendation 99 (2003:382) which emphasized a police focus on crime distinct from social worker's assessment of need, the police changed their approach from a Y model of joint investigation to an H model of working in parallel (Bourlet in Kennison and Goodman 2008:122) an approach evident in the Peter Connolly case (Guardian, 2009). The government response to this tragedy was to establish a social work taskforce but this did not address the demise of the police role in child protection (DCSF 2009 a and b, Davies 2009a). Lord Laming's report (2009) made no reference to joint investigation and referred to police interviewing of children with regard to children in distress rather than as child victims and witnesses (Laming 2009:60). The most recent revision of Working Together to Safeguard Children (DCSF 2009c:10) stated that Local Safeguarding Children Boards should decide the joint investigation protocol locally. This guidance was based on a consultation process that did not include questions about joint working between police and social workers or investigation procedures (HM Government 2010). When so many other aspects of policy and practice are centrally dictated, it is the author's view that it was surprising that such an important aspect of child protection practice was left to local discretion. Police guidance (NPIA 2009:3.1.2) made reference to

the term *joint investigation* but with minimal elaboration. The perspective was also undermined by a subsequent reference, in the same document, to social care workers having only a discretionary involvement in the interviewing of child victims (NPIA 4.7.1, Appendix A), an approach which contradicted the statutory guidance (CJS 2007:2.12, Document 6).

The Chair of the House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee, Barry Sheerman MP commented on the author's evidence that, 'it was important to get on record that you are saying that something quite dramatic changed in terms of how the police pursued the possibility of a child being at risk' (2009: 76). Recent developments concerning the joint training of police and social workers are addressed by the author in Appendix A and it is important to note that government commissioned research cited in *Working Together* (DCSF 2009c:112) omitted to include this aspect of child protection training (Carpenter 2009).

4. The involvement of the community in raising and reporting concern about abused children

Within two London authorities the role of the community in the protection of children was central to the author's practice. With training and awareness raising, key protective adults could be identified to work with professionals in identifying child abuse, alerting the authorities and monitoring known child sex offenders. In practice, this approach increased the number of referrals to the statutory services and also provided a response to the specific protection needs of children from diverse communities by identifying gaps in provision.

The Assessment Framework (DoH 2000) ecological dimension presented a different approach which considered the social and economic needs of families from a perspective of assisting them to adjust to their responsibilities as citizens using the sole methodology of individual casework. Community work as a means of empowerment to protect children and adults from harm was not included and instead was developed as an instrument of control to manage young people's behaviour.

Parton was critical of a public health model of primary prevention (Hardiker et al 1991) which, because it aimed to reduce secondary and tertiary intervention by increasing primary approaches, represented a threat to children's rights through over intrusive intervention (Lonne et al 2009:10, Parton, 2006). However, emerging evidence suggests that universal service provision may lead to the

identification of a greater volume of child protection work and a review of the Sure Start prevention programme supported this view (Calder 2007, Carpenter et al 2007:17).

Protective intervention as a proportionate response to children who required protection involved a community of protective adults to assist the process of identification and referral of high risk children enabling an increased number of children to gain safety. This was a strategy recommended by the National Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse (1996, Arnold and Cloke 1998:309). This differed from a primary prevention model aimed at reducing child protection referrals which developed into a system of unprecedented state surveillance of children and used factors of social deprivation associated with child abuse to target suspected young criminals (Hine 2006). One such primary prevention initiative based on self report data was '*Communities that Care*' (CtC) (Farrington 2000, Hawkins 1992), designed to improve school achievement while reducing the risks of crime and other problems among young people (Crow and France 2004). Nelson and the author challenged the ethics of this project which collated data from children without triggering protective action (Davies 2005a cited in Nelson 2005). Nelson and Baldwin commented that the CtC focus was on behaviour 'by' children and failed to address causal abusive factors of such behaviour (2002:224, 2004).²

The documents in this thesis emphasise the essential role of the community in informing investigative processes. This approach extends that of Waldfogel (2000a:53) who suggested that community partners work with children and families where the degree of risk was not high and that of Lonne et al (2009:141-150) who acknowledged the risk of losing protection within primary prevention but did not present community based support as an option with a model of statutory intervention. An example from the author's practice in the London Borough of Harrow involved the police having identified over two hundred abusive images of what they thought to be local children. The police provided the author with an album of photographs of the children's faces and she organised trained and identified members of the local community such as teachers and health visitors to see if they could identify the children. Nine children were identified as local children and following investigative interviews this enabled further charges to be made. Importantly the children were then able to access therapy. All the children were known to children's services as having behavioural problems but until this time the reasons for their problems had not been understood. In another instance residents on a local housing estate, where

² The author and Nelson commented at a conference following a presentation by Jack (2007) because his paper did not accurately represent their views about the role of communities in investigation of abuse.

some had been trained as ‘protectors’, had raised concern about some men seen to be touching children and playing with them on the estate. The author discovered that a youth work project had been established without informing the parents and residents. The author arranged for the youth leaders to meet with the residents and the situation was diffused.

The police involvement of the community in the management of known child sex offenders through a pilot scheme enables controlled notification (Home Office 2010). Following 585 inquiries to the pilot projects it was found that 24 children were in contact with child sex offenders. However, these 24 children should already have been identified as requiring child protection planning and it is important to examine how and why these children were failed by existing systems such as the MAPPAs. Allowing individual members of the public to make checks risks enabling revenge attacks (Travis 2010). Community notification through a trained network of protective adults would be better managed. At a local level, as stated in Document 2, under the authority of the LSCB’s, the community may be empowered to work with professionals in the identification and investigation of child abuse. Laming, when examining the role of the church in the Climbié case, referred to the importance of the eyes and ears of the community in protecting children (Laming 2003:17.30). However, national schemes are open to being exploited for political reasons to establish a climate of fear or to target specific minority groups.

5. Working positively with the media in seeking justice for children

It is the author’s experience that it is working together with the media to achieve change that furthers political debate. She has worked with the media on a number of issues such as;

- the Islington child abuse scandal
- the case of Lisa Arthurworrey
- supporting Haringey whistleblower Nevres Kemal
- campaigning against Margaret Hodge’s appointment as Minister for Children
- supporting Demetrious Panton Islington survivor
- supporting the Jersey care leavers and promoting the need for a UK investigation
- supporting Teresa Cooper’s exposure of the abuse and drugs regime in children’s homes
- opposing the children’s databases
- challenging the abolition of the child protection register and lack of joint working with police
- challenging the appointment of a pharmaceutical company vice president to the board of Ofsted

- questioning the appointment of John Goldup, former Islington manager, as head of social care for Ofsted
- questioning the appointment of Lord Laming to conduct the review of child protection after the Peter Connolly case
- child protection policy in the Peter Connolly case

The author's first contact with the media was when Superintendent Hames, then in charge of the Obscene Publications Unit at New Scotland Yard, told her that the only way to address the Islington children's home abuse network was to expose individual abusers one by one in the media. He said no other methods would work because the networks were powerful and actions to intervene would be thwarted by those involved. Hames involved Eileen Fairweather, the investigative freelance journalist, and the author worked with them both for about 4 months before the first of over 200 articles about Islington appeared in the press. When the first story broke in October 1992 several prominent Islington staff left their posts and it is known that some of them went abroad. Each of the thirteen Inquiries concerning the abuse of children in Islington only followed media pressure. Fairweather wrote a dossier of evidence which was presented to the police and the Department of Health and Fairweather, with the journalist Stewart Payne, won the Press award of the year for their work. There were various attempts to discredit their work by suggesting they had paid children for their accounts but these were not upheld by the Press Commission. The author met the Editor of the Evening Standard who told her that he would cover the story until every known child victim of the network was safe.

Through her work with investigative journalists, the author developed skills in working across the range of television, radio and print media i.e. tabloids, broadsheets and specialist magazines (Appendix D). Her work with Eileen Fairweather and Angus Stickler of the BBC Today programme is documented on the author's website (www.lizdavies.net). She has the support of a trusted media network ready to spring into action as it did in the Peter Connolly case to pre-empt negative media coverage of the social workers and to draw attention to the limitations of government policies. The BBC journalists provided coverage to the author each day from their attendance at the trial of the three defendants. She constructed a chronology from this evidence and through analysis of the information was able to work with the producer of Panorama and pre-record news programmes for all the main channels. Following the author's role in the Arthurworrey campaign, many journalists were sympathetic to the social workers and did not want to scapegoat them (Appendix E). The author and Fairweather made links between Peter's mother and a relative who was a victim of the Islington

children's home scandal indicating an organised abuse aspect to the case (Fairweather 2008b and c). The BBC, Sky News and Channel 4's news team spent much time with the author learning about the subject and provided a high standard of television news. The author wrote articles across a range of print media including the Daily Mail, Guardian, Community Care and Professional Social Work (Davies 2008 c,d,e and f 2009b and g) and participated in an online debate on the issues raised by the case (Davies 2008c). The author also acts as a conduit between social workers and trusted media contacts. She assisted one social worker in contributing to Channel Four news, following the Peter Connolly case. He appeared in disguise to confront the Minister of Education with the message that the work of protecting children was unachievable within current unsafe working conditions. When new stories hit the headlines, Michael Hames (now retired), Professor Eileen Munro and the author often consulted each other about appropriate responses and to clarify which media outlets each person was covering.

There has been little published about social work and the media other than a critique of negative coverage (Kitzinger and Skidmore 1995, Kitzinger 1996, Franklin and Horwath 1996, Community Care 2009). Some authors have supported a non-defensive approach to the media and urged social workers to take opportunities to promote their views (Ayre 2001:899, Franklin and Parton (Eds) 1991:127). It is not easy for social workers to speak with the media as it is almost always a disciplinary matter. This was almost the author's experience when she wrote her first newspaper article (Douieb 1991) as, despite using a pseudonym and heavily disguising the case, her Islington manager threatened her with dismissal. In 1995, the author was influenced by the media strategy described by the Director of Social Services in Gloucester following the West case (Bridge 1996) and by Valerie Howarth, much blamed at the time of the Jasmine Beckford case, who wrote about the media listening if you work with them (Franklin and Parton (Eds) 1991:128). Now, with blogs and other means of communication social workers are finding more channels to be heard and, following the author's presentation, a Director of Children's Services invited his staff to work with his Press office in speaking with the media (Davies, 2009d). It is the author's view that, if a story needs to be exposed in the interests of children, there is usually a safe way for that to happen whilst protecting the professionals involved by working with trusted journalists. The author has presented this theme at four conferences (Davies 2004a, 2009c, 2009d and 2009e). She will also be a keynote speaker at the national BASPCAN conference in Birmingham on the 10th May 2010 '*Speaking up for children: the media and the LSCB's –on the same side?*'

Wattam commented that, 'those who have the power to define the terms have the power to shape the discourse' (1996:192). This thesis has demonstrated that the media is a powerful means of reclaiming the language of protection and enabling the views of abused children, survivors and those professionals representing their best interests to have a strong and influential voice in working towards restoring an effective child protection system and seeking justice. Lisa Arthurworrey, after ten years, regained her status as a social worker (Davies 2010a) and, without the media, this would not have been possible. Without the extensive and persistent media coverage, and investigative journalism, the abuse of the Islington children would certainly not have been exposed, and Margaret Hodge would not have been removed from her ministerial post.

6. The experience of being silenced

The author was silenced for a ten year period until Margaret Hodge was made Minister for Children. In 2003, the Editor of the Evening Standard asked the author if she would make public that she had been the main whistleblower of the child abuse scandal in support of the Islington survivors, who opposed this political appointment. The author had raised the issues internally by over 15 reports to management, and to the Area Child Protection Committee, and when she left her post she took evidence of serious crime to Scotland Yard. She also presented the case to her trade union Unison, but gained no support. She was represented by the British Association of Social Workers. The story of the author's experience in Islington was the subject of an article by Harris and Bright (2003) and other articles listed in Appendices A, B and D.

It was on meeting Superintendant Hames, of the Obscene Publications Unit, that she gained validation of the fact that she had exposed a widespread child sex abuse network that targeted children within the care system. Previously, in every forum that the author had raised this issue, she had been met with denial and suppression of the information and facts. The author's identity had been protected by both the media and the police, for her own safety. The Evening Standard had learnt of death threats from people claiming to know the whistleblower's identity and others involved in exposing the abuse of children in Islington, including journalists, residential workers and foster carers, had also received serious threats. The author was motivated to leave her employment in Islington when she was instructed by the Assistant Director for Social Services in Islington, in 2001, to place a young child into a foster placement that she had reported to be part of the abuse network. When promoted to her post as child protection manager and trainer in the London Borough of Harrow, a condition of her

employment was that she should sign a statement that she had never spoken with the media about children which was clearly a measure to silence her.

It was Paulo Friere who stated that, 'men are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection (1972:61). The author, in her strategies to protect children within a context of having been silenced, had mirrored the abusers tactics through collating detailed information, secrecy, networking and subterfuge. Because Islington social services would not co-operate with police at the time, the author was sent by the police to meetings across the country to assist in the investigation of numerous networks which had connections with those in Islington. The author met whistleblowers from Nottingham (Social Work Today 1989), Cleveland (Butler Sloss 1988), Orkneys (Clyde 1992) and many others involved with less high profile investigations. Superintendent Hames advised her that any attack would probably be on her professionalism and he recommended that she should pursue an academic career as a form of protection as it would increase her professional status. This, he said, would make it more difficult for her to be targeted.

The author gained support from Geoff Hunt, then Professor of Ethics at the University of Surrey. Because of the need to conceal her identity, she was not able to write a chapter for his book on whistleblowing in the social services (Hunt 1998). The chapter was written instead by the journalist and remains the only academic documentation of the case and the author's role (Fairweather 1998). Kate Cairns, a foster carer, wrote a book based on her experience of the Islington abuse network (Cairns 2006). The author recently wrote the Foreword for the revised edition of 'Surviving Paedophilia' where Cairns addressed tertiary trauma experienced by professionals investigating the abuse of children (Cairns 2010). The author has addressed the topic of whistleblowing in her books (Davies and Townsend 2008:244, Davies and Duckett 2008:154) but has yet to write an account of events in Islington which included the ritual abuse of children and child murders. The final Inquiry reported that a social worker, (i.e. the author), had identified 61 children as victims of the abuse but that they had found no evidence of an abuse network (White and Hart 1995:41, Document 1). Yet this was at the very time when the author was being asked by police to inform other investigations and when intelligence from the Islington evidence was collated with that of Operation Orchid the investigation of the murders of children in London and the South East (Oliver and Smith 1993). One of the children murdered was Jason Swift who had been resident in an Islington children's home shortly prior to his death, although his connection with Islington was always denied by the authority. The author wrote a play, entitled 'Swallowing Glass,' as a fictional account of the abuse of children in

Islington.³ Ken Loach, film director, wrote to the author, and telephoned her, encouraging her to tell the story as a factual account but the author did not think he fully appreciated the risks involved in doing so.

When the author worked in Harrow, she conducted the Serious Case Review following the death of Aliyah Ismail, a girl aged thirteen who died in a context of sexual exploitation. Stewart Payne, journalist for the Evening Standard, covered the story in a number of articles during 1999 (Appendix D, Document 3). The author interviewed many of Aliyah's friends and discovered that there was an extensive abuse network of perpetrators targeting girls. She presented her evidence to the local police who requested the central child abuse investigation command to investigate because the network was so large. The Director of Children's Services commissioned an independent report, which supported the author's perspective but this did not result in police investigation of the network. As a result serious crimes against girls were never investigated despite the author's extensive collation of evidence. The author submitted details of this case in confidence to the Bichard Inquiry (2004) but received no response.

The author gave evidence to 4 of the 13 Islington Inquiries and only then realised that all her notes had been destroyed, although fortunately she had retained copies (White and Hart 1995). It is an interesting question as to why only 4 out of 200 social workers in Islington blew the whistle. Perhaps the reason that more social workers did not come forward is that the author and her allies were labelled obsessional or over zealous and, when the stories were published, many colleagues would not read them because the accounts were presented mainly in the tabloid newspapers (Document 5). Yet, at the time, the Guardian showed little interest in the subject. Some of the most important news coverage about Islington was in the News of the World, a newspaper prepared to take risks in naming particular abusers (Insall 1992, Appendix D). One of the abusers named by that newspaper was Nicholas Rabet who fled to Thailand and was later arrested there for the abuse of 300 boys (Fairweather 2007).

The author has provided support and advice to many whistleblowers and has used the media to tell their stories and gain justice for children (Appendix D). She also had contact in Jersey with Simon

³ The author sent the play to Ken Loach who in a letter to the author dated 25th May 2000 described it as an 'extraordinary, horrifying story. A couple of us have read it and come to similar conclusions. I think it would work best as a diary, in print or possibly on radio. Personally, I can't see it working as fiction. It would mean simplifying the events and characters and the strength of the story is in the detailed factual accuracy. Take that away and the opposition can have a field day in opening up the fact or fiction argument. Nail them with the relentless accuracy of what you write and paradoxically the 'story' becomes stronger'.

Bellwood, a social worker who raised issues concerning children as young as 11 years old being kept in solitary confinement (Ahmed, 2007). Recently she has developed her own website and as a result has heard from many social workers wishing to raise serious matters concerning the protection of children. This has led to her work with Roger Kline at the trade union Aspect who has provided many of them with representation and has written a guide for social workers to inform them of their rights (Kline 2009). The author has noted that, in contrast to the frontline social workers, managers in authorities where there have been scandals have frequently gained improved employment opportunities. As an example, Fairweather has written about the appointment of John Goldup, former Islington manager, as Head of Social Care for Ofsted (Fairweather 2009).

Despite the author's media and academic profile she continues to find difficulty in being heard. The subject matter lends itself to the dynamic that abused children and survivors experience – the accommodation syndrome – they are met with denial and disbelief, and the information is suppressed and often withdrawn (Summit 1983). The author has developed networks and systems for enabling whistleblowers to be heard without compromising their safety, but each case requires persistence, conviction and courage to pursue. In doing this, the author has drawn on her own experience of being silenced to help others find a voice in their efforts to seek justice for children. For example, Nevres Kemal, the Haringey whistleblower, gained a settlement and vindication but remains unable to gain employment despite having fifteen years child protection social work experience. She has changed her career to that of politician (Davies 2009b). It took ten years to remove Neville Mighty's name from the Protection of Children Act list. He was an Islington whistleblower falsely accused of child abuse (Ivory 1993). It took another ten years to assist Lisa Arthurworrey in regaining her career (Davies 2010a). These have been long, hard battles involving many different lawyers, media and political campaigns. Each case represented goes beyond the individual situation to that of major policy and practice issues. Each battle won is a step to retaining effective child protection systems, exposing criminals and crimes against children and confronting the extent to which perpetrators will go to protect their own interests. Friere referred to the role of 'critical witness' which 'if it does not bear fruit at a certain moment and under certain conditions is not thereby rendered incapable of bearing fruit tomorrow (Friere 1972:144). Michael Hames often told the author that abusers' activities and crimes are so vast, and their networks so powerful, that protectors of children can only strive to block their paths and make their actions more difficult to perpetrate.

Conclusion

The arguments posed by advocates of the refocusing agenda, which led to the wholesale review of children's services and demise of protective systems, are the same arguments which have become institutionalised as policy and practice as a direct result of that agenda. Criticism of social work practice by the advocates of refocusing, concerning alleged overzealous professionals and an over forensic approach, led to an increased likelihood of inaccuracy or lack of decision making to protect children - both under and overreaction, both false positives and false negatives (Lonne et al 2009:176). Whilst the Peter Connolly case was an example of under-intervention, the Justice for Families (www.justice-for-families.org.uk) campaign is concerned with allegations of over intervention. The author commented on cases in Norfolk and Nottingham (Davies 2007, 2008a).

The Peter Connolly case accelerated concern at the lack of joint investigation processes (Davies 2009a and b, Guardian 2009). Unexplained injuries, suspicious marks, medical findings, forensic evidence, sibling interviews, parental accounts and investigation of other known adults, were not jointly analysed by police and social workers working together. Police information about previous crimes by adults in the household was not shared and remained unknown to the social workers (Ramesh and Butler 2010). Although Peter Connolly's name was on the child protection register, the child protection conferences were poorly informed by assessments rather than investigations. In court the social worker for Peter Connolly defined her role as to support the family rather than to protect the child and Haringey LSCB published an account of their '*Support offered to family of Child A*' (Haringey LSCB 2008) rather than document the action taken to protect. Panorama exposed that the 'Signs of Safety' a strengths model approach used in Haringey at the time was the basis for social work involvement (BBC 2008, Turnell and Edwards 1997). Yet, analysis of the case has mainly focused on workforce and technology issues in social work with no mention within a government response of the lack of Section 47 joint investigation (DCSF 2009b).

Less than a tenth of child abuse cases are identified by the official services, the response to the protection needs of children are minimal when compared with known prevalence rates and many child abuse cases do not follow a pattern of slow detectable harm, making early intervention to prevent abuse applicable to only a few cases (Littlechild 1998:118, Munro 2005, 2009, Wattam in Parton 1997:117). The numbers of deaths of children known to professionals is increasing (Ofsted 2008, BBC, 2008 (File on 4), Davies 2008d) and social workers paid to protect children lack the systems to

enable them to succeed (Jones 2001, Reder and Duncan 2004:112, Pearl 2005, Green 2006, White 2008, London Conservative Party 2007, Munro 2009, Unison 2009, Samuel 2009). At a British Association of Social Workers London meeting (BASW 2009), which the author attended, social workers spoke of their inability to protect children effectively. They described the reduced status and high costs of child protection, police reluctance to jointly investigate and assessment tools not fit for purpose.

'Working Together' principles were first in place in 1974 (DHSS) and refined through subsequent versions (DHSS 1986, DHSS 1988, DoH 1991, DoH 1999, DfES 2006, DCSF 2009) and the demise of these systems was taken further forward in Laming's review of the progress of child protection (Laming 2009, DCSF, 2009b). Despite the title, the report confused concepts of protection and safeguarding and omitted basic child protection protocols (Davies 2009a, Munro 2009). As in the Climbié case, the social workers for Peter Connolly were dismissed and blamed for the tragedy which distracted attention from the impact of policy on their practice. Laming's report (2009) primarily drew attention to workforce issues and reaffirmed a commitment to prevention as a polarised agenda.

This supporting document has collated evidence of the critical contribution made by the author's social activism to child protection policy and practice. The methodology and key themes provide a context to the six documents and the document commentaries (Appendix A). Although current policy and practice remains situated within the Every Child Matters agenda (HM Treasury, 2003) the author's work in representing the voices of abused children, survivors and whistleblowers has increased both professional and public awareness of the risks to children's safety from this policy development.

As a future project, the author intends to explore the concept of the Scandinavian model of the Children's House and to examine the transferability of this model to a UK context. The Children's Houses aim to provide specialist services for children known to have suffered sexual abuse or violence. The first was established in Iceland in 1998 and there are now also fifteen in Sweden, and seven in Norway. The Children's House provides a comprehensive service for child victims and their families with a focus on the best interests of the child, successful prosecutions of the perpetrators and also treatment for the child and family. The service provides a child-friendly centre for joint interviews of the child and medical examinations with full collaboration between professionals involved and aims to ensure professional competence, experience and knowledge in the investigation of harm to children

(Guobradsson 2002). This will be the next stage of the author's work to contribute to the development of effective child protection policy and practice.

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Appendix A

Analysis of Documents 1-6 presented within three timescales as follows;

- **Summary of the document**
- **The background and historical context of the document**
- **The main content and findings of the document**
- **The impact of the document on policy and practice**

1. 1989-1995

Developing a good practice model of multi-agency child abuse investigation

Document 1: Davies L (1997) *The investigation of organised abuse: considering alternatives*. Chapter 9 in Westcott H and Jones J (1997) *Perspectives on the memorandum. Policy, practice and research in investigative interviewing*. Hampshire. Arena Ashgate Publishers.

Summary of the Document

This chapter presented a new approach to the joint investigation by police and social workers of organised abuse of children. The need for both preventative and proactive protective strategies was emphasised as effective practice in the professional response to the child's need to seek justice. Prevention was defined as including community strategies to inform multi-agency protective intervention. Both strategies included a focus on targeting the perpetrators of crimes against children. It was suggested that the need for children's testimony for criminal proceedings would be minimised by this approach.

The background and historical context of the Document

Two publications illustrate the development of the author's ideas prior to the writing of Document 1. A newspaper article, '*I have done a dawn raid, I have no apologies*' (Douieb 1991) written using a pseudonym whilst the author was a social worker in the London Borough of Islington, described how a child was removed from her mother's care. This article ran counter to the myth of professionals being over zealous which was prevalent following the recommendations of the Cleveland and Orkney Inquiries (Butler-Sloss 1988 and Clyde 1992). Myers referred to an 'escalating chorus of criticism directed against professionals working to protect children' (1994:17).

'*Trial of the Innocents*' (Davies and Higginson 1995) co-authored with Sue Higginson of the NSPCC organised abuse investigation team, presented an alternative view to that of the government, an approach which centred on the rights of the child to protection and justice. It emphasised the need for a proactive, multi agency, investigative approach to the protection of children with a focus on the perpetrator as well as the child. The article prompted debate about possible infringement of the alleged abuser's civil liberties (Thomas 1995, Bibby 1995 and Davies 1995). Sarah Nelson, as an investigative journalist covering the Orkney case, read the article and requested that the author write a chapter for the book '*Perspectives on the Memorandum*' (Westcott and Jones, 1997) (Document 1).

Document 1 was written whilst the author was child protection and training manager in the London Borough of Harrow where she learnt from the authority's experience of institutional abuse investigation (Brannan 1992) and gained experience of co-ordinating organised abuse investigations. Publication of guidance on '*Working Together*' (Department of Health et al 1991b), the interviewing of children (Home Office and DoH 1992) and training for work with child victims of sexual abuse (DoH 1991a) informed the Harrow Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) training group which determined to retain an emphasis on protection despite the refocusing agenda.

As the Harrow member of COCAN (Committee on Child Abuse Networks), the author developed knowledge of the subject of organised abuse. In contrast with the view of La Fontaine (1994), the author contributed details of the Islington child abuse scandal to police research by Superintendent Hames of the Metropolitan police Obscene Publications Unit into forty cases of ritual child sexual abuse which was not published (Alton 1994). The evidence was collated with that of Operation Orchid⁴, partly because Jason Swift, who was murdered by this child sex abuse network, had been resident in an Islington children's home until just prior to his death (Oliver and Smith 1993).⁵

(Document 1) was also informed by the author's experience as a team manager, between 1986 and 1992, and as the whistleblower in the Islington child abuse scandal. Following the first article in the

⁴ Operation Orchid was a large scale organised abuse investigation into the abduction, sexual assault and murder of boys in the East End of London. The author met two professionals who verified Jason Swift's placement in Islington care yet for some unknown reason this fact was always denied by the council.

⁵ Valerie Sinason, consultant child and adult psychotherapist, edited 35 contributions on the subject of ritual abuse including contributions from police and social workers (Sinason, 1994). The author attended the book launch at the House of Commons. This launch led to negative media coverage.

Evening Standard (Fairweather and Payne 1992) ⁶the author contributed to many media articles (Appendix D) and represented by the British Association of Social Workers presented evidence to four of thirteen Islington inquiries. She also supported other social workers in coming forward to the media. The author's role at the time was reviewed in a number of publications (Fairweather in Hunt, 1998, Neuberger 2005:151-3, Harris and Bright 2003, Wolmar 2000:124-6).

The Islington joint police and social work investigation collated a considerable amount of intelligence about the ritual murder of children, abductions and sexual crime but these investigations were curtailed suddenly when investigating police officers were removed from the case and all joint enquiries closed. The police subsequently assisted the author's collaboration with investigators across the country including social workers from the Nottingham investigations (Social Work Today, 1989). This led to the author's access to information about the vast scale of abuse little understood either within the profession or by the public. The final Islington Inquiry report confirmed that child sex abusers had accessed vulnerable children both within the care system and in the community but that, 'allegations of organised abuse were investigated but not substantiated' (White and Hart 1995:47). Yet, contrary to this official view, the author had continued to develop investigative skills through work with the police and investigative journalists. Organised abuse was now a controversial subject as professionals who were exposing it were being publicly vilified and others including Clapton, a former Islington social worker, (1993) added argument to the backlash⁷.

The main content and findings of the Document

The chapter developed the concept of a dual strategy of proactive, focused investigation of known and alleged perpetrators paralleled by preventative intervention aimed at creating an organised network of protective adults around children in the community. It was proposed that children would only gain protection when both social work information and expertise in work with children and families, and police expertise in the investigation of crime, came together in practice. Spence and Wilson (1995) recommended that police and social workers should be co-located in joint investigative teams and in the UK there was a history of some co-location and early evidence of the achievements derived from

⁶ The Editor of the Evening Standard, Stewart Stevens, now deceased, told the author in 1992 that he would keep printing articles until every child in Islington was safe from abuse within the care system. Between 1992 and 2009 the Evening Standard printed over 100 articles on the scandal. When Margaret Hodge became Minister for Children in 2003 Stewart Stevens wrote that the decision had made his blood run cold (Stevens 2003)

⁷ In an email to the author on 7th January 2009, Gary Clapton commented that he retained a belief in the moral panic in relation to satanic ritual abuse

joint working (Metropolitan Police and London Borough of Bexley 1987, Gallagher 2000). An exploration of the history of joint working and training formed the basis of the author's chapter (Document 6) in two training manuals for police and social workers (Davies and Townsend 2008a and 2008b).

Whilst children's policy (Audit Commission 1994, Rose 1994) was proposing a shift away from forensic work, the author instead proposed that, given increased knowledge about the extent of child sexual abuse, social workers should become involved with all aspects of the investigative process including the targeting of the perpetrators, assisting in the study of scene of crime evidence and informing suspect interviews. It was suggested that joint teams needed to be at regional, national and local level in order to address organised networks that extended beyond authority and police boundaries.

A key theme of Document 1 was that the child should not be expected to provide solutions to the abuse. Instead, sources of corroboration other than the child's account, such as forensic, medical, photographic, witness and knowledge of perpetrator strategies should inform an investigation and lead to the minimal involvement of children as witnesses in criminal proceedings. This perspective, shared by Nelson (1997:158) was further developed in Document 3.

The author questioned findings stating that the involvement of police was counter productive in work with parents (DoH 1995:35) Document 1 emphasised the right of the child to safety and the need to assess parents as to whether or not they were collusive in the abuse, victims themselves or proactive protectors.

The impact of the Document on policy and practice

With respect to the development of organised abuse investigation strategies, and joint working, Document 1 identified the essential conflict which Calder referred to as 'a lack of fit' in government guidance. He realised that whilst being directed towards a child in need approach, the criteria for placing a child's name on the child protection register had been expanded to include children exposed to internet abuse, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and domestic violence (Calder 2007a:522). Whilst the criteria were increasing there was a general reduction of children's names on the register achieved largely because of measures to promote compliance with performance targets (Spratt and Callan 2004).

Document 1 emphasised the extent of risk posed by child sex abusers, the scale of child abuse reflected in prevalence surveys, the high numbers of missing children and the need for community strategies to respond effectively to these risks. Child sexual abuse is underreported as children rarely report to statutory agencies and prefer community settings or confidential helplines (Wattam 1996:11). The rights and best interests of the child were central and provided the basis for a critique of child care policy. This Document included examples of innovative models of organised abuse investigation.

A proactive investigative approach and community based prevention strategies to support that approach were presented in Document 1 not as 'either/or' but as two essential aspects of a single child protection strategy to keep children safe from the crimes of child abusers and thus contrasted with children's policy directives to transfer resources from one sector to the other.

2. 1994 - 2000

A critique of child protection policy as it developed after 1994. The need for children to gain protection through both prevention and protection strategies.

The theme of prevention defined as an essential component of protection connects these three documents. Document 2 outlines the rationale for countering the perspective that prevention, in terms of early intervention, is a viable alternative to protection and if in place would lead to a reduction in child protection referrals. It also contests the view that involvement of the community in the protection of children (Barter 2001:270) reduces the need for professional protective intervention.

A prevention strategy which is integral to effective child protection is described as reliant on appropriate public reporting of child abuse and the notification of concerns about alleged and known perpetrators. It is the author's view that increased reporting leads to child protection referrals and interventions more consistent with known prevalence rates. Documents 3 and 4 provide an exploration of the application of this perspective in practice to both child sexual abuse and the abuse of children by female genital cutting.

Document 2: Davies L (2004f) The Difference between Child Abuse and Child Protection Could be You. Creating a Community Network of Protective Adults. *Child Abuse Review*, 13:426-432

Summary of the Document

This Document developed the work presented in Document 1. The author presented the case, based on a practice example derived from professional practice, for the dual strategy of prevention and protection with an essential role for the community in both. In Islington the young people had disclosed abuse to the author through access to a shop-front, patch based, social work service and the local community played an invaluable part in contributing to the child protection investigation (Appendix F). The article challenged the split between protection and prevention which, by 2004, had been replicated in service restructuring.

The concept of the creation of a network of protective adults in the community was developed to clarify the importance of prevention strategies as protective of children. This strategy did not focus solely on disadvantaged communities because child abuse prevalence rates indicate child abuse across all socio-economic classes (Wattam 1997:120) and because all children have a right to protection from harm (UN 1989: Article 19). Wattam expressed concern at community based provision which targeted the 'underclass' and did not address child harm particularly sexual harm and injuries (1996:13). Munro and Calder, critical of the strategy of framing preventive services within social inclusion policies, stated that some forms of abuse such as sexual abuse and domestic violence do not seem to be linked to poverty (2005:442). However, the petition of the *Social Work Action Network* (SWAN) regarding the Peter Connolly case mistakenly assumed a correlation between the child's death and poverty (Lavalette cited by Hunt 2008) - a view explored further by Broadhurst et al (2009:248).

The author was critical of the ecological approach (Jack 2001, and Jack and Gill 2003) which failed to set the child, their carers and their family/community environment into a wider socio-political context and include all forms of oppression (Calder and Hackett 2003:30).

The background and historical context of the Document

The development of a community publicity and training strategy to create a network of protective adults in the community reflected the author's work with the Harrow ACPC between 1995 and 2000. The aim was to raise public awareness, to encourage and ensure accurate reporting of child abuse and

to allow professionals the opportunity to be non-defensive about child protection work (PIAT 1998). Gerrilyn Smith contributed to the training and promoted the concept of a protective ring of adults to insulate a child from potential perpetrators (1995).

The public and local media became aware of the complexities of child protection work, were supportive of professional interventions and assisted implementation of the community notification of known child sex abusers. A three tier child protection training strategy was devised which was replicated in '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' (DoH 1999).

This multi agency strategy was developed in the context of local resistance to the government drive to swiftly fund and implement the Framework of Assessment for Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000a). In contrast, as is further explored in Document 6, there was no funding for the introduction of the revised edition of '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' (DoH 1999).

The author conducted a serious case review in Harrow concerning Aliyah Ismail who died aged 13 years from a drug overdose following sexual exploitation. Known to over 230 professionals since birth, she had received a response as a child in need rather than a child in need of protection. The case attracted media interest and influenced the guidance supplement '*Working together to safeguard children involved in prostitution*' (DoH 2000b), which included the need for investigation to target perpetrators of sexual crime (Davies 2000, Coward et al 2003, Payne 1999).

The main content and findings of the Document

The article provided a basis for challenging the ecological approach promoted as a method of needs assessment (DoH 2000a) which focused on socially disadvantaged children and their adaptation to the socio-economic environment (Jack and Gill 2003). The model, 'sees protection through supporting families in their environments as the best safeguard from harm' (Ward and Rose 2002:215). Jack defined the social capital of the community as a control factor in working towards the prevention of children becoming a risk to society (Jack and Jordan 1999). Garrett stated that the model implied that 'communities' are powerless in the face of globalisation and that social work was merely to aid people 'as the fiery tides of globalisation wash all around them' (2003a:86, 2003b:452). In Document 2, the author supported the development of community strategies to protect all vulnerable children from crimes of abuse and organised criminal networks of child exploitation and acknowledged the inequitable basis of socio/economic structures.

To respond effectively to the protection needs of black and ethnic minority children who are overrepresented within the care system, the community strategy included local ethnic minority communities in training programmes. There has been a recent increase in the numbers of children in care (Garrett 2003a:153) and if child protection systems do not reach black and ethnic minority communities particularly in relation to child sexual abuse, then situations develop to a crisis when diversion from the care system may not be an option (Richards and Ince 2000, Barter 1999, Chand 2008:15). There is a risk that some children, deemed unable to achieve government defined outcomes, risk being defined out of protective services. A series of inspection reports have demonstrated that disabled children, asylum seeking children and children in custody cannot be said to be protected from harm. As well as being the majority of children seeking asylum, black children are five times more likely to be incarcerated than any other group (Jerrom 2003, Stuart and Baines 2004, CSCI, 2005, Ofsted 2007). Parton commented that the Treasury and Home Office as the primary drivers of the ECM policies were more concerned with preventing unemployment and crime than child abuse (2006:985).⁸

The impact of the Document on policy and practice

The author presented this strategy at an NSPCC conference (PIAT 1998). A 'Knowing the Basics' training pack developed in Harrow was published by the company Akamas⁹ as online child protection training accompanied by a book '*Protecting Children - a course reader*' (Davies 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2009i). Both the courses and the book received positive reviews (Weir 2007, Calder 2007b, and McKinnin 2008). The author continues to deliver multi-agency child protection training and attended the House of Commons launch of a unique example of a community based project for sexually abused children as documented in the publication '*See Us Hear Us*' (Nelson 2008).

Document 3: Davies L (2007g) Responding to the Needs of Traumatized Sexually Abused Children. Chapter 10 in Hosin A (Ed) *Responses to Traumatized Children*. Hampshire. Palgrave Macmillan

Summary of the Document

⁸ A campaign '*Every Disabled Child Matters*' (www.edcm.org) has drawn attention to the exclusion of disabled children from the ECM agenda.

⁹ Akamas is a training provider for the wider children's workforce, specialising in professional development for those working with vulnerable or traumatised children and young people.

This chapter was written at the request of the Dr. Amer Hosin, Senior Lecturer in Applied Psychology at London Metropolitan University, following the author's contribution to the MSc Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health. Document 3 developed the thinking outlined in Document 1 and 2 and explored the extent of sexual crime against children and the impact of child sexual abuse. It referred to knowledge about low levels of reporting which informed the community prevention strategies proposed in Document 1 and described in Document 2. Child protection register statistics for child sexual abuse were only 2,500 in 2007 (DCSF 2007) and reduced even further to 2,200 in 2009 (DCSF 2009c). These statistics represent an underestimate when compared with prevalence studies and knowledge about the extent of organised sexual crime against children (Wattam 1997:119, NSPCC Inform 2009 a and b). In Document 3, the decline is explored within the context of the impact of the refocusing agenda with regard to sexual abuse. Gibbons et al (1995) asserted that abuse did not necessarily lead to poor outcomes for children if it took place in homes unless in a context of 'low warmth and high criticism'. This perspective was criticised because the study related only to physical abuse and failed to address the power dynamics present in sexual abuse and long term consequences for the child (Wattam 1996a:3, Pringle 1992, 1993, Nelson 2002).

It has been suggested that the supposed decline in child sexual abuse statistics as explained by factors including increased incarceration of offenders (Jones et al 2001, Finkelhor and Jones 2006) but these arguments are disputed by Kelly who questioned whether shifts in child welfare regimes had unintended consequences such as professionals choosing not to enter the 'danger zone' (2008).

Information provided about the lack of prosecution and conviction of perpetrators of sexual crime further informed the author's perspective about the need for joint investigation and proactive protection strategies as presented in Document 1 but with added concern about reduced police involvement in the investigation of child abuse and a decline in protection systems. Government policy focused on therapeutic interventions rather than the right of the child to seek justice (Jones and Ramchandani 1999, Laming 2009:48, The Cabinet Office 2008) and in Document 3 the importance of support for children both during and after an investigation was included but in the context of the child's right to protection.

The background and historical context of the Document

This document derived from the author's experience of working with children and adult survivors of child sexual abuse during the Islington child abuse investigations and in particular the author's support

of Demetrious Panton, Islington survivor, in his campaign against the appointment of Margaret Hodge as Minister for Children (Davies 2003a and b).

Accounts from survivors were included in two of the author's books (Davies and Townsend, 2008a:138-141, Davies and Duckett 2008, Howells, 2009). Particular reference was made to the work of Frampton¹⁰ (2003), Mason-John (2005), Fyfe (2007), Cooper (2007) and the survivor's groups NAPAC¹¹, CIS'ters¹² and the Survivor's Trust¹³. The author's contact with survivors was the foundation of all her work through the involvement of survivors in training courses, reviewing books by survivors, presenting at conferences and supporting their campaigns and organisations (Davies 2004e, 2005d, 2005f, 2006b, 2007d).¹⁴ The author's work as expert witness for Lisa Arthurworrey, social worker for Victoria Climbié, provided access to documentation from the case with regard to child sexual abuse and provided evidence for Document 3 with regard to the inadequacy of assessment protocols in the protection of sexually abused children (Laming 2003, Pearl 2005).

The main content and findings of the Document

This chapter focused on the protection of children from sexual abuse which as a complex task was increasingly omitted from child care policy and the reasons why professionals may not protect children

¹⁰ Phil Frampton is a survivor and careleaver who wrote about his experiences in his book 'Golly in the Cupboard' (2003). The author made this book a key text for social work students at London Metropolitan University in 2004 and Phil Frampton got in contact with her. They have worked together since that date.

¹¹ NAPAC: National Association of People Abused in Childhood was established in 1997 to provide advice and support to adults who have survived childhood abuse.

¹² CIS'ters : Child Incest Survivors is a survivors group which provides emotional support for women who were sexually abused as children.

¹³ The Survivors Trust: Fay Maxted, Chief Executive of the Survivor's Trust, contributed to the meeting of the Jersey Care Leavers Association, July 2008. The organisation is a national umbrella agency for over 120 specialist voluntary sector agencies providing a range of support services for victims/survivors of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse.

¹⁴ Kate Cairns book '*Surviving Paedophilia*' was based on her experience as a foster carer during the Islington child abuse scandal. The author wrote the Foreword for the book which is based on the experiences of the survivors she cared for and those professionals who bore witness to their trauma (Davies 2006e, Fairweather 2007).

effectively from this form of abuse were explored. Also, as in Documents 1 and 2, dilemmas presented by statutory investigative protocols are examined with regard to the need to target perpetrators and to conduct joint investigation.

The establishment of a trusting relationship is essential to work with child and adult survivors of child sexual abuse. It was significant that Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfES 2006) omitted the prior role of the ACPC as being to develop relationships based on trust and mutual understanding (Department of Health 1999:4.2) – a theme further developed in Chapter 3¹⁵. In her work with the Jersey Care Leavers¹⁶ the author learnt about the breakdown of trust between themselves and the authorities which led to the police investigating historic abuse as a single agency. Protocols based on the triangle of need (DoH 2000a) involve a procedural approach to a subject that instead requires the slow development of mutual trust and creative, situated judgement – a combination of analysis and intuition (Parton 1998:23, Smith 2001, Munro 1999:119, Munro 2002:112, Bray 1997 xv).

The impact of the Document on policy and practice

Document 3 contributed to a multi-agency perspective about child sexual abuse by providing an analysis and critique of the system in the UK. The chapter also informed the author's future work with survivors and care leavers groups.

Following a presentation to the UK care leavers association about the Islington investigation, the author was invited to Jersey, in July 2008, to speak at a public meeting, organised by the Jersey Care Leavers (Davies 2008d, Davies 2008e, Jersey Evening Post 2008). Later that year, the author also presented a conference workshop with Frampton, entitled, 'Jersey- tip of the iceberg' (Davies and Frampton 2008).

The author has also collated evidence of the corporate abuse of vulnerable children in drug trials as exposed in various countries (Parliamentary Debates 2005, CBC archives 2009, Blakeley 2008, Kaufman 2005, and Clayton 2007). She worked with the BBC to expose the institutional and sexual

¹⁵ The government has introduced volunteers in a pilot project to work with children who are subject to protection plans. This is an example of a perspective that supports a non-skilled approach and is based on an America model which does not apply to high risk families. (Child Abuse Prevention Council of Sacramento Inc. 2001, Tunstill 2007).

¹⁶ In July 2008, the author contributed to a public meeting organised by the Jersey Care Leavers Association which was attended by survivors and careleavers from the Jersey children's homes as well as by politicians, professionals and members of the public.

abuse of Teresa Cooper¹⁷ and the drug regime which may have caused the subsequent disability of her children (Stickler 2009, Gillen 2009). With Frampton, the author successfully challenged the Ministerial appointment of the vice president of the pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmith Kline on the board of Ofsted (Davies 2008c).

Document 3 informed research for the BBC Real Story programme 'Saving Becky' to which the author and her colleague Nora Duckett contributed, as well as to an article in the Mail on Sunday (BBC 2006a and b, Knowlsey and Fairweather 2006, Davies 2006a). The documentary emphasised the importance of implementing organised abuse protocols to protect a young woman targeted by child sex abusers.

After reading an article about the author and LA (Marciano 2005), Nevres Kemal a former Haringey social worker, who whistleblow about the lack of protection for sexually abused children, asked the author to be her expert witness and an out of court settlement was achieved (BBC 2008e). The need for Kemal to be released from a high court injunction that prevented her from speaking about the issue was addressed by the author through the media (BBC 2008e, Fairweather 2008a, Doughty and Fernandez 2008). Kemal more recently decided to stand as councillor to promote child protection issues (Purdy 2010).

Document 4: Dustin D and Davies L (2007) Female Genital Cutting and Children's Rights. Implications for Social Work Practice. *Child Care in Practice*, 13(1):3-16

Summary of the Document

This article developed through a shared interest with a university colleague, Dr Dustin, in this aspect of child protection. The authors defined Female Genital Cutting (FGC) as a children's rights issue and emphasised the need for a focus on the perpetrators of this crime and organised abuse investigation as stated in Document 1. The article further explored community network prevention strategies as described in Document 2.

The background and historical context of the Document

¹⁷ Teresa Cooper has a website www.No2abuse.org and coordinates the campaign to expose the use of children in care for drug testing.

The author contributed to this document her practice experience in protecting children from this form of child abuse and in promoting the use of the Children Act 1989 in cases of FGC. This prompted

Forward¹⁸ to request the author's contribution to the House of Lords Select Committee (APPG 2000:19-22, BBC 2001).

The main content and findings of the Document

Document 4 outlined the social work response to a child who is likely to experience or has already experienced FGC and analyses possible professional blocks to that response. As in Document 3, survivor's views were central and the need for community awareness strategies, built on trusting relationships, to inform child protection investigation repeated themes developed in Documents 1,2 and 3. In Document 4 the author was critical of the government 'refocusing' response to this subject which distracted from a protective response (DfES 2004a). The author emphasised the professional duty to protect the child as in any other situation of significant harm to or crime against a child.

The impact of the Document on policy and practice

The author contributed to a press conference of the Genital Autonomy Campaign (2008) when Forward, as the main campaign group against FGM, joined with the campaign by NORM-UK¹⁹ against non therapeutic male circumcision (male genital mutilation or MGM) on the basis that both procedures involve a breach of the child's right to bodily integrity, are irreversible, performed without the child's consent and breach the rights of the child to safety from harm and from harmful traditional practices (UN 1989. Article 19 and 24.3). NORM-UK has raised awareness about the risks involved in MGM and following child deaths associated with the practice in London (Bannerman 2009, Curtis 2007) the London Safeguarding Children Board included guidance on MGM in the London Child Protection Procedures (2007). *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DCSF 2009d), although now including the risk of young women who have experienced FGC dying in childbirth, continued the perspective of the previous guidance (DfES 2006:6.15) in minimising the importance of protective intervention by stating only that 'a local authority may exercise its powers under Section 47 (Children Act 1989)

¹⁸ Forward: Foundation for Women's Health, Research and Development. an international non government organisation was founded in 1983 and aims to advance and protect the health and human rights of African women and girls. It works to eliminate harmful gender based practices that violate women and children's human rights and dignity such as Female Genital Mutilation.

(DCSF 2009 6.18) and in making continued reference to the flawed Local Authority Social Services Letter LASSL (2004a) which was critically analysed in Document 4 (DCSF 2009:6.19).

The article is the only contribution on this subject in social work journals and the material was further developed in a reference manual for an online resource (Davies 2008i). The author also contributes on this topic to two M-level law and psychology modules at London Metropolitan University.

3. 2000-2008

Protection redefined as safeguarding. An examination of the impact of child protection policy from 2000 -2008 on social work practice with specific reference to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry.

Documents 5 and 6 evidenced the development of the author's thinking both prior to and following the Victoria Climbié Inquiry (Laming 2003). Acting as expert witness for Lisa Arthurworrey (LA) provided the author with access to documentation and first hand evidence. The author completed a Bridge-style chronology of events as a basis for analysis (Fitzgerald 1999) and concluded that LA was a victim of government policy shifts and an unsafe working environment.

Document 5: Davies L (2008) Reclaiming the language of child protection. In Calder M (Ed) (2008k) *Contemporary risk assessment in safeguarding children*. Dorset. Russell House Publications

Summary of the Document

Document 5 provided detail of the LA case and related this to the refocusing agenda and the deprofessionalisation of children's social work. Through developing her perspective on changes in child protection policy, she concluded that current government policies were propelling professionals into the abandonment of proven effective methods of protecting children in favour of universal, unrealisable solutions.

The background and historical context of the Document

Calder requested this chapter following communication with the author about his publications (Calder, and Hackett 2003, Munro and Calder 2005, Calder 2004) and the author's conference presentation (Davies 2004a).

Document 5 was based on knowledge gained from the author's experience as expert witness for Lisa Arthurworrey and her actions to reverse negative media coverage of LA's role in the case (Appendix E). In 2001, Fairweather wrote the first positive article and involved the author in reassuring LA about the process (2001). Further positive coverage included two interviews of LA on the Today programme (Stickler 2004), the author's article 'Why I believe in Lisa' (Davies 2004c) and other articles (Davies 2005b and 2005c).

From 2004, the author supported LA in appeals against her dismissal from Haringey, her name having been placed on the Protection of Children Act List and the refusal of social work registration. Judge Pearl, at the Care Standards Tribunal hearing, concluded that LA was fit to work with children, had been the scapegoat for the tragedy of Victoria's death and, following examination of a workload analysis, said that her task of protecting children had been unachievable (Pearl 2005, Oliver 2008). Evidence included that of the link between poor professional practice in Haringey and government policy (Parton 2002, 2004, Munro 2003, 2005, Reder and Duncan 2004).

Assessment guidance had referred to not seeing safeguarding and promoting welfare as two sides of the same coin (DoH 2000a:5) but there continued to be criticism of the investigative approach as being of little benefit to children and a misuse of social work time (Smith 2002:256, Spratt 2001:935). Platt expressed concern that, while the assessment enabled social workers to combine Sections 17 and 47 to both help and protect, the 'event focus' continued to be a defining factor in investigations (2006:278) and an invitation to tender for a research project asked, 'Do the LSCB's still focus mainly on responsive child protection work?' as to do so was failure (DfES 2007).

In Document 5, the author instead considered that, because Working Together (DfES 2006:5.60) had redefined a Section 47 (CA 1989) as a core assessment, the family support model had been implemented at the expense of investigation. Quiggin had earlier expressed concern at the use of assessment protocols which were in 'danger of becoming *the* service at the expense of social work intervention' (2004:80) and Ferguson criticised mechanisation of the task (2004:15). Concern had also been expressed about technical demands on social workers reducing the space for professional judgment in the application of their skill (Calder 2004, Garrett 2005, Munro 2008, Parton 2008, Parton 2009:70, Rustin 2004, White et al 2008), a trend illustrated by the replacement of experienced, social work custodians by IT managers (Barker 2009:157).

The author had submitted a critical response to the *Working Together to Safeguard Children Draft for Consultation* (DfES 2005, Davies 2005g). She wrote that, ‘the costs of implementing this document will be very high. They will be the costs incurred through the deaths of children and the serious harm of children. They will be the costs of professionals leaving the profession in droves’ (Davies 2005g). In response to the consultation regarding ECM (DfES 2003b, Davies 2003c) the author had expressed concern at a lack of research prior to the abolition of the child protection register a fact later confirmed by a response to a parliamentary question (Dhanda 2007) despite a statement in *Keeping Children Safe*, without supportive evidence, that the decision to abolish the register was based on research findings (DfES 2003a:16).

The main content and findings of the Document

Following the conviction of Ian Huntley, for the murder of two children, the Bichard Inquiry (2004) failed to emphasise the importance of joint investigation and instead focused on the need for police intelligence systems. In a response to the Bichard consultation, and in a presentation to the Bichard Inquiry conference (Davies 2004d), the author repeated her concerns about policy failings (DoH 2005, Davies 2005e, Davies 2004b) and recommended a return to a specialist child protection workforce (Davies 2005g).

The document explored the backlash against the effective joint working by police and social workers during the early 90’s which had led to the protection of children and conviction of perpetrators. In view of the division and minimisation of the roles of the two statutory agencies it was suggested that investigations of organised and institutional abuse, as described in Document 1, would be increasingly difficult to implement.

The author also examined the distinction between ‘working together’, which involved specialist professionals from different agencies working through statutory forums to protect children and the concept of ‘partnership working’ between the public and private sector. The Minister for Children had criticised professional silos (Hodge 2004) minimising the importance of professional specialisms. Garrett explored how the word ‘common’ was a feature of the ECM agenda implying that any relevant practitioner could do the job of protecting children which facilitated the increase of ‘for profit’ children’s services (2008:276).

Document 5 explored the business model and increased privatisation of children's services (DfES 2004b:28) as the co-location of children's services within children's centres and extended schools also provided accessible marketplaces for child related products. Reference was made to the role of Wyeth²⁰ pharmaceutical company in the launch of ECM (Kendall 2003).

The impact of the Document on policy and practice

In exposing LA's situation the author drew attention to the failings of government policy. However, despite the success of the hearings and media strategy, the General Social Care Council has only recently approved her registration (Davies 2010). The Care Standards Tribunal case (Pearl 2005:23) altered the law by stating that the POCA list for professional mistakes should be an unusual occurrence, to be used only in the most clear cut of cases (Jarman and Davies 2005).

As a result of publicity in the LA case, the author was contacted by and acted for Haringey whistleblower, Nevres Kemal (Fairweather 2008a) and the foster carer in the Haringey miracle baby case (Dovkants 2008). In 2005, the author also assisted in publicising a report on child abuse in African and Asian communities (Stickler 2005). A 'no blame' approach to social workers, not discounting accountability, has been the subject of work by Bostock et al (2005), Fish et al (2008), Ferguson (2005) and Cooper et al (2003:33) and the author wrote on this with regard to the Peter Connolly case (Davies 2009j).

Document 5 received a positive review (Barnes 2009) and the theme of reclaiming child protection became the subject of a number of conference presentations (Davies 2004a, 2004d, 2005a, 2006b, 2009d). The author wrote a briefing to inform Baroness Walmsley's child protection speech in the House of Lords (Walmsley 2007, Davies and Dowty 2007: Appendix G).

Through contact with Eileen Munro and Terri Dowty (ARCH), the author examined issues relating to technology and children's rights (Davies 2006c) and contributed to three Youtube films (ARCH²¹ 2008).

¹⁸Wyeth pharmaceutical company market many products for children. They were due to co-host an ECM conference, on 16th September 2003, entitled *All together now: the future of children's services* with London Institute for Public Policy Research but Wyeth did not attend on the day. Conference papers are available online: <http://www.ippr.org.uk/events/archive.asp?id=220&fID=46>

¹⁹ ARCH (Action on Rights for the Child) is an internet based children's rights organisation which has taken the lead in examining the implications for children of the children's databases.

Document 5 preceded the publication '*Proactive child protection in social work*' (Davies and Duckett 2008). Duckett had worked with the author in the London Borough of Harrow and their experience of effective child protection practice enabled them to illustrate the impact of government policies on practice. Two chapters in foundation texts (Davies 2007e and 2009c) continued to develop the same themes. During 2008 the author wrote a number of Society Guardian online articles about the demise of child protection (Davies 2008 a and h), a Guardian Response piece (Davies 2007f) and a conference presentation (Davies 2006d).

Key points raised in Document 6 became relevant to the Peter Connolly case. For example, the implementation of a 'signs of safety' family support model (Turnell and Edwards 1997, Shennan 2006) which placed the focus on the mother's parenting rather than the protection of the child (Davies 2008g, BBC 2009). The author's views were well documented (Davies 2008j, Davies 2009h) and informed the shadow Minister for Children. The author provided a submission to the Laming review (Davies 2009a), arranged for LA to write an article (Weathers 2008), worked with Fairweather to relate the Peter Connolly case with the Islington child abuse scandal (Fairweather 2008b, Fairweather 2008c), assisted Panorama programme with research (BBC 2008a, BBC 2009), spoke at conferences (Davies 2009d, Davies 2009e, Davies 2009f, Davies 2009g) and presented on news and radio programmes (BBC 2008c, BBC 2008d, BBC 2008e, Sky 2008, Channel 4 2008 and 2009a and b). Both of Laming's reports (2003 and 2009) took a narrow perspective about the two child tragedies. Despite a global context, he presented the abuse of Victoria Climbié as a UK inter familial child abuse case and paid no attention to the possibility of network abuse in the Baby Peter case (Garrett 2006, Chand 2008, Fairweather 2008b and c, Davies and Duckett 2008:97-8).

Document 6: Davies L (2008) *Joint investigation of child abuse. Working Together Training Together*. Dorset. Russell House. Introductory Chapter

Summary of the Document

Document 6 provided a history and analysis of training conducted jointly between police and social workers as a backdrop to two training manuals (Davies and Townsend 2008a and 2008b). It was written solely by the author. This training is the advanced level child protection training that Lisa Arthurworrey had not accessed (Document 5, Jarman and Davies 2005) and similarly neither Maria Ward the social worker for Peter Connolly nor Gillie Christou her manager had attended this level of training in working with police (Davies 2008j and 2009j)

The background and historical context of the Document

Since the early 90's the author and Townsend, a police trainer, delivered advanced child protection training across London including a two week course to police and social workers at London Metropolitan University (Smith 2004). Following retirement in 2005, Townsend was no longer approved as a police trainer and despite requests for joint training by London authorities, and the validation of the courses at M-level the Metropolitan police did not provide another trainer. The author's decision to write the manuals derived from concern at the reduction in availability of this advanced level training.

The main content and findings of the Document

Document 6 provided an analysis of the history of joint investigation and investigative interview training for police and social workers in the context of policy development and the refocusing agenda making reference to statutory guidance (DHSS 1988, DoH 1991b, DoH 1999, DfES 2006, Home Office and Department of Health 1992, Home Office 2002 and CJS 2007) and research findings. Reference is made to a serious case review at a time when the roles of police and social work were quite separate (Lawson 1989). The author presented the risks of an approach based on assessment processes (DoH 2000a) and considered that there has been a return to a division between the professionals leading to dangerous practice and a reduced focus on perpetrators. Evidence from recent serious case reviews was provided in support of the author's view.

The impact of the Document on policy and practice

Document 6 has been widely accessed by child protection trainers in both police and children's services indicating that practitioners continue to use this approach despite government policy (Puffet and Lepper 2009). A ministerial response to a parliamentary question, informed by the author, about police training made no reference to advanced level child protection training (Loughton 2009) replicating recent government reports (Laming 2003, DCSF 2009b).

Following the Peter Connolly case, Laming (2009:5.27) stated that police officers must receive specialist training to work on child protection over and above core police training, including that of how 'best to talk and listen to children and young people often in distress' and recommended that the Home Office should take national action to ensure that police child protection teams are well resourced and have specialist training to support them in their important responsibilities. The report did not

mention of the type of training or of the complexity and statutory nature of the police task in interviewing child victims and witnesses. Working Together to Safeguard Children (DCSF 2009d:127) identified the need for training members of the workforce who have particular responsibility in relation to Section 47 enquiries and including professionals from health, education, police and children's social care, those who work with complex cases and social work staff responsible for coordinating assessments of children in need. This recent guidance made no mention of joint investigation training for police and social workers, but did state that all joint interviews with children should be conducted with those with specialist training and experience in interviewing children although the type of training was not specified as needing to be for police and social workers together (DCSF 2009d:5.68). Research commissioned by the DCSF into 'Organisation, outcomes and costs of inter-agency training for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' failed to address joint investigation and investigative interview training and even omitted police completely from a list of professionals well represented in the study (Carpenter et al 2009:3). Professor Carpenter informed the author that police and social work training was not included in the study because, although he would have liked to include this training, it was not the responsibility of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Carpenter 2010). It is correct that Local Safeguarding Children Boards are not required to provide the training and because it is provided for only two of their member agencies some will not prioritise the funding of the courses.

Recent police guidance from the National Police Improvement Agency marginalised the role of social workers in the interview process and stated that 'all those involved in interviewing child victims should be trained in the application of ABE and if possible trained in communication with children. In some cases professionals from other agencies such as children's social care may be involved in the interview process, for example if this is in the best interests of the child' (NPIA 2009:4.7.1). However, child protection training by the NPIA has not been well received by some police officers who wanted investigative interviewing emphasized (Puffet and Lepper 2009).

Following the author's comment during a Sky news debate on a reduction in joint training (Davies 2008f) the Metropolitan police child protection training officer tried unsuccessfully to gain approval for the courses at London Metropolitan University. An article about this issue was also posted on the author's website (<http://lizdavies.tumblr.com/post/123381199/police-training-in-child-protection>). Despite the overwhelming lack of government focus on the importance of this training, both training manuals received a positive review in the British Journal of Social Work (Brown, 2009:575-578) and the manuals were presented to the House of Commons Select Committee 'The Training of Children

and Family Social Workers' with the author's submission and oral evidence (House of Commons, Children, Schools and Families Committee 2009:65). The Chair Barry Sheerman MP commented that the author's written evidence was 'very compelling' (House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee 2009:73).

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Appendix C: Analysis and findings of a search of academic texts using key terms relating to child protection investigation.

Table (2) A collation of references to five indicators of child protection practice in academic texts published in a ten year period between 2000 and 2009.

Author	Title	Date	Joint Investigation	Police CAIT	Section 47	Strategy meeting	Child protection register	Police context – other than child protection
Adams R, Dominelli L and Payne M (Eds)	Critical practice in social work	2002	None	None	None	None	None	None
Adams R, Dominelli L and Payne M (Eds)	Social work futures. Crossing boundaries, transforming practice	2005	None	None	None	None	None	Police response to youth crime
Barker J and Hodes D	The child in mind. A child protection handbook	2002	None	None	In context of assessment	None	Child protection conference and plans described	MAPPA
Barker R (Ed)	Making sense of Every Child Matters	2009	Descriptive	None	Descriptive	Descriptive	Refers to abolition of register	None
Beckett C	Child protection	2007	Descriptive	None	Descriptive	Descriptive	Descriptive relating to abolition of register	Police role investigating abuse when a crime
Broadhurst K, Grover C and Jamieson J (Eds)	Critical perspectives on safeguarding children	2009	Descriptive historical account	None	Descriptive re CAF	None	Descriptive historical account	Police role in investigation of crime, contribution to CAF, descriptive re.historical role in working together
Browne K, Hanks H, Stratton P and Hamilton C (Eds)	Early prediction and prevention of child abuse. A Handbook.	2002	None	None	None	None	Statistics descriptive	MAPPA and police response to domestic violence
Butler I and Roberts G	Social work with children and families	2004	None	None	Descriptive	Descriptive	Descriptive	None

Calder M and Hackett S Ed	Assessment in child care Using and developing frameworks for practice	2003	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	None
Cleaver H and Walker S	Assessing children's needs and circumstances. The impact of the assessment framework	2004	None	None	Context of core assessment	Strategy discussion in context of assessment. Descriptive	Statistics	Consultation with and referral to core assessments and police as a source of referrals. Questionnaire findings re assessment framework and initial assessments
Cleaver H, Cawson P, Gorin S and Walker S (Eds)	Safeguarding children. A shared responsibility	2009	General reference to LSCB procedure locally	Descriptive as responsible for investigation of child abuse and practitioners to seek their advice	Re training of police and social workers. Re: treating parents sensitively. Descriptive of Working Together protocols	Need to work sensitively with parents	CP Plans not register	Police investigation presented as single agency. Descriptive of police role on LSCB and MAPPA
Cohen B, Moss P, Petrie P and Wallace J (Eds)	A new deal for children? Reforming education and care in England, Scotland and Sweden	2004	None	None	None	None	None	None
Collins J and Foley P (Eds)	Promoting children's wellbeing, policy and practice	2008	None	None	None	None	None	Police and racism
Corby B	Child abuse towards a knowledge base	2006	None	None	S47 as an order which it is not.	None	Statistics	MAPPA and organised abuse. Police role adding to trauma in cases of child sexual abuse
Dale P, Green R and Fellows R	Child protection assessment following serious injuries to infants. Fine judgments	2005	None	None	Statistics	None	Statistics	Parental view of police intervention

Doyle C	Working with abused children	2006	None	None	None	None	None	Police role described within case studies
Fawcett B, Featherstone B and Goddard J	Contemporary child care policy and practice	2004	None	None	None	None	Statistics	Police complaints
Ferguson H	Protecting children in time	2004	None	None	None	None	None	Historical context of police role in the Climbié case
Frost N and Parton N	Understanding children's social care. Politics, policy and practice	2009	None	None	Descriptive . Historical policy overview. Refocusing Confused with assessment.	None	Statistical analysis	Chart from 'Staying Safe ' on role of police within safeguarding in a broad sense
Garrett P	Remaking social work with children and families	2003	Yes	Yes	None	None	None	Social work role with police and shift to criminalisation of children
Garrett P	Transforming children's services? Social work, neoliberalism and the modern world	2009	None	None	None	None	Context of critique of databases	Community policing and police access to databases
Gill O and Jack G	The child and family in context	2007	None	None	None	None	None	Police investigation of youth crime
Goldson B, Lavalette M and Mc Kechnie J	Children, welfare and the state	2003	None	None	None	None	None	None
Hallett C and Prout, K (Eds)	Hearing the voices of children. Social policy for a new century	2003	None	None	None	None	None	Police investigation of crime and domestic violence
Horner N and Krawczyk S	Social work in education and children's services	2006	None	None	None	None	None	Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984

Horwath J	Child neglect, identification and assessment	2007	None	Responsibility of police to identify abuse, refer and assess	None	None	Police role in conferences	Police role in criminal proceedings
Howe D	Child abuse and neglect. Attachment, development and intervention	2005	None	None	None	None	None	None
Jones K, Cooper B and Ferguson H (Eds)	Best practice in social work. Critical perspectives	2008	None	None	S47 included in case study	None	Child protection register included in case study	None
Kennison P and Goodman A (Eds)	Children as victims	2008	Refocusing: police move to the H model	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child protection conference/ plan	None
Lawrence A	Principles of child protection	2004	None	None	None	None	Descriptive history of register	None
Lonne B, Parton N, Thomson J and Harries M	Reforming child protection	2009	Refocusing	None	Refocusing S47 enquiries	None	Refocusing historic account	None
May-Chahal C and Coleman S	Safeguarding children and young people	2003	None	None	Descriptive	Descriptive	Descriptive	Police powers of protection
Munro E	Effective child protection	2003	Yes	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	None
Munro E	Child protection	2007	None	None	Yes	Descriptive	Statistics	Police powers of protection
Parton N	Safeguarding childhood	2006	None	None	In relation to social work role only	None	Statistics	MAPPA, sex offender register. Police protection in the Climbié case Police role in historic organised abuse investigations
Sayer T	Critical practice in working with children	2008	Yes	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	Policing of youth crime

Scott J and Ward H (Eds)	Safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children, families and communities	2005	None	None	None	None	None	None
Smith R	Values and practice in children's services	2005	None	None	Descriptive	None	Statistics Register included in case study	None
Stanley J and Goddard C	In the firing line. Violence and power in child protection work	2002	None	None	None	None	None	Police role included in domestic violence case studies
Stanley N, Penhale B, Riordan D, Barbour R and Holden S	Child protection and mental health services. Inter professional responses to the needs of mothers	2003	None	Report of police response to research	None	None	Statistics	Findings of study about police view of inter-professional working. Also parental perceptions of police role
White V and Harris J (Eds)	Developing good practice in children's services	2004	None	None	Descriptive refocusing	None	In context of core assessment	None
Wilson K and James A (Eds)	The child protection handbook	2007	None	None	Confused with assessment	Descriptive and mistakenly refers to convening when there is suspicion of crime (not significant harm)	Statistics Child protection planning after the abolition of the register	Police powers of protection

Table (3) Findings from evaluation of academic texts

Term	Number of texts out of a total of 42 in which term included	Additional relevant text references
joint investigation	3	
police child abuse investigation team/unit	3	Additional 3 referred to police role in child protection but not to CAIT
Section 47 (Children Act 1989)	5	Additional 3 referred to S47 in context of core assessment only
strategy meeting	4	Additional 1 refers to term in the context of assessment only
child protection register/ child protection plan	10	Additional 3 refer to term in the context of the abolition of the child protection register

List of texts analysed

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- Adams R, Dominelli L and Payne M (Eds) (2005) *Social work futures. Crossing boundaries. Transforming practice*. Hampshire. Palgrave
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- Ferguson H (2004) *Protecting children in time. Child abuse, child protection and the consequences of modernity*. Hampshire. Palgrave
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- Munro E (2007) *Child protection.* London. Sage
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- Scott J and Ward H (Eds) (2005) *Safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children, families and communities.* London. Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Smith R (2005) *Values and practice in children's services.* Hampshire. Palgrave
- Stanley J and Goddard C (2002) *In the firing line. Violence and power in child protection work.* Chichester. Wiley
- Stanley N, Penhale B, Riordan D, Barbour R and Holden S (2003) *Child protection and mental health services. Interprofessional responses to the needs of mothers.* Bristol. Policy Press
- White V and Harris J (Eds) *Developing good practice in children's services.* London. Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Wilson K and James A (Eds) *The child protection handbook.* London. Balliere Tindall

Appendix D: Media – television, radio and print media listing.

Reporting in date order of : Islington child abuse scandal, Lisa Arthurworry case, Nevres Kemal case, Aliyah Ismail case, Baby Peter case, Baby C case, Jersey child abuse investigation, Ofsted appointments, Teresa Cooper case.

1992

Islington Gazette (1992) *Social worker had sex with boy in care*. London. Islington Gazette. 23rd March

Benetto J (1992) *Social worker is cleared of sex abuse of boy, 14*. London Independent. 25th March

Community Care (1992) *Worker's nightmare ends*. *Community Care*. 2nd April

Mowbray C (1992) *Child care expert fined over photographs of naked boys*. London. The Independent. 17th September.

Fairweather E and Payne S (1992) *The scandal at the heart of child care*. London. Evening Standard. 6th October

Fairweather E and Payne S (1992) *The tragic stories of five victims*. London. Evening Standard. 6th October

Fairweather E and Payne S (1992) *Lured into the Hot house of corruption*. London. Evening Standard. 7th October

Payne S and Fairweather E (1992) *Minister acts over our child abuse revelations*. London. Evening Standard. 7th October

Payne S and Fairweather E (1992) *All-party backing for inquiry on child abuse*. London. Evening Standard. 7th October

Fairweather E and Payne S (1992) *The gay care worker who tried to foster a boy he was banned from seeing*. London. Evening Standard 7th October

Fairweather E and Payne S (1992) *The prime suspect ; SHANE'S STORY How Islington hindered a police inquiry into a former worker a boy in care and a pornographer*. London. Evening Standard. 7th October

Fairweather E and Payne S (1992) *Abuse inquiry gets backing from all sides. Children at risk*. London. Evening Standard. 8th October

Marchant C (1992) *SSD accused of ignoring fears of abuse network*. *Community Care*. 15th October

Fairweather E and Payne S (1992) *How Louise, aged 15, was sent back to a life of shame*. London. Evening Standard. 16th October

1993

Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Children in care: the truth*. London. Evening Standard. 18th February

Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Islington: Inquiry backs Standard report on plight of children. The Failings*. London. Evening Standard. 18th February

Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Islington: The missing evidence*. London. Evening Standard 19th February

Harper M (1993) *Apologise to the Standard, Islington told*. London. Evening Standard. 19th February

Ivory M (1993) Sacked worker claims he was scapegoated. *Community Care*. 19th February

Brindle D (1993) *Children's homes out of control*. London. Guardian 19th February

Community Care (1993) Islington denies claims of victimisation. *Community Care*. 19th February

Ivory M (1993) Islington carpeted in independent inquiry. *Community Care*. 25th February

Fairweather E (1993) *Children missing as 'violent' home is shut*. London. Evening Standard. 8th March

Fairweather E (1993) *Child home inspector is demoted*. London. Evening Standard. 11th March

Insall R (1993) *Pervert runs play park in the woods! Kiddie porn haul seized by vice cops*. London. News of the World. 21st March

Pryer N and Payne S (1993) *Police stoned by rioting children at council home*. London. Evening Standard. 23rd March

Care weekly (1993) *Unrest quashed by crack team*. London. Care Weekly. 25th March

Community Care (1993) Court action dropped. *Community Care*. 6th May

Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Country house hideaway of disgraced care chief. Central figure in Evening Standard news investigation*. London. Evening Standard. 6th May

Marchant C (1993) Still putting the family to rights. *Community Care*. 6th May

Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Islington abuse case expert is dismissed Standard team wins top award*. London. Evening Standard. 20th May

Community Care (1993) Tunnard 'overlooked in children's home inquiry. London. *Community Care*. 27th May

Brindle D (1993) *Social work changes 'put children at risk'*. London. The Guardian 19th July

- Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Guilty as charged. Minister rushes in homes inspectors and praises the Standard*. London. Evening Standard. 28th July
- Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Dogma that ignored children's needs. Council branded incompetent as inquiry criticises 'past and present serious failings'*. London. Evening Standard. 28th July
- Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Shock attack on childcare. Islington condemned as official inquiry backs Standard report*. London. Evening Standard. 28th July
- BASW newsletter (1993) *Islington Inquiry fails the children*. Birmingham. BASW. 28th July
- Fairweather E and Payne S (1993) *Islington: Yard to investigate child sex abuse. The agony goes on for victims and their families*. London. Evening Standard. 29th July
- The Times (1993) *Childcare standards attacked by experts*. London. The Times. 29th July
- Macdonald M (1993) *Council's social services condemned*. London. The Independent. 29th July
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- Watt S (1993) *Extinction in generic park*. London. Care Weekly. 5th August
- Adamson C (1993) *New shock as child abuse files go missing*. London. Evening Standard. August
- Chamberlain L (1993) *SSD's generic system slated by inquiry team. Community Care*. August
- Eaton L (1993) *Jack of all trades. The neighbourhood based approach to providing services has lost much credibility after the scathing report into Islington's child care services. Community Care*. 2nd September.
- Goodall C (1993) *Boy flees kidnap bid. London. Islington Gazette*. 23rd September.
- Fairweather E (1993) *Standard forces Islington to make crucial changes*. London Evening Standard 27th October
- Lineham T (1993) *A lesson for everyone. Doubts about Islington's management structure have been justified by an investigation into borough's homes. Community Care*.
- Ivory M (1993) *Miller moves in to help lift morale. Community Care*
- Payne S and Fairweather E (1993) *Islington's head of child homes resigns*. London. Evening Standard. 15th November

Islington Gazette (1993) *Social services chief quits. London. Islington Gazette. 18th November.*

Community Care (1993) Cusack retires. *Community Care. 18th November*

1994

Daily Mail (1994) *For the sake of the children. Comment. London. Daily Mail. 19th February*

Fairweather E (1994) *Scandal council's social services director resigns. London. Evening Standard. 22nd February*

Rose P (1994) *An abuse of trust. Scandal of paedophile network preying on youngsters put into their care. London. Daily Mail. 24th February*

Chamberlain L (1994) Nail in the coffin. Generic social work. One London borough is pulling back from its system of neighbourhood services. *Community Care. 24th February*

Adamson C (1994) *Islington manager faces probe in new care row. London. Evening Standard. 15th March*

Evening Standard (1994) *Hodge bid to be MP is threatened by sacking. London. Evening Standard. 16th March*

Payne S (1994) *How Islington failed a family for 14 years. London. Evening Standard. 17th March*

Rosser N and Fairweather E (1994) *Ex-Islington leader to stand as MP. London. Evening Standard. 29th March.*

Fairweather E (1994) *Surely our children deserve more than this? Police chiefs have suggested that Scotland Yard's obscene publications squad – a key weapon in the Met's fight against child pornographers, may be disbanded. London Evening Standard 25th April*

Downey R (1994) Charity acts to scotch rumours. *Community Care. April*

Payne S (1994) *Islington exposed over child welfare. London. Evening Standard. 8th July*

Ogden J (1994) *Inspector's report tears into Islington. London. Care Weekly 14th July*

Downey R (1994) SSI slams Islington child care services. *Community Care. 14th July*

Fairweather E (1994) *Islington hid criminal past of gay children's home chief. London. Evening Standard. 18th July*

Fairweather E and Payne, S (1994) *Children abused by pimps in Islington. Official report confirms the disturbing findings of the Evening Standard investigation into child care. London. Evening Standard. 1st August*

Community Care (1994) Report leaked to paper reveals Islington chaos. *Community Care. 4th August*

Fairweather E (1994) *Islington in child care shake up. London. Evening Standard. 9th September*

James G (1994) Righting the record in Islington. Letter. *Community Care*. 9th September

Payne S and Fairweather E (1994) *Child care chief held in abuse inquiry*. London. Evening Standard. 9th October

Clarke N (1994) *Home sweet home. Runaway boys are found living in a garage*. London. Islington Gazette. 27th October

Payne S (1994) *Inquiry child care inquiry chief named*. London. Evening Standard. 4th November

Goodall C (1994) *Childcare inquiry chief named*. London. Islington Gazette. 10th November

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1995

Payne, S and Fairweather E (1995) *The sad betrayal of a boy in care. How a vulnerable teenager was placed with gay foster parents by Islington council*. Evening Standard. 31st January

Fairweather E (1995) *Ex yard man fights on against child abuse*. London. Evening Standard. 9th May

Payne S and Fairweather E (1995) *'Political correctness' put children at risk*. London. Evening Standard. 23rd May

Fairweather E and Payne S (1995) *At last they admit it : we were right. Vital files withheld from police*. London. Evening Standard. 23rd May

Brindle D (1995) *Child abuse claims left unchecked. Council too anxious not to offend black and gay staff sensitivities*. London. Guardian. 24th May

Spencer R (1995) *Equal rights policy 'hid child abuse'*. London. The Telegraph. 24th May

Daily Mail (1995) *How town hall dogma betrayed sex-ring children*. London. Daily Mail. May 24th

Murray I (1995) *Council's PC bias 'helped pimps and paedophiles*. London. The Times 24th May

Evening Standard (1995) *The truth and Mrs Hodge*. London. Evening Standard .25th May

Oborne P (1995) *At last! Mrs Hodge admits: I was wrong*. London. Evening Standard. 26th May

Hodge M (1995) *Another view*. London Evening Standard. 25th May

Fairweather E (1995) *Stalinist reluctance to study the facts. Reporting the Islington child abuse story was terrifying*. London. The Independent. 30th May

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Appendix E: Media response in the case of Lisa Arthurworrey - social worker for Victoria Climbié.

The following two articles raised some questions about Lisa's situation and stood out among other more negative reporting between 2000 and September 2004

1) 23rd January 2001: Evening Standard. Eileen Fairweather

The social worker who should have saved little Anna is distraught, has lost 2 stone and can't sleep but was it all her fault?

Raised issues of management, supervision, restructuring and the role of other agencies re. the medical fax and the scabies issue.

2) 16th February 2002: Daily Mail. Jo-Ann Goodwin

Killed by anti-racism

Arthurworrey had never carried out a full investigation, not held a case conference, nor overseen a case working with police...

The two ten minute interviews on Today programme took 4 months to prepare working with Angus Stickler and Lisa Arthurworrey

September 1st and 2nd 2004: Today programme. Angus Stickler

Interviews with Lisa Arthurworrey

(bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/listenagain)

Subsequent headlines were mainly factual reporting.

Lisa Arthurworrey appealing against decision to sack her and to place her on POCA

Arthurworrey condemns poor supervision and flaws that led to tragedy

Child cruelty and accountability – of superiors 'only lowly officials like Lisa lost their jobs'

Climbié social worker to appeal

Climbié social worker admits mistakes

Climbié care worker appeal queries justice of POCA listing

Climbié social worker to challenge sacking

Shamed experts who failed tragic Victoria are still in top jobs.

Shame of Climbié council

Climbié council hired 18 criminals

Bullying policy for Haringey

3rd September: Evening Standard editorial

Her appeal funded by the taxpayer should be slung out. She shows no sense of personal responsibility for the sins of omission which led to Victoria Climbié's death

This editorial contrasted with more supportive reports in the same paper

3rd September: Guardian. David Batty

The Blame Game

'(Laming) concluded that Ms Arthurworrey had made many and serious mistakes. These mistakes seem due to a lack of common sense rather than inadequate guidance and supervision

During the public inquiry she admitted that she had only spent 30 minutes with Victoria. Furthermore she accepted the word of the child's abusers...

The fact that these senior managers' careers flourished despite their responsibility to Victoria's suffering is not a reason to absolve Ms Arthurworrey of blame.

Ms Arthurworrey complains that her life has been wrecked and her career lies in ruins. 'I don't see a future' she told the BBC. But perhaps she should consider that for Victoria the stakes were much higher'.

3rd September: The Voice

The parents of murdered Victoria Climbié have spoken of their outrage that the social worker, who failed to protect their little girl, wants her job back.

23rd September: Community Care: Yasmin Alibhai Brown

I listened on the radio to Lisa Arthurworrey ... and I found myself incandescent, unable or unwilling to hear her side of the story – a reaction that was grossly unfair.

6th September: Evening Standard. Liz Davies

I believe in Lisa. I have no doubt whatsoever about her abilities. If I were a team manager I would employ her any day.

9th September: Community Care. Yvonne Roberts

'But' is no excuse for not getting it right

God help other children if investigations are conducted on the basis of what evidence is legible.

The average member of the public is bound to believe that common sense dictates that 19 pages of medical evidence have to flag several reasons not to be cheerful about the outcome for a child

9-15 September: Community Care

Ann Bristow, Director of Children's Services in Haringey, It is a serious step to place a professional on the POCA list who has not directly abused a child.

Community Care poll mainly supportive of Lisa

October 4th – 8th 2004: Employment Tribunal hearing

*Ms L Arthurworrey and London Borough of Haringey
London Central. Case 2205868/2002. Judgment 08.12.2004*

8th October 2004: Decision of Employment Tribunal to uphold decision of London Borough of Haringey to dismiss Lisa Arthurworrey on the grounds of gross misconduct.

Based on a report by Bernard Monaghan the six charges which led to the Haringey case of dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct were:

1. Failed to call an initial child protection case conference as required by the strategy meeting of 5th November 1999
2. Failed to conduct enquiry under sect 47 as required by the strategy meeting of 5th November 1999
3. Failed to evaluate and give proper attention to the information she received.
4. Failed to adequately prepare and conduct the interview with Victoria Climbié on 6th August 1999 in a manner conducive to provide accurate and complete information.
5. Failed to ensure that the best interests of Victoria Climbié were met by her receiving education
6. Failed to make reasonable use of the good practice guidance available to her in the child protection procedures and the initial assessment form CF.

Two other charges had been rejected earlier on appeal.

- Failure to communicate with and to discuss the outcome of the section 47 inquiry with Dr Rossiter
- Failure to properly read and evaluate the Central Middlesex Hospital fax of the 2nd August 1999

Subsequent coverage mainly factual.

Junior worker became scapegoat

My bosses made me a scapegoat over Victoria's murder

I was a scapegoat claims worker sacked over Climbié case

Director intervened in Haringey inquiry (Monaghan report limited to exclude senior staff at Bristow's request)

Arthurworrey says she is scapegoat

Union blames lack of training after tribunal.

Climbié social worker loses appeal

Climbié social workers 'made a scapegoat'

Climbié social worker appeals against dismissal

Climbié social workers ignored guidelines

Social services staff 'escaped responsibility' for Climbié scandal

5th October: Evening Standard. Amanda Platt

Haringey Land of Blame. ... to clear her name for the most venal of reasons – hard cash. Yes. Ms Arthurworrey wants compensation.

14th October: Hornsey Journal

Climbié case social worker loses claim for 'unfair sacking' - No winners says council. 'Even though the tribunal has found our decision to dismiss Lisa Arthurworrey for gross misconduct was fair, there can be no winner here today' Councillor Kate Wynne

October 2004: Liz Davies. The Whistle Freedom to Care. No 24

The Case FOR Lisa Arthurworrey.

1st May 2005: Statement from Liverpool John Moores University lecturers, tutors and social workers

Observations on Lisa Arthurworrey's Appeal against her inclusion on the Protection of Children Act List;

Lisa Arthurworrey is a victim of a failing managerial system. Omissions and incomplete assessments made by her were the result of a chain of systemic professional and managerial failures which are invisibly endemic in Children and Families social work. An individual cannot take responsibility for organisational failure.....

23rd -27th May 2005: Care Standards Tribunal Hearing.

Lisa Arthurworrey v Secretary of State for Education and Skills (2004) 355.PC

11 particulars of misconduct presented by Secretary of State's counsel Mr Coppel

Appeal against the inclusion of Lisa Arthurworrey's name on the Protection Of Children Act List by the Secretary of State, DfES.

Appeal upheld - no findings of misconduct. *'Ms Arthurworrey is today suitable to work with children'*.

(Full text available: www.carestandardtribunal.gov.uk)

No media interest at this tribunal other than Community Care reporter at the beginning. Coverage in Community Care minimal

Arthurworrey insists she is suitable to work with children.

25th May 2005: BASW AGM motion passed unanimously

This AGM calls for a review of the use of the Protection of Children Act (POCA) with the implementation of registration and regulation of the social care workforce. Competency issues should exclusively be dealt with by the Care Councils and the remit of the POCA needs to be more narrowly defined in relation to individuals deemed to pose a risk to children. BASW condemns the differential use of the list in respect of other professional groups in a recent high profile case.

8th June: Press release from Haringey Council

We are surprised that the Secretary of State's decision has been overturned, as the Laming Enquiry, Haringey Council and an Employment tribunal ALL found serious weaknesses in Ms Arthurworrey's professional conduct that contributed to the failure to safeguard Victoria. It must be remembered that when Ms Arthurworrey was allocated Victoria's case she was a fully qualified social worker who had previously worked in another large London Borough and had 18 months post-qualification experience.

9th June 2005: Angus Stickler Today programme. Interview with Lisa Arthurworrey
(bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/listenagain)

9th June 2005: Liz Davies. Guardian online comment.
The Right Decision.

9th June: Black Information Link. Shirin Aguiar

Climbié scapegoat social worker cleared.

A social worker scapegoated over the horrific child murder of Victoria Climbié has been cleared. But senior council officials who ran a chaotic social services department remain unpunished.

9th June: Careandhealth online

Climbié ruling highlights problems say campaigners. Liz Davies comment.

10th June: The Victoria Climbié Foundation press statement supportive of the Tribunal decision on behalf of Victoria's parents.

The Foundation now calls upon the government to punish those senior managers and councillors who were responsible at the time for the chaos that passed for social care in Haringey at the time of Victoria's murder. Lisa Arthurworrey was simply a convenient scapegoat for senior people to hide their failings behind.

10th June: The Independent.

Climbié parents say council chiefs must face action.

10th June. Helen Weathers. Daily Mail. Exclusive interview with Lisa Arthurworrey.

I'm not the only one to blame.

Devastating insight into the near lunatic incompetence that was rife in Haringey Social Services

10th June: John Arlidge / David Cohen Evening Standard exposé.

Revealed the woman at the heart of the worst two child abuse cases' 'The controversial record of care supremo Mary Richardson.' Frances and Berthe Climbié state 'the buck stops with Mary Richardson' Key Climbié social worker can work with children again

Editorial:

the care standards tribunal has reminded us that at the time of the case ..it was impossible for Ms Arthurworrey to do her job.

10th June: John Carvel. The Guardian

Social worker in Climbié case wins job fight

30th June 2005: Community Care, Viewpoint. Liz Davies

Arthurworrey is vindicated.

19th February 2007: Guardian. Diane Taylor

Victoria is always there. She never goes away.. When Victoria Climbié was murdered, her social worker's world ended. Seven years on, she still feels like she's living in a prison cell. Exclusive interview with Lisa Arthurworrey

March 2008: Care Standards Tribunal hearing. Lisa Arthurworrey appealed against the decision of the General Social Care Council not to accept her registration as a social worker.

7th March 2008: Community Care. Sally Gillen

I live with Victoria inside my head. Climbié social worker says she was 'crushed' by system.

13th March 2008. Community Care. Sally Gillen

Arthurworrey tells tribunal of death threats and insults.

20th March 2008: Community Care. Sally Gillen

Arthurworrey disputes GSCC claim over supervisory input.

2nd June 2008: Decision of Care Standards Tribunal

LA v GSCC: <http://www.carestandardtribunal.gov.uk/Public/View.aspx?ID=890>

4th June 2008: Community Care. Sally Gillen

Arthurworrey allowed to register but with conditions.

6th June 2008 : BBC news

Climbié social worker wins appeal. www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/7435419.stm

6th June 2008 : BBC news

Climbié parents back worker move. The parents of Victoria Climbié have welcomed the decision to overturn a ban on her social worker being allowed to work with children.

www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4077240.stm

12th June 2008: Community Care. Sally Gillen

Arthurworrey won case despite not because of her representation.

14th June 2008: Mail on Sunday. Eileen Fairweather

I don't dream about murdered Victoria Climbié . I live with her every day , says social worker who became a scapegoat. Exclusive interview with Lisa Arthurworrey

11th December 2008: Daily Mail. Helen Weathers

Why Baby P never stood a chance - by the social worker blamed for the death of Victoria Climbié.
Exclusive interview with Lisa Arthurworrey.

10th March 2010: Community Care article. Liz Davies.

Victoria Climbié's social worker failed by system.

Lisa Arthurworrey is registered as a social worker by the General Social Care Council subject to conditions

<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2010/03/10/114023/victoria-climbis-social-worker-failed-by-system.htm>

Appendix F: Islington investigation network. The multi-agency network from 1989 to 1992

The author investigated a large network of child sexual exploitation in the London Borough of Islington, both in the community and within the care system, in the early 90's. The following agencies and individuals worked together to share information in order to target the abusers and protect children.

- Probation Service: Information about known child sex offenders and current concerns about young offenders
- Police: Current intelligence about known and suspected child sex offenders. Information about young people being exploited by abusers to commit crimes.
- Central intelligence from the Paedophile Unit. Information from the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team, Community Safety Unit, and Schools Involvement Officers. Joint investigation with social workers.
- Schools: Known child sex offenders targeting children at the school gates. Noted indicators and patterns of abuse relating to school students and also staff had knowledge of local community networks
- Education Social Workers: knowledge about young people absent from school and of abuse networks
- Health Visitors / school nurses. Knowledge about babies and toddlers being networked for abuse. Historic and current information about families and children. Liaison with midwives
- Paediatricians: Noted indicators of sexual abuse. Learnt of concerns from GUM clinic (sexually transmitted diseases) and Family Planning Service (pregnancies / terminations)
- Child Psychiatry: Therapeutic work with traumatised victims of child abuse and adult psychiatrists with adult victims of the same networks.
- General Practitioners: Historic and current knowledge of abuse within families
- Children's services: Direct statements from children, families and the community. Liaison with residential social workers, foster carers and childminders. Locating missing children and investigating jointly with police.

- **Housing and Environmental Health:** Knowledge of houses and flats used by child sex abusers and procurers. Information about local disturbances and incidents
- **Families and the local community network** of protective adults who identified child abusers and vulnerable children. They were the ‘eyes and ears’ at times when the professionals were not around. They had access to professionals through the local patch based, shop front, office. Islington had decentralised to 24 Neighbourhood offices at the time.
- **The Local Authority lawyers** made connections across cases
- **Councillors, MP’s, Magistrates, Journalists.** Local newspaper a source of archived information about local child sex abusers

Appendix G: Parliamentary briefing for Baroness Walmsley: June 2007

BRIEFING: CHILD PROTECTION

For Baroness Walmsley

From:

Liz Davies: Senior Lecturer in Social Work, London Metropolitan University

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Date: 14th June 2007

The safeguarding agenda – need to reclaim child protection

Government definition of safeguarding:

All agencies working with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised

And
Where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare all agencies take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policy and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies

DfES (2003) *Keeping Children Safe*. TSO

Dictionary definition:

Protection, safety, security, custody; safe-keeping, guarantee of safety or safe passage given by person in authority; anything that offers security from danger, a defence, protection.

***Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (5th ed.2002)**

The language of child protection has changed from

- Harm/abuse to concern
- Risk to need
- Investigation to enquiry/assessment
- Working together to partnership
- Protection to prevention/safeguarding

The framing of child protection within a social inclusion agenda with an emphasis on prevention

- places attention on children and their families as responsible for 'concerns' and for finding solutions to them and therefore diverts attention away from perpetrators of harm to children, particularly those outside the family
- places attention on child concern within disadvantaged communities whereas child abuse exists across all social and economic classes. The international industry of child abuse and exploitation remains hidden.
- prevention is defined as preventing children becoming a risk or trouble to society not preventing children becoming victims of child abusers. It is significant that the Youth Offending Team police officers are mentioned in Every Child Matters rather than the Police Child Abuse Investigation Teams. Also probation is excluded from the hub of agencies in ECM – yet they are an essential agency in child abuse investigation. It can be argued that the increasing criminalization of children has resulted in the need to protect children from incarceration within adult custodial regimes and detention centres.
- true prevention would encourage early reporting and identification of child abuse and result in an increase in child abuse referrals

[For a discussion of the interface between prevention and protection see Davies L (2004)]

- social work teams have been restructured with specialist child protection teams now abolished. The restructuring is in line with the assessment process – initial assessment and long term 'core assessment' teams. This has led to a subsequent move towards multi-agency teams at the prevention level within children's centres and extended schools. It must be asked which social workers will now be specialists in child protection work?
- a wide range of workers in a number of statutory and voluntary agencies are now able to do prevention work identifying child 'concerns'. The social work statutory specialist child protection role is minimized. Current guidance uses the term 'local authority social care worker' rather than social worker. At the stage of a Common Assessment or Initial Assessment the identification of children at high risk of harm may well be missed by workers untrained and unskilled in child protection social work.

Since Messages from Research (DoH 1995) there has been a move to narrow statutory child protection intervention to a minimum and to increase privatization of 'family support' services. In fact family support and child protection are not polar opposites but they have been framed as alternatives resulting in the child protection component becoming marginalized. Social workers have been criticized for working too forensically and child protection intervention seen as negatively 'reactive'. For example a recent invitation to tender included the following question:

22. What is the relative amount of time/effort LSCB's put into their different tasks? E.g. do they still focus mostly on 'responsive' child protection work?

Invitation to tender for a research project entitled 'Evaluation of the effectiveness of the new local safeguarding children boards' DfES tender No EOR/SBU/2007/005

A very useful article on this aspect is

Munro E and Calder M (2005) Where has Child Protection Gone? *The Political Quarterly* 76 (3):439–445.

By changing the definition of 'at risk' to mean at risk of a number of poor outcomes, the government has effectively relegated child protection and the concept of 'at risk of significant harm' to a sub-category of a larger concern about children's welfare. This implies that abuse is merely one of a range of difficulties that a child may face, rather than significant harm or a serious crime against a child.

S47 investigation and assessment should be distinct processes

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfES 2006) introduced new guidance:

5.60 The core assessment is the means by which a S47 enquiry is carried out.

S47 is the local authority duty to investigate when there is reasonable cause to suspect actual or likely significant harm to a child (S47 Children Act 1989).

An assessment may inform an investigation but is a distinct and separate process from investigation which should always involve a process of consultation with police and a decision as to whether the investigation is conducted single or joint agency.

Assessment is conducted through the Assessment Framework. This is a triangle of three components the child's developmental needs, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors. This was introduced by the *Framework of Assessment for Children in Need and their Families* (DoH 2000). It forms the basis of all government protocols for children – Common Assessment Framework, Initial and Core Assessments and all the Integrated Children's Systems with standard forms for all processes including child protection conferences and S47 Strategy meetings. It is a tick box approach and a performance management tool.

For a critique see Calder and Hackett (2003: Chapter 1)

Lord Laming in the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report, Recommendation 13 (2003) suggested the need for a step by step guide on how to manage a case through either a S 17 (child in need) or a S47 (child in need of protection) track as separate and distinct processes.

The key mistake in Victoria's case was that she was responded to as a child in need and not a child in need of protection. Lisa Arthurworrey had been trained in the assessment (sometimes called the family support) approach and thought child protection was only for emergencies. She had no understanding of how to conduct a S47 investigation jointly with the police. The local authority procedures she was following contained '*nothing requiring the social worker to liaise with police to make checks and/or hold joint strategy meetings*' and a notice displayed in her office declared '*no police.*' (Arthurworrey 2004:144). Laming commented that in the case he had '*heard no evidence of what I would term a Section 47 inquiry ever being carried out by Haringey Social Services* (Laming 2003.6. 217).

Reder and Duncan reviewed the case and commented, '*A referral received by social services which indicated the likelihood of non accidental injuries to Victoria was labelled from the outset as 'child in need'. This framed all of that departments subsequent activities on the case*' (Reder and Duncan 2004:104).

Nigel Parton in his submission to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry clarifies this point '*At its crudest this was handled as a 'family support case' when it could and should have been handled as a 'child protection case*' (Parton 2002: 4).

A S47 is not a core assessment. When the Children Act 1989 stipulated the duty to investigate the assessment framework had not been published therefore it is reasonable to question how a S47 can be the same as a core assessment?

A core assessment is a completely different tool from that of investigation. Assessment focuses on children and their families and not on targeting perpetrators of child abuse and seeking justice for children. An investigation jointly with police of actual or likely significant harm must always involve a focus on strategies to target perpetrators and to assess risk to the child. A core assessment is not an assessment of risk.

A core assessment includes the following components in the assessment of parents:

Disability: Physical, Learning, Sensory Impairment, Period in care in childhood, Experience of being abused as a child

These may be important questions when assessing family needs but they may not be required when conducting a S47. There is no known correlation between physical disability and child abuse for instance so it is actually discriminatory to routinely ask such a question as part of a S47 investigation without good reason for doing so. Similarly it is discriminatory to suggest that a childhood in care or history of child abuse has a correlation with child abuse. This may be justified in a particular case as part of a S47 but as a routine question it is grossly insulting to survivors of abuse and to care leavers.

All the Integrated Children's Systems forms are available online from:

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/integratedchildrenssystem/resources/exemplars/>

Limitation in police child protection role

Since Recommendation 99 of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry there has been a move towards a police emphasis on the investigation of crime rather than of likely or actual significant harm in Section 47 inquiries. This represents a significant reduction in police involvement in child protection joint investigation work.

'The Working Together arrangements must be amended to ensure the police carry out completely and exclusively, any criminal investigation elements in a case of suspected injury or harm to a child including the evidential interview with a child victim' (Laming 2003:14.57).

The police child protection teams now screen referrals and it is increasingly difficult for social workers to engage police in any child protection matter that does not constitute a potential or actual crime.

There is now a gap between police investigation of crime and social work assessment of children in need. The joint investigation of actual or likely significant harm as a practice model has been marginalized. The impact is that social workers are now far more often left alone to make an 'initial assessment' of whether a suspicion or allegation of child abuse actually warrants a referral to police whereas in the past this would have been a joint process from the point of a child protection referral.

This leads to the following risks;

- delay in immediate protection of abused children whilst the 7-day initial assessment is processed.

- risk that key information in the possession of the police is not obtained soon enough to protect the child.
- because an assessment of need requires parental permission for all checks there is therefore a risk that parental consent is sought to interview a child who has made an allegation and the child may be an increased risk of harm as a result. A S47 investigation allows checks to be made without parental consent if it is thought to do so might place the child at risk.
- without a S47 strategy meeting, and decisions about how to investigate, an assessment of the child and family's needs will not be asking the right questions in order to evaluate the risk to the child of actual or likely significant harm with respect to specific circumstances of a referral and case history.
- Dr Eileen Munro refers to the need for professionals to have two sets of glasses - one for assessment of need and another for assessment of risk of harm. The latter must include skills of questioning, challenging, confronting and understanding the concepts of professional dangerousness – the blocks to professional recognition of child abuse.
- the assessment process is too prescriptive and interferes with the exercise of professional judgment. Assessment involves excess professional time spent on data entry. Estimates of up to 80% of social work time now in front of a computer. There is a managerial emphasis on surveillance of computer input rather than professional supervision. Technology will not protect children. Skilled, trained professionals working in safe working environments protect children effectively. Social workers spending hours of their time inputting data will not protect children. Social workers ticking boxes will not protect children. Managers counting the ticks will not protect children. Government officials awarding stars for the right number of ticks will not protect children.
- strict application of timescales (7 days initial assessment and 35 days core assessment) may lead to premature closing of the case. Child protection investigation cannot be time limited but must be the subject of professional judgment.
- because every S47 must be a core assessment which is very demanding of professional time for every child in the family, there is a likelihood that cases will be kept at level of S17 because of resource issues. For instance, if a child makes an allegation of abuse by a teacher how relevant is it to conduct a core assessment on every child in the family? Whether or not a S47 includes an assessment process should be a matter for professional judgment at a Strategy Meeting.

Child protection is a grey area demanding multi agency debate and analysis not rigid barriers to collaborative processes. It is of concern that in 'Every Child Matters Next Steps' the police role is defined only as within the Youth Offending Team with no mention at all of the police child protection or community safety teams. The Multi Agency Public Protection Panels gain a small mention in this document in relation to safeguarding children within public protection arrangements but there is no reference at all of joint working to bring abusers to justice (DfES 2003: 4.19-4.24)

In contrast the Achieving Best Evidence Guidance requires a child-centred interview conducted collaboratively. *'Provided both the police officer and social worker have been adequately trained in interviewing vulnerable and/or intimidated child witnesses there is no reason why either should not lead the interview'* (Home Office 2002:Vol.1.2.74)

Lack of joint training at advanced level for police and social workers

The recent *'Working Together'* (DfES 2006:95) redesignates the levels of training required and loses the clarity of the previous document's three tier approach which specified the need for joint investigation and interview training for those engaged in the statutory investigation of child abuse

(DoH 1999). This has been replaced with a third tier now including a wide range of professionals and stating broad, vague and ill defined training requirements. Specialist advanced level investigative child protection training is increasingly difficult to access with variable commitment to such courses by Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and no associated performance targets. The training standards also omit to emphasise these specialist training requirements (Shardlow 2004). In London such training is in crisis as the numbers of police child protection trainers has been reduced to four, since centralization of the police CAITS, whereas there were previously thirty-two, i.e. one for each Borough. This significantly reflects a shift in police commitment to joint working in the capital. There are only twelve two-week courses a year for the whole of London whereas every Borough used to run 3 or 4 a year.

Laming (2003:6.10) said that Lisa Arthurworrey was not trained to interview a child according to the Home Office guidance 'Achieving Best Evidence' (2002) and '*could not therefore take a Section 47 child protection inquiry through to its conclusion*'. He did not recognize the importance of joint investigation training between police and social workers which precedes the ABE child interview training. Yet this is the training which teaches risk assessment and S47 investigation. Social work child protection managers would usually conduct this advanced level training with a trainer from the local child abuse investigation team.

Police in other teams such as CID, Sapphire and schools involvement officers rarely access this training now that child protection is under a central command - yet a core part of their work involves investigation of crime against children and interviews of children e.g. in cases of abuse of children by 'strangers'. In the past when the advanced level training involved local police CAIT trainers such officers were usually included as participants.

Abolition of the child protection register – the most effective tool in protecting children

The danger for vulnerable children in need of protection is during the time between referral to social services and NOT becoming defined as in need of protection. Research indicates that children who have died from child abuse have commonly been referred to social services many times but have not been classified as child protection cases and have therefore not gained the protection of a multi agency protection plan. Victoria Climbié was one such child. A key lesson from the Victoria Climbié case was the importance of child protection registration involving co-ordinated multi agency debate, analysis, planning and decision making to protect the child.

Research confirms that the vast majority of children who die as a result of child abuse have never had their names placed on the Register (Reder et al 1995).

In Keeping Children Safe (DfES 2003:75) reference was made to research conducted about the child protection register. This research was not sourced in the document. The so called research identified 'worrying practices' such as staff being falsely reassured by a child's name being on the register, considering that if a child's name was not on the register there is no concern or seeing the register as a 'passport to services'. These are all matters for training, development and supervision rather than reasons for abolishing the register. There is no mention of whether the research outcomes confirmed that the Register was effective in protecting those children whose names were on it – surely the most important factor for comment and the most important subject for research.

Keeping Children Safe (DfES 2003:8.22) stated that the register was not consulted for 60% of the children for whom there were child protection concerns. This is not a reason for abolition but is rather a reason to ensure compliance with statutory guidance. It demonstrates a problem with referral processes and professional competence not a problem with the effectiveness of the child protection register.

Lord Laming made reference to the lack of planning in conferences but there were no child protection conferences in the Climbié case - only Strategy Meetings. He was making a generalisation but it was not based on the Climbié case.

In recommendation 13 of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Lord Laming suggested replacing the Register with a more effective system. He did not say abolish the register but that the focus must on *'establishing an agreed plan to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child'* rather than *'on whether to register or not'*. However, Laming criticised staff for not convening child protection conferences and for not defining the case as child protection. He casts doubt on the 'usefulness' of the registers because of the dangers of unwarranted assumptions and also expressed concern about the drive to reduce the numbers of children's names placed on the register. He was concerned at the lack of priority given to child protection and said that key agencies were not following relatively straightforward procedures (Laming 2003:1.18-19). His comments should have led to initiatives to improve the implementation of the policies and increase the use and effectiveness of the Register rather than abolition.

The table below illustrates the reduction in children's names on the Child Protection Register since 2001. Statistics for physical and sexual abuse have halved. There is a knowledge base about prevalence rates and the known extent of child abuse is not reflected in these figures.

Some authorities have no children on their Register for child sexual abuse. This needs urgent research because it is a trend that could well be related to the reduction in joint investigation processes and the lack of focus on perpetrators. It might also reflect the assessment of children in need processes and a focus on neglect and emotional 'concerns'.

2005 (2001)

- Neglect 11,400 (12,900)
- Physical abuse 3,900 (7,300)
- Emotional abuse 5,200 (4,800)
- Sexual abuse 2,400 (4,500)

Department for Education and Skills 2004 *Statistics of education: referrals, assessments and children and young people on child protection registers: year ending 31 March 2006*. London. DfES
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000692/SFR45-2006V1.pdf>

Placing a child's name on the Register is a highly specialist multi-agency task based on the exercise of skilled professional judgment based on analysis of available information and relevant research findings. The protocol now introduced is an ICS ('Integrated Children's System') form based solely on assessment not investigation, which focuses on the child and family and not the perpetrators of abuse and which reduces decision making to a tick-box approach inherently dangerous in any child protection case as open to misinterpretation and assumption.

It is unclear with the new database arrangements whether the emergency alert to police and A&E departments of a child's name being on the Register will remain in place with the new description of a 'child with a child protection plan'. This system is essential for fast identification of children identified as at high risk of significant harm and has been tried and tested since the mid-90's.

The guidance, available on the Every Child Matters website, for phasing out the child protection register is basically a list of technological requirements.

| <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/integratedchildrenssystem/technical/cpr/>

There is complete absence of professional debate on key issues relating to the impact of this policy on children's lives. There is a need to seek clarity about the changing role of the custodian of the child protection register who is currently a skilled senior social work specialist whereas the new role relates more to that of an IT manager.

Access to the Child Protection Register was tightly managed by the Custodian in each authority in recognition of the high risk of child sex abusers gaining access to a list of the most vulnerable children. Professionals who could make enquiries of the Register were each professionally accountable for their actions. The new systems allow a wide range of children's workers from the voluntary and statutory sector to access children's records. For example, Pat Cummins from Barnardo's spoke at a recent Community Care Live conference and said that as a voluntary organization they are pleased that they no longer have to go through the hoops of accessing information about children from social services. The question must be asked as to how safe will the information be about children with a *child protection plan*?

'Barnardo's has been involved in pilot work for ContactPoint with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and local authorities and is now a National Implementation Partner with DfES, working on the project. ContactPoint is a new system that will enable practitioners from a range of agencies to contact one another should need arise, having verified that they are working with the same child'.
<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/cclive/programme17.htm#20>

The abolition of the Register without due process of research and consultation may well place many vulnerable children at high risk of serious injury and death from child abuse. Current government research regarding serious case reviews should include evaluation of the impact of the abolition of the Register.

Increased state intrusion into family life

Multi agency professional identification of children at risk of significant harm provides a formal threshold of intervention in children and families lives which is proportionate because of the need to protect children and keep them safe from harm.

A **National Child Protection Register** would protect children even more effectively than many local registers. A national register of missing children, and counting those missing who are never found, would place the focus on high risk children. Such registers could be justified as a proportionate response to high risk situations and would assist in the task of keeping children safe from harm. It is a serious gap in the system that there is no current method for recording the children who are missing and not found.

The shift in emphasis from child protection to more general child welfare, and to the purported 'early identification' of children likely to commit crime or have other poor outcomes creates a number of other problems.

Health Visitors are to be encouraged to focus on identifying babies at risk of social exclusion. Because the main criteria for social exclusion are centered on poverty, poor housing etc. it is likely that families without these problems will receive less attention.

The Common Assessment Framework encourages practitioners in a variety of disciplines to probe deeply into a child's life and development. In doing this, a practitioner may fail to recognise important

signs of abuse, or lack the skill to avoid being manipulated by abusive parents. S/he may inadvertently compromise important evidence, or delay onward referral because s/he confuses needs with risk.

ContactPoint (formerly the Information Sharing Index) which connects with social care records that list concerns creates the risk of misinterpretation, misjudgment and poor analysis. It is not clear at the moment whether Contactpoint will have a facility to indicate the level at which an agency is involved with a child. The draft regulations for which consultation closed in December 2006 provided for an indicator to be placed against a child's name if a practitioner:

- (a) considers that he or it has important information to share relating to the person, or
- (b) has undertaken an assessment of the person under the system known as the Common Assessment Framework, or
- (c) has taken any action relating to the person,

[http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/The%20Information%20Sharing%20Index%20\(England\)%20Regulations%202007%20\(Draft\).doc](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/The%20Information%20Sharing%20Index%20(England)%20Regulations%202007%20(Draft).doc)

However, at 3.26 the draft guidance

[http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/DraftContactPointGuidance-v.1\(03May07\).doc](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/DraftContactPointGuidance-v.1(03May07).doc) seems to show that these plans have been revised, but we will not know until the regulations are placed before Parliament.

The difficulty is that none of the indicators suggested in the draft regulations shows the severity or urgency of any 'important information' and the guidance gives practitioners no help in discerning what information or 'action' merits an entry. If too much low-level activity is recorded, children at risk of harm will be missed in a welter of data about school performance or petty crime. On the other hand, if indicators are too detailed, they will clearly indicate a child's relative vulnerability on what will inevitably be an insecure system.

A central principle of security engineering is that three factors must be considered when building a database system: scale, functionality and security. It is not currently possible to build a system that adequately addresses more than two of these factors. As a national database, Contactpoint already ticks the 'scale' box. It can therefore either be functional *or* secure. See e.g. Brian Gladman quoted in the Guardian: <http://society.guardian.co.uk/serviceofthefuture/story/0,,1881490,00.html>

[Dr Gladman is a particularly authoritative source. He is former Director of Communications and Information Systems Engineering at the MOD and Deputy Director of the technical centre of NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE)]

The government acknowledges the potential insecurity of Contactpoint in its intention to 'shield' the identities of some children: see the draft guidance at 4.63.

There is also a real possibility that the information-sharing agenda will deter children and their parents from accessing services until they have reached a crisis, rather than at a time when problems are more tractable. This has profound implications for child protection.

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Perspectives on the *Memorandum*

Policy, practice and research
in investigative
interviewing

Edited by
Helen Westcott and Jocelyn Jones

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9 The investigation of organised abuse: considering alternatives

Liz Davies

The Memorandum of Good Practice on Video Recorded Interviews with Child Witnesses for Criminal Proceedings (Home Office, 1992a) is excellent guidance for the investigative interviewing of older children who wish to seek justice, have good verbal skills, the support of their carers and who are safe. These are not the children generally selected as victims of sexual and sadistic abuse by serial predatory paedophiles who systematically target the most vulnerable, isolated and rejected children. By placing the prime focus for conviction of offenders on children's evidence we pressurise children who already have suffered enough. With low conviction rates the existing system rarely achieves justice for children; and in criminal proceedings Section 1 of the Children Act 1989, which emphasises the paramountcy of the child's welfare, takes second place to the concept of a fair trial. Even when paedophiles have been convicted, the traumatic impact of the trial on children has led some professionals to recommend that, 'never again should child victims of sexual abuse have to undergo days of cross-examination by lawyers' (Dobson, 1994).

Organised abuse is perpetrated by adults against children and it is clearly adults who must seek to achieve justice for child victims (Davies and Higginson, 1995). A framework is required in organised abuse investigations which relies minimally on the need for children to be witnesses in criminal proceedings. A dual strategy is necessary to take the onus off children. This demands as one component the proactive, highly focused investigation of known and alleged perpetrators paralleled by broad spectrum intervention as the second component, aimed at creating an organised network of protective adults around children in the community.

In this chapter I propose to offer a practice based, alternative, adult focused approach to the investigation of organised abuse. I make reference to investigations in the London Borough of Islington because during the time of my employment in that Borough I worked to protect children from organised,

institutional and ritual abuse. I subsequently gave evidence to the various inquiries and the Paedophile Squad at New Scotland Yard. I have since had the opportunity to develop practice skills in this fraught area of work, with the satisfaction of achieving positive outcomes for children.

I first make a plea for a change of attitude towards the child victims of this form of abuse and then go on to consider procedures to be used in the joint investigation of organised abuse, followed by an overview of community based, broad spectrum interventions which I argue must co-exist with the more sophisticated strategies. The *Memorandum*, as a precise method of interviewing child witnesses, finds its place as but one intervention within joint investigation procedures (see Figure 9.1).

Figure 9.1: An alternative approach to investigating organised abuse

Strand A: Highly focused, joint investigation/intervention

- Local/regional/national specialist multi-agency teams
- Identification of children at risk and strategies to protect
- Perpetrator focused strategies – surveillance, search of premises, scene of crime evidence, forensic retrieval
- Interviews with convicted paedophiles to seek intelligence about perpetrators and victims
- Collation of intelligence about perpetrators – mapping networks, methods, venues
- Intelligence gathering interviews
- Questionnaires given to alleged child victims as a filter before interviewing a select few
- Identification of adult witnesses
- Involvement of non-abusive carers/local community to assist the investigation
- *Memorandum* interviews – minimal involvement of children as witnesses in criminal proceedings

Strand B: Broad spectrum intervention

- Creating an organised network of protective adults in the community
- Training professionals and non-statutory workers in the early recognition of organised abuse
- Filtering information through the Area Child Protection Committee
- Self-protection work with children

The need for a change of perspective

Child victims of organised abuse are consistently failed by current multi-agency responses. Intervention is generally triggered by disclosures from children or reports to police child protection teams and social services. Both organisations primarily respond to intra-familial abuse and are not resourced to investigate perpetrators proactively. Organised abuse often comes to the attention of other agencies without triggering joint police/social services investigation. For instance, it is rare to attempt the identification of children from the vast numbers of child pornographic photographs and videos obtained following police searches of premises. Similarly, paedophiles may abuse hundreds of children in a lifetime and yet it is not usual to attempt to locate these victims. Using information about convicted paedophiles in East Sussex, Willis suggests a total of as many as 14,400 child victims in that area alone (Willis, 1993: 4).

The plight of missing children and lack of strategies to protect them was highlighted by Chief Superintendent Stoodley following the Operation Orchid investigation concerning abducted and murdered children in London and the South East. He commented, 'Children can vanish without trace, without anyone caring or looking for them. The bodies of young boys were being carried about the Kingsmead estate in broad daylight ... This gang based there has unquestionably killed more children than is known' (Oliver and Smith, 1993: 275). Wyre makes a similar point in his analysis of the child murderer Robert Black. 'If we can't protect our children 24 hours of every day, and we can't, we must work with offenders to reduce the risk that they will abduct, abuse or kill. There are thousands of men in Britain, at large and unnoticed, who are on the same path as Robert Black' (Wyre and Tate, 1995: 266). The insights gained by such professionals working with sex offenders must be incorporated within the investigative process if the numbers of children targeted are to have any chance of effective protection.

Numerous investigations of organised institutional abuse in boarding schools, residential care establishments and day care settings have increased knowledge about the recidivist nature of paedophilia and that offenders often change their identities and proceed to abuse children elsewhere. While there has been an essential emphasis on the need for improved vetting procedures (Home Office, 1992b; Coombes, 1995), there has been little central collation of intelligence or proactive investigation of the paedophiles involved. The tracking of such offenders often relies on an individual professional contacting the authority where they suspect a paedophile is working. Hughes and Parker (1994) argue that there should be a shift away from seeing child sexual abuse as a primarily social problem towards perceiving it as a serious crime. They are concerned that, 'there is no way of tracking perpetrators as

they move around the country'. If legislation prevented Schedule One offenders changing their name by deed poll, and enforced registration of residence, it would be difficult for offenders to move the location of their offending (particularly abroad), and would provide information locally.

Strand A: joint investigation teams

Of foremost importance in the effective investigation of organised abuse is the establishment of local, regional and national joint investigation teams. Former Detective Superintendent of the Obscene Publications Squad, Michael Hames, has emphasised the urgent need for this development. 'The Police Child Protection Teams are doing a great job dealing with offences if they are reported. But that is not enough. We need a proactive, national squad to go out and gather information and target these people' (Davies, 1994). A very useful US analysis of such teams is offered by Spence and Wilson (1994: 13/14). They argue that, 'by working together, the team can accomplish the goals of all investigative agencies in a more efficient manner and with enhanced results'. In the UK, social workers used to working with the police child protection teams have to develop working relationships with officers from the CID and New Scotland Yard. These police officers need to become involved with joint investigation training and development. Joint work demands flexibility of role, and may, for example, involve social workers contributing their expertise to traditional police work such as scene of crime investigations and suspect interviews. The Home Office and the Department of Health would need to redirect existing resources to establish a central joint investigation team to take the lead in training and developing the regional teams.

The child abuse investigation in Islington provides a useful example of the importance of joint teams if children are to be protected from the activities of large scale paedophile rings. On 1 August 1993 a *Sunday Times* report stated that, 'Britain's biggest police inquiry into organised sexual abuse of children has been launched by Scotland Yard's Obscene Publications Squad'. It explained that the investigation had uncovered several groups across London and Southern England and included surveillance of some wealthy businessmen who had been linked to a sex ring abusing young children living in children's homes in the London Borough of Islington (Palmer, 1993).

Following extensive media coverage, 'The Report of the Inquiry into the Management of Local Authority Children's Homes in Islington 1995 (the 'White Report' – White and Hart, 1995), acknowledged that 61 children had been identified as possible victims of organised abuse in just one of the local offices. The police, however, had found no evidence of connections between

individual children at risk from abuse and Scotland Yard had insufficient evidence for prosecutions. The Islington Area Child Protection Committee and the Social Services Inspectorate both concluded that there was 'no evidence to support the assertions of organised abuse' (White and Hart, 1995: 41–2).

This conclusion was flawed and betrayed the many child victims of paedophiles in that area of London. Although only one case led to conviction, the fact that there may have been insufficient evidence at that stage for further prosecutions did not prove that there was no organised sexual abuse of children (BASW, 1993). Professionals had profiled victims and offenders, and collated details of organised and ritual abuse which had led to civil proceedings, but in the absence of proactive collation of intelligence and multi-agency planning across the 24 local offices and with neighbouring boroughs, it was impossible for the investigation to proceed to the higher level of proof required for the criminal courts. Without co-ordination with local multi-agency teams the officers at Scotland Yard were limited in accessing intelligence and the locality professionals did not share the relevant knowledge held centrally by the Obscene Publications Squad. Without a central multi-agency team, liaison proved difficult with a number of different social services departments, each with their own procedures and practices.

Methods of investigation

Collation of intelligence

When we examine the reasons why children rarely speak about their abuse by paedophiles, it is surprising that we place our investigative emphasis on children's disclosures. Threats from the paedophile, or from peers and family who do not want their own involvement in the ring exposed, may involve direct physical threats or the withdrawal of favours on which the child has come to depend, for example drugs, money, housing. Young people fear disbelief, particularly when the abuse is of a bizarre nature, and that disclosure – which rarely leads to conviction – may leave them more vulnerable. A paedophile's strategy will aim at the child's total emotional, physical and economic dependency on him or her and may well involve the child in the abuse of other children, child pornography or other criminal activities. The child will fear both his or her own and the paedophile's imprisonment and may well have to overcome this guilt and fear of punishment before feeling confident enough to disclose. A number of investigations have highlighted the involvement of respected members of the community in the abuse network, leading understandably to children's reluctance to disclose.

The main task of the joint investigation teams would be to find alternative

methods of gaining evidence to protect children and to convict perpetrators. Collation of evidence of known and suspected offenders is the cornerstone of this work. A Register of Schedule One offenders is essential and would extend intelligence currently on file at the National Criminal Intelligence Service. Social services departments and the probation service are now informed by prison governors and consulted when Schedule One offenders are admitted to and released from custody (HM Prison Service, 1994). These notifications should be extended to include the police, and these agencies should also be alerted to information coming to the attention of mental health teams particularly concerning the release of sex offenders who had been admitted under Section 37 of the Mental Health Act (Buckley and Peterson, 1994). Joint investigation teams would use mapping techniques to examine networks between known offenders, their methods of targeting and abusing children and the venues used for their criminal activities.

Because very few paedophiles are convicted and the court system is so inadequate given the extent of the problem, it is imperative that information about suspected paedophiles form part of the team's database. The 'Report of the Social Services Inspectorate into the Case of Martin Huston' recommended, 'In situations where organisations or professionals have reason to believe that a person who has not been convicted of a relevant offence nevertheless presents a risk to children, the duty to protect children should override considerations for the right of the individual concerned' (DHSS, 1993: 152). While the principle is clear, there are procedures which can offer some degree of protection to adults who stand accused.

Multi-agency conferences could decide whether, on the balance of probabilities level of proof, abuse has occurred. This decision would be quite separate from any criminal proceedings. The Area Child Protection Committee would safeguard the information using a system similar to that of the Child Protection Register. The Area Child Protection Committee would organise an appeal procedure. Following such a conference decision, notification would be made as appropriate to the Department of Health Consultancy Service and the Department for Education List 99. The entry of a name on these lists would not depend, as at present, on disciplinary proceedings having taken place but on a multi-agency decision. The current requirement that the alleged abuser must be informed of these notifications would depend on the multi-agency assessment of whether such sharing of information would place any child at risk of significant harm.

It is accepted that children often disclose abuse gradually, and before continuing to disclose they commonly test the water of the professionals' response. Often the truth in a child's statement is overlooked as it appears implausible. Bizarre comments and clues can be systematically recorded and in time checked against known fact and placed in context.

Local information about offenders, such as press reports, would be added

to the team's database and consideration would be given to interviews with convicted paedophiles for information about other victims and perpetrators. New evidence might lead the investigators to the identification of adult witnesses themselves abused as children, pre-empting the need for children to appear in court.

Of particular importance is information about missing children. An innovative survey of missing children notifications over a year conducted in Bedfordshire found that most referrals were simply recorded. The authors found a few children's circumstances particularly worrying, and concluded that 'it is only the hard core group that we would be interested in following up' (Shriane, 1995). These children were the most likely to be victims of paedophiles. John Fitzgerald of the Bridge Child Care Consultancy raised these issues following the West case: 'What happens when a child comes back from absconding? Who asks the question where they have been? Who decides whether to alert the duty officer in social services and if the child does not return, and what happens after the initial police search?' (Downey, 1995). An independent review into the case of one 12 year-old child in residential care in Islington commented that there had been a 'lack of urgency in responding to allegations that this young man was being abused or at risk' (White and Hart, 1995: 11). The boy had been missing 90 times and was alleged to have been the victim of paedophiles (Fairweather and Payne, 1994). Such children often acquire the label 'rent boy' or 'prostitute' and the adult perpetrators remain hidden from professional view.

Maps can be drawn locating the places missing children visit from a particular locality or children's home and may lead to the identification of venues used by paedophiles to create 'pools' of children available for abuse. Sometimes attempts can be made to trace a number of perpetrators from knowledge about the abuse of one child. It is known that paedophiles advertise their victims and market them. This premise can assist a team in the mapping process.

Child protection meetings – focusing on perpetrators

At child protection strategy meetings and conferences every minute detail of a child's life is debated as if it is public property. Descriptions of the child's anatomy, psychological history, feelings, thoughts and innermost secrets are discussed. In contrast, it is not unusual to hear little or nothing about the alleged perpetrator. Meetings could be convened to coordinate such information. The numbers of children at risk and the level of concern would be assessed and child protection plans made as necessary, including attempts to identify other child victims. This may involve surveillance or the search of premises. Child pornography or forensic material may be found which could lead to a conviction without the child having to be a witness or could add

corroboration to a child's statement. Locating material may lead to the identification of more child victims and perpetrators.

Questionnaires

The scale of organised abuse investigations can seem overwhelming to professionals. In situations where a large number of children may be victims of abuse, thought might be given to the use of a questionnaire (see Appendix at end of chapter). Some investigators have conducted *Memorandum* interviews with 50–100 children concerning the activities of one alleged perpetrator without gaining enough evidence to press charges. Sometimes decisions to limit resources lead to valuable evidence being missed and children remain unprotected. A questionnaire offers an alternative and economical method of investigation in such situations. When it is not known how many children have been exposed to abuse, this method allows many children to be asked certain questions in a short space of time. From the responses it may be possible to identify children who are most likely to have been victims. The investigating team can then select a small group of children for *Memorandum* interviews. These would need to be held simultaneously to avoid contamination of evidence.

In one situation a holiday camp was the setting for a volunteer to indecently assault children. Numbers of children had attended the camp for short holidays. Following allegations made by two children, it was possible through use of the questionnaire to identify five additional child victims. The questionnaire and details of the conduct of the investigation were made available to the court. The evidence led to the conviction of the perpetrator.

Intelligence gathering interviews

It may be a decision of the team strategy meeting to conduct an intelligence gathering interview with a child. The purpose would be to seek information from the child which would assist the investigation of the alleged abuser/s. Questions might cover a description of the suspect's home, workplace or vehicle, knowledge of telephone numbers, methods used to target children, known associates, and so on. Ideally, information gained would lead to further investigation and the perpetrator being charged without the child having to give evidence. Children may feel empowered through this type of interview, through their knowledge that they had played an invaluable part in the investigation. There would be no pressure on the child to discuss any abuse to themselves and most importantly the child's identity would be protected so that they would feel as safe as possible from retaliation by the perpetrator. It would also be important to establish that the child would not alert the alleged abuser to the inquiries.

The interview should always be conducted in a relaxed manner preferably at a discreet location. The child must be assured of the absolute confidentiality of the interview and that they are not in any trouble. The lead interviewer should be someone known and trusted by the child – for example a teacher, carer/parent, residential social worker – in the presence of and guided by a social worker or police officer skilled in investigative interviewing. The approach to the child is clear: 'We would like you to help us in our enquiries about.' The rapport phase may not be as crucial as in a *Memorandum* interview, depending on the age and development of the child, but the general rules of investigative interviewing would apply.

If during the interview the child begins to disclose that they have been abused, that they are witness to the abuse of other children or that they have themselves abused, the interview must be terminated sensitively and the officer would explain to the child that a statement may be taken or a *Memorandum* or PACE interview conducted, unless it is already clear that the case will not lead to future proceedings. If the child is distressed they should have the choice about whether or not to continue the interview. When the interview is closed the child must be told about how they might be informed of any developments.

This type of interview presents no dilemma with regard to the child's need for therapy. In the research by Sharland et al. (1995) concerning professional intervention in child sexual abuse, they concluded that, 'rather alarmingly those affected by abuse that had occurred outside the close family received least help'. Intelligence gathering interviews, and the perpetrator-focused approach, minimise the need to rely on child witnesses and therefore children are free to access therapeutic help at the time when they need it, with no limitations on what may or may not be discussed.

Current trends in child protection – the difficulties in relation to organised abuse investigations

Partnership with parents and carers is a key principle of current child care practice and essential when the parent or carer is known to be non-abusive. The team would work closely with the non-abusive carer who would need a great deal of support in understanding the paedophile's grooming processes of both parent and child. Informed parents can often provide a key source of information and assistance to the team. However, if a parent is a Schedule One offender thought must be given as to whether it is in the best interests of the child to pursue such partnership. For instance, how does a child victim experience the abusive parent attending the case conference designed to protect the child? Willis (1993: 86) refers to the 'risk of empowering abusive parents' when pursuing the 'laudable aim' of 'working in partnership with parents'.

Some paedophiles are making use of Residence Orders under section 8 of the Children Act 1989, to gain parental responsibility of a child in uncontested cases when the court does not routinely request a court welfare report. Local authorities can find themselves acting in partnership with such an abusive carer.

Other key concepts currently promoted within child protection work sit uncomfortably with the protection of children. Respecting the wishes and feelings of the child may not be straightforward when a child is entrapped by a paedophile. To allow a child who wishes to reside with a paedophile to do so may not be in the child's 'best interests'. Professionals have to act courageously to protect such children from manipulation by paedophiles which may involve hypnosis and other mind control techniques, quite apart from threats. Children are victimised for financial gain and are a valuable commodity for a paedophile. The abuser will strive to retain possession of the child he or she may have groomed for some time – even years.

Ghate and Spencer (1995: 17), suggest that abusive behaviour should only be defined as such when it is debilitating for a child, making a distinction between abusive action and the impact on the child. In the context of organised abuse this is inappropriate. A child victim in the early stages of grooming may be receiving treats and find the relationship enjoyable. Children previously deprived of affection may even 'thrive' on the attention they are receiving. These situations would demand intervention even though the child, unaware of the harmful effects of the abuse, is wishing the relationship to continue. There are many cases where children are desensitised to pain as a result of persistent abuse or would be very aware of the dire consequences to themselves of displaying any obvious impact of the abuse.

Farmer and Owen (1995: 35), emphasise the importance of avoiding an interventionist approach to child protection in less serious cases. They found that involving police early in investigations could be counter-productive. This approach has no place within organised abuse investigations. Social workers must work closely with the police from the outset where organised abuse is indicated even though concern for a particular child may be low level at that time.

Dawn raids have been the subject of much media criticism. Such actions might well be the best method of obtaining the required evidence in order to ensure the protection of many children without alerting the alleged suspect. Paedophiles network with each other with a high degree of sophistication and to some degree investigators find their own techniques and communication systems mirroring those of the perpetrators.

Strand B: broad spectrum intervention

Investigators can develop and create their own effective networks including channels of communication with the local community to ensure that the team does not become out of touch. To facilitate the relaying of information to the investigators, Area Child Protection Committee training and awareness raising must reach out to active community members, for example: school governors, tenants associations, charities, ethnic minority groups, neighbourhood watch, local political parties and churches. Such caring citizens can learn how to recognise the early signs of child sexual abuse and the importance of reporting their suspicions. Public meetings and constructive use of the media can encourage the establishment of an organised network of protective adults within the community. Relationships between the public and the professionals can become informed and trusted, based on discussion and actual contact rather than on media constructed fantasies.

Wyre is clear that paedophiles frequently seek out and gain jobs in child care agencies, 'once there they typically continue to abuse, and their new victims don't speak out' (Wyre and Tate, 1995: 229). There must be channels for the reporting of suspicion across agencies, a system of checks and balances. One professional in each agency could be the contact for staff from any agency to report concerns. This would provide a legitimate route for 'whistleblowers'. The designated professional would also be the channel for passing information to the team from within their agency.

Area Child Protection Committees should aim to create a culture of awareness of child sexual abuse within the authority in a similar way to the programmes that have trained staff countrywide in relation to equal opportunities and HIV/AIDS.

Finally, self-protection work with children themselves must continue to be taught within schools. This approach on its own places too great a responsibility on children, but it is an essential component when used in conjunction with the perpetrator-focused strategies described above. Children must have their own clearly trusted and understood channels for recognising and reporting abuse.

Conclusion

Robert Black said that 'short of locking the kids up' there was nothing the parents could have done to prevent his murder and abuse of children (Wyre and Tate, 1995: 226). It was beyond the means and knowledge of any parent to have stopped Black or any other serial paedophile. It was not beyond the means of professionals, employed to protect children, to have actively worked towards preventing such atrocities. In order to be effective these

professionals must receive the full backing of civil servants and politicians. The protection of children from serial predatory paedophiles has to be firmly placed on the political agenda.

The *Memorandum* arrived in the wake of the events in the Orkneys. If the clock could be turned back, it would be interesting to know what would have happened if the children had been interviewed according to the guidance. If the actions of professionals and techniques of investigation had not been the focus of the inquiry (Clyde, 1992) would the inquiry have had the remit to consider whether or not the children had been abused? What if the focus had been on the alleged perpetrators as described in this chapter? The outcome for the children if that had been the case will never be known – that has to be left to informed speculation.

Acknowledgement

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APPENDIX: The use of questionnaires in organised abuse investigations

1 *When to use a questionnaire*

It is not always appropriate to use a questionnaire. This method provides a way of interviewing a large number of children in a short space of time, where it is not known how many children have been exposed to abuse. A questionnaire is used to identify potential victims and witnesses, and to gather coherent information about the club/group/holiday regime from the child's perspective.

2 *Who should decide whether or not a questionnaire is to be used in a particular investigation?*

The decision should be made at a joint strategy meeting with legal services present. If the Crown Prosecution Service are involved, they should also be consulted.

3 *Writing the questionnaire*

The questionnaire must be worded age appropriately. Its questions must be clear, non-leading and deliberately non-specific about the abuse, and there must be space for young people to add their own comments. The questionnaire might contain the caution that the child completing it must not discuss what they have written with anyone else. It may be necessary to produce the questionnaire in a number of languages.

4 *Making the questionnaire relevant*

Questions should relate to the particular inquiry, and it might be necessary to ask specific questions, e.g. 'Where did you sleep?' or 'Who sat next to you on the bus?' The details of the abuse must be kept from the children and they should have the opportunity to tell about abuse without any kind of prompting.

5 *Preparing the parents/carers*

Depending on the situation, a meeting of parents may be called or a letter sent to ask for their cooperation. Consideration needs to be given to contamination of evidence through parents discussing the matter together. If some

young people have already disclosed, then there must be planning to ensure that those families are not identifiable, e.g. agree with those parents that their children also get a letter to take home even though they do not need to complete the questionnaire. Contact with parents must be ethnically and culturally sensitive, and thought must be given to the needs of parents and carers who are non-literate. Contact numbers must be provided should they have any queries or concerns.

6 Preparing the young people

A letter may be worded to the young people but obviously without conveying any detail of known allegations. They should be informed that the questionnaire is confidential and will only be shared with the investigating team. If some young people have already disclosed, their identities must be protected both to ensure their safety and to prevent contamination of evidence. In the usual situation these children would not be completing a questionnaire but the above would apply where the questionnaire is distributed in a classroom. Children should be given the name of a member of staff or a member of the investigating team to whom they can talk.

7 Preparing the staff

It might be considered in the best interests of the children to distribute the questionnaire in familiar surroundings for them, e.g. a classroom. The staff must then be prepared to present the information correctly and the investigating team should be available in case any young person wishes to talk with someone during or following the completion of the questionnaire. Staff will need support throughout the whole exercise and for the days following as issues arise.

8 Evaluating the response

The questionnaire should be collated immediately and parents contacted as soon as it is practicable to inform them of any concerns. If the questionnaires have been completed at home it is important that the parents have feedback quickly. When the questionnaires are collated, a strategy meeting should be convened and decisions made about whether or not to interview any of the young people and to prioritise the interviews. Staff who have an understanding of the young people may assist in the evaluation process. It is not unusual for the scope of the investigation to be widened following the analysis of the questionnaires, and consideration must also be given to any young people who did not complete the form.

Sample questionnaire

This is an example of a questionnaire which is based on an investigation where an allegation of abuse has been made about a leader at a youth club. The young people would be about 12 years old.

Child's name

- 1 Are you a member of club?
- 2 How long have you been a member of club?
- 3 If you have left the club, why did you leave?
- 4 What activities do you enjoy most at the club?
- 5 Why do you like these activities best?
- 6 Which activities don't you like?
- 7 Why don't you like these activities?
- 8 What are the names of the youth leaders at the club?
- 9 Is there a youth leader you
 - a) like? who? why?
 - b) dislike? who? why?
- 10 Has anything happened at the club that you did not like? Yes/No
- 11 If Yes – what was it you did not like and why?
- 12 Have you ever been worried or frightened by anything at the club?
Yes/No
- 13 If Yes – what was it that worried or frightened you?
- 14 Have any of your friends told you that they have been worried or frightened?
- 15 Is there anything else you would like to say?

Signed

Date

Short Report

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***'The role of the
community in
child protection
is currently
primarily located
within prevention
strategies.'***

'The Difference Between Child Abuse and Child Protection Could be You': Creating a Community Network of Protective Adults

Community Involvement Narrowly Defined Within Prevention Strategies

Safeguarding children effectively requires a dual strategy—prevention and protection. The community have an essential role in both. The concepts are not mutually exclusive, as prevention is in itself protective and protection should result in the prevention of further abuse. Both concepts have become constructs to steer child protection policy in politically favoured directions. This short report develops previous work by the author (Davies, 1997).

The role of the community in child protection is currently primarily located within prevention strategies. These have two prime objectives:

- To encourage recognition of abuse, allowing for early intervention and diversion from statutory intervention
- Through partnerships, to contribute to universal solutions to some of the causes of child abuse when located within social and economic disadvantage

In this context, the statutory role is narrowed and the private/voluntary sector is increasingly the provider of services for children in need, addressing protection when abuse is within the family and correlated with social disadvantage.

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Farrow argues that, 'the reason a community's overall family support system is critical to effective child protection is that it creates the possibility of stemming the flow of vulnerable, at risk families' (Farrow, 1997; 48). He presents the case for community partnerships, not just as an assessment approach, but as a means to offer help to families through a community-based delivery system. Narrowing the statutory role by filtering out referrals is a theme in the Green Paper *Every Child Matters*, where the North Lincolnshire Common Assessment is defined as successful because referrals to social services dropped by 64% (Department for Education and Skills, 2003; 58). Margaret Hodge, Minister for Children, makes reference to this project, saying, 'I want to eke value out of every penny we spend' (Revans, 2004). Minimization of a proactive interventionist approach to child abuse developed following the refocusing debate in the mid-nineties and the ensuing interpretation of the findings of *Messages from Research* (Department of Health, 1995). Subsequently, the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* (Department of Health *et al.*, 2000a) split assessment from protection and this division was replicated in service restructuring. These developments further paved the way for family support services to be situated outside statutory services. The 'Framework' was published with an accompanying training pack (Department of Health *et al.*, 2000b) and training programmes were swiftly implemented. In contrast, there were no such government initiatives to promote the implementation of *Working Together* (Department of Health *et al.*, 1999), the statutory guidance concerning interagency working. Multiagency child protection strategies were at risk of becoming an afterthought.

An Area Child Protection Committee Community Involvement Strategy

An alternative approach to community involvement is to create protective networks of adults within the community in order to inform investigation of abuse and to increase rather than decrease appropriate reporting. Such a model is unapologetic in striving to protect children from abuse and to seek justice for them by prosecution of the abusers. Child abuse is located not solely within the family, but within the global child abuse industry of the exploitation of children worldwide: a vast commercial industry involving the marketing of abusive images, each one evidence of sexual crime, as well as the trafficking of children for sexual and domestic exploitation, the international adoption market and the so-called 'sex

'To offer help to families through a community-based delivery system'

'There were no such government initiatives to promote the implementation of Working Together'

'To pick up the pieces of an unjust and inequitable socioeconomic system in which children have little power'

tourism' trade. Multiagency professional intervention, with community support, aims to pick up the pieces of an unjust and inequitable socioeconomic system in which children have little power—a system in which sexual exploitation and violence are endemic and where children are valued primarily as marketable commodities and potential consumers. This protective community strategy challenges the view promoted during the refocusing debate, that too many children enter the child protection system, and instead suggests that many children remain unable to gain access to the effective protection they need and fail to gain safety from child abusers. For example, a recent Home Office report states that 56% of all police-recorded child abductions involved a stranger (Newiss and Fairbrother, 2004). Such child abuse would not necessarily trigger multiagency child protective strategies.

This proactive approach is illustrated by a description of an Area Child Protection Committee community involvement strategy in a north London borough between 1995 and 2000. The ACPC public awareness group included members from social services, police, probation, education, health and local survivors' organizations, and had three objectives:

- To raise public awareness of child protection work
- To encourage the public to refer child abuse to the statutory authorities and to understand the importance of referral
- To promote a positive view of child protection work

The strategy was aimed at both the general public and adults within the community who could be identified as effective protectors of children. Child abuse was conceptualized as an adult responsibility.

Strategies Involving the General Public

The ACPC realized that the public had little idea of how to report suspected child abuse. An ACPC logo enabled easy public identification of the literature, and posters were displayed in surgeries, schools, hospitals, police stations and other public spaces. Designed by local art students, the posters were in primary colours and used images of children's building bricks and handprints. The messages of the posters were: 'Children may need you to see'; 'Children may need you to hear'; 'Children may need you to speak out about physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect'; 'The difference between child abuse and child protection could be you'. Contact numbers for the police child protection team and social services were provided. Exhibitions of the work of the ACPC

'The public had little idea of how to report suspected child abuse'

were taken to supermarkets, shopping centres and other venues such as private sector health settings. Four public meetings with the titles 'Listening to Children', 'Child Protection is Everyone's Business', 'Domestic Violence: Change is Possible' and a play about organized abuse attracted 200 guests at a time who had the opportunity to ask questions of ACPC members. An ACPC newsletter was widely distributed and the local press were fed positive accounts of child protection work. Some members of the public came forward wanting to do more. One example of an issue brought to the attention of the group was that of female genital mutilation within the local Somali community. This increase in knowledge led to specific training events for the ACPC and close working with the local African Well Woman Clinic.

Creating a Network of Protective Adults

A database was established through mapping local groups and specific members of the community who worked with or had contact with children. This included, among others, play-groups, sports and arts clubs, churches, mosques, bus and taxi companies, private schools and hospitals, interpreters' and signers' groups, residential establishments, domiciliary carers, childminders, foster carers, school governors, child care lawyers, Relate counsellors, women's centres, Neighbourhood Watch volunteers, probation volunteers, parent support groups, victim support and survivors' groups and local councillors. A 'Knowing the Basics' training programme addressed the 'what, how and when' of child abuse—What is abuse? How to refer abuse? When to refer?. Groups which attended the training sent key staff to attend the multiagency 'Introduction to Child Protection' course which was organized for all professionals in the authority. This two-day course was widely supported by all statutory and voluntary agencies. Through the course, which included presentations by survivors of abuse, local professionals were made aware of the importance of their role in supporting the public awareness strategy.

Following the training, the organizations were then assisted in establishing internal child protection and safer care protocols in line with local and national guidance. Such organizations received approval from the ACPC and members of the public were able to check this. An affiliation scheme was planned, but not approved by the ACPC when priorities changed.

Child protection advisers in each agency could be contacted with specific queries. This provided a bridge between an

'The local press were fed positive accounts of child protection work'

'The importance of their role in supporting the public awareness strategy'

'Professionals too could raise concerns with an adviser from an agency other than their own'

uncertain community and the professional networks, particularly when concerns focused on professional behaviour or people of high status in the community. Professionals too could raise concerns with an adviser from an agency other than their own. This was a valuable safety net.

It was the view of ACPC members that an increase in referrals, particularly those of physical abuse and neglect, had demonstrated that the community awareness strategy had resulted in abusive situations being appropriately reported at an early stage.

A Community Strategy to Protect Children and a Professional Strategy to Monitor Abusers

The network of protective adults played a key role in the safe implementation of community notification strategies. When a child sex abuser was released into the community, some of this network were able to inform professionals of any noted contact with young people. They also reassured the community that there were professional systems in place to protect local children. Some worked closely with police and social services in the investigation of complex organized abuse networks and this led to the police child protection team allocating one officer to proactive investigation work. In this way, concerns about individual adults were collated and analysed and led to joint investigation as patterns of abusive behaviour were noted. Community identification of networks of young people targeted by one abuser led to the identification of other perpetrators who were targeting the same group of vulnerable children.

On one occasion, a child sex abuser wished to attend his local church. Probation, police and social services worked with the minister and church leaders to agree a child protection plan. The church members would accompany him to certain church services and ensure he had no contact with young people. They agreed that the statutory agencies would conduct some spot checks. If the pastors who had contact with Victoria Climbié and her aunt had been trained in awareness of child abuse, perhaps this might have provided her with protection. The inquiry report commented that 'the general view was that the "eyes and ears" of the community are not used enough in the identification of children potentially in need' (Lord Laming, 2003; 17.30).

One community concern was raised by women who had seen some young men playing with children on their housing estate late at night. It became clear that they were in fact youth

'The "eyes and ears" of the community are not used enough'

workers specifically assigned by the local authority to an outreach project following anxiety about the children's safety, but the local community had not been informed. Concerns were addressed between the youth service and the local protective network.

The strategy described here came to an abrupt end following a change in management to a more top-down culture focused on target-setting, increased involvement of consultants which demoralized experienced staff (many of whom left the authority) and preoccupation with Chapter 8 reviews (now known as serious case reviews). These factors, unfortunately, left little time or encouragement for creative multiagency approaches to child protection. A workshop describing the experience of creating a network of protective adults within the community was presented at an NSPCC/PIAT conference in December 1998; this allowed other authorities to develop the ideas and make use of the materials.

The current focus on prevention as offering an alternative to proactive child protection strategies diverts scarce professional resources from rigorous child protection investigations addressing all forms of abuse within all sectors of society. Effective child protection requires a professional response. If a community network is in place to inform that response, through both appropriate referral and involvement in investigation strategies, children will have an increased chance of protection from all child abusers, not solely those within the family.

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'A more top-down culture focused on target-setting'

'Protection from all child abusers, not solely those within the family'

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Responses to Traumatized Children

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Responding to the Protection Needs of Traumatized and Sexually Abused Children

Liz Davies

Child sexual abuse¹ has been described as soul murder due to the serious and lasting damage to the child's emotional, neurological and physiological development that results from the overwhelming impact of trauma which includes both fear and pain (Strong 1998: 65). However, the word 'trauma' comes from the Greek word meaning 'to pierce' which Bentovim explains as a piercing of the protective layers of the mind (1992: 24). Victims of such overwhelming trauma tend to live in a world of continual and unpredictable danger, alone and powerless without means of escape. Van der Kolk (cited in Strong 1998: 95) equates the abuse as more pernicious than that affecting prisoners of war in that the abusers are often the people who are supposed to protect and nurture the child. Frampton (2004: 218) in a graphic account of his childhood in residential care noted that the gleam had gone from a child's eyes when they had suffered abuse at the hands of those employed to care for them. He described trying to reach out to his abused friend: 'We all peered inside but the watchman's lamp had gone out.' Like him I 'pay tribute and marvel at how out of so little, so many children are able to shape reasonable lives as adults' (2004: 290). Therefore this chapter aims to highlight both the extent of the suffering of sexually abused children and the nature of such trauma.

Understanding the extent of child sexual abuse

To understand the incidence of abuse, it has been suggested that one should imagine three victims of child sexual abuse for every car on the road (Survivors Swindon 2005). Children from all cultures and ethnicities are sexually abused at all age levels by men, women and other young people. The abuse is generally repeated and lasting in 50 per cent

of cases between the ages of 2 and 18 years, and in 67 per cent of cases beginning before the age of 11 years (National Commission of Inquiry, 1996). More than 80 per cent of the victims of sexual abuse know their abuser and most abuse takes place in the home of the child or the abuser (Cawson et al. 2000; Grubin 1998). Disabled children are 3.1 times more likely to suffer sexual abuse than non-disabled children (Sullivan 2000). Other statistics confirm that 6 per cent of child abductions are sexually motivated (Newiss and Fairbrother 2004). It also seems that children are commonly victimized by more than one abuser (APRI 2004: 70).

The extent of child sexual abuse is underestimated given the low level of child and adult reporting. Children may deny abuse, not understand that it is wrong, or their reaction to it may be significantly delayed sometimes due to the lack of recall of the abuse. The more extreme the level of abuse the more likely it will be shielded from the child's consciousness (Briere and Conte 1993; Briere and Elliott 1994; Finkelhor 1979; Summit 1988). The focus on the 'false memory' debate detracts from the reality of the abuse recollections by children (APRI 2004: 35). In a study of ten young adults who were sexually exploited as children through abusive images, none had told freely of the events in 28 years. This provides a very different view to the idea that children make false allegations (Svedin and Bach 1996). An NSPCC² study concluded that 72 per cent of sexually abused children stated that they were too frightened to tell anyone at the time of the abuse and 31 per cent still had not told anyone by early adulthood (Cawson et al. 2000). It must be understood that to speak of abuse is a deeply painful task for a child or adult. A young man aged 14 years spent interview after interview telling the author of this chapter about the many types of bottle on a shelf, their colours and contents and types of lid. After one excruciating 20 minutes of silence he finally said these were used by the abuser to prepare him for rape.

The abuser's insistence on secrecy with direct or indirect threats is a powerful influence (APRI 2004: 35). Mudaly and Goddard (2001: 228) noted that 'the abuser like a terrorist utilises a state of fear in the victim to obtain compliance ... the victim is a need satisfying object'. Survival strategies assisting a child to cope with continuing maltreatment may include the child abuse accommodation syndrome including reactions of secrecy, helplessness, entrapment, delayed unconvincing disclosure and retraction (Summit 1983). One of the most vivid accounts of being a child and unable to speak about sexual abuse is that of Mary Bell who killed two children when she was 11 years old. At the age of 40 she looked back on a childhood where her mother exposed her to abuse by numbers of men. 'I was so frightened because she says if I ever told

anything I would be locked up. You know I told you about the sentry box on the Tyne bridge? That's where she said I would go and she said nobody would believe me. And anyway, I think I must have thought it was my fault. I had done wrong and was being punished ... I felt so dirty' (Sereny 1999: 335). Many child victims only disclose much later in life commonly when they wish to prevent other children being abused by the same perpetrator. Detective Chief Inspector Spindler commented that out of over 2000 child sexual abuse investigations in London each year over 30 per cent are 'historic', i.e. cases of adults who were sexually abused as children (Fairhurst and Spindler 2005).

There is concern that as much as 95 per cent of sexual crime against children is unreported (NCIS 2003). The low level of adult reporting of serious crimes against children was raised during the review of the West case (Bridge 1996) and also by Chief Inspector Stoodley at the time of Operation Orchid, an investigation of the abduction and murder of young boys in London and the south east, who stated that children had vanished without trace without anyone caring or having looked for them. 'The bodies of young boys were being carried about the Kingsmead Estate in broad daylight' (Oliver and Smith 1993: 275). Cawson et al. (2000) reported the incidence of child sexual abuse as 21 per cent of girls and 11 per cent of boys when defined as acts to which they had not consented or where consensual activity had occurred with someone five years or more older and the child was 12 years or less. Yet when placed within a context of knowledge about the offending patterns of child sex abusers (NSPCC 2005a), child trafficking for sexual exploitation (Metropolitan Police 2003), the marketing of abusive images of children (Renold et al. 2003) and the entire globalized industry of child sexual exploitation, it is extraordinary that so few children's names are on the UK child protection registers under the category of child sexual abuse – only 2700 in 2003, a considerable reduction compared with 6600 in 1999 (NSPCC 2005b). Multi-agency community prevention programmes aimed at increasing public awareness to ensure appropriate reporting of suspicion and knowledge of child sexual abuse must be in place if children are to access the investigative, protective processes (Davies 2004). However, the main focus of this chapter is the professional response both pre- and post-referral.

The pathologization of child victims of sexual abuse

Frampton (2004: 290) noted that 'society pays for its neglect – children become adults'. Yet instead of focusing protective systems on the child

victims of abuse, current policy pathologizes children as potential criminals and threats to the social order. Children whose lives have been damaged by neglect and abuse are the very children who occupy the juvenile remand wings of prisons (Goldson 2002: 5.1). Further, it is estimated that one-third of women and one in twenty men in prison have suffered child sexual abuse. A prison inspection report states that 'many or most children in locked establishments have suffered neglect, ill treatment and violence but few have received the treatment that is their right' (Children's Rights Alliance 2002). Children negatively described as 'feral' – a term for a forgotten underclass of children that roam inner cities, and claimed by a police commissioner to be a threat second only to terrorism – have typically been sexually assaulted whilst in care. Homeless children have commonly been sexually abused (Townsend 2004). Hence, punitively stigmatizing these children as criminals diverts attention from the importance of child protection investigation and the targeting of child abusers – it is a crude dynamic of blaming the victim.

Professionals are key messengers between the child and the state and as such bear a major responsibility for listening to the child's voice and representing the right of children to be free from abuse (UNCRC 1990: Articles 3, 19, 34 and 39). The Children Act 1989 is unequivocal in requiring the protection of children from actual or likely significant harm (1989 s. 47) but it is a far from simple task. Monahan (1993) compares the traumatic effect to a childhood wound that is often invisible, internal and where there are no X rays to define the damage (cited in Hutchinson 2005: 7). The following sections will describe the enormity of the professional task of recognizing and understanding the trauma of child abuse, of rigorously investigating allegations of abuse and of seeking justice for the child victims through the identification and prosecution of perpetrators.

It's hard to tell

The subject of this poem was a 15-year-old girl who was being sexually and physically abused by her father:

I wonder how a child
Who is being tortured day and night
Who's body aches and pains
Can sing Or laugh Or anything?

How can such a child
Play in the playground
And pretend
So perfectly?
There is no feeling
That's how it's done.

She hung her head and Spoke
In soft, dull tone
One word blended with
the next in a stream of
Unspecific sorrow
Sometimes, she said, a male voice was in her head.
She waited hour on hour
to see someone, anyone.
'What's she here for?' They said.
'She's here again'
'Not again'
'there's no dialogue.
What's the point?'

Some persisted
Reaching out within the pain
Entering inside the enigma
and barely holding on.

Still she came
She was so young.
He trapped her every day.
Six times.
She could not fight.
He gave her drugs.
He pinned her down.
Her inner voice kept her sane.
The phantom male loved her while
her father stole her body
and tore her mind.

Now she can – now and then
look me in the eye
for one small fleeting moment only.

As a professional social worker, I had a problem. I was guessing. She presented in my office almost daily after school for no apparent reason and in a way unseen by other agencies. At school she was the model child but I would see her muttering to herself. Very slowly I gained her trust. Not by questioning and pressurizing but by listening, often in silence, feeling her pain and waiting patiently until she was ready to tell. At any stage it would have been easy to wreck this delicate process. Each time I reassured her that if she needed me to make her safe I would do so – because that was my job. I also spoke with her about my police colleague whom I trusted and who would be willing to meet her. The joint police and social work investigation waited in the wings until one day she made the decision that her need for her only parent to give her love was not as great as her need to escape his sexual abuse and violence.

This was the London Borough of Islington in 1992. It was just one of the many cases where young people came to trust social workers in a small local neighbourhood office. The young people demonstrated Factor X. An unknown. A gap in professional knowledge leading to the all important hypothesis about what the child's experience might be given small pieces of available information about drug and alcohol misuse, petty crime, mental ill health and attempted suicide often in a context of parental neglect and abuse.

The hypothesis that a high number of young people were being sexually exploited in the locality had to be tested. This was achieved through a number of strategies. It became obvious that the nervous, disorientated, secretive and frightened young people would not provide the evidence – it was only later that the social workers learned of the abusers' threats to 'bury them alive' or 'knife them if they told'. Whilst social workers befriended the young people individually and tried to gain their trust, the strategy did not depend on the child's account as sole evidence. The children needed no added pressure. They were suffering enough and it is clearly an adult responsibility to protect children.

Police and social workers worked with all other agencies in the area and local community representatives to collate information. This was mapped and analysed together with the many clues provided by the children and their families such as places, names, car and telephone numbers. The joint investigation strategy focused on gathering intelligence about the child abusers and targeted them through proactive surveillance and profiling. As children were protected by their families or through child protection procedures and civil proceedings the

abusers simply drew more young people from the pool of vulnerable children so constantly available to them in this disadvantaged area of the city. It later became known that the network of abusers extended throughout the children's homes – the places where as social workers we had placed them for safety. Demetrius Panton, a survivor of the Islington child abuse scandal, spoke of a healing that needed to take place within him that couldn't begin until someone had apologized to him (Blitz 1996).

Perpetrator focused strategies and seeking justice for children

Enabling and empowering children to speak of their experiences in their own time and at their own pace in child-centred environments to professionals trained in specialist child interview skills is one key component of a child protection investigation. However, to effectively protect children there must be risk assessments of the abusers and where necessary the abuser must be removed from the child's environment. Child protection procedures must include a dual strategy – work with the child and the non-abusive family to respond to the child's need for safety as well as investigative work to identify and target the child abuser. Sarah Nelson states in her research of women survivors of child sexual abuse: 'the survivors felt strongly that they should have been protected at an early age and that the perpetrators should have faced legal justice many years before' (Nelson 2001). Seeking justice is an important aspect of the healing process for children, and whilst going to court may be stressful for children it can also help the child gain a sense of empowerment (Vieth in APRI 2004: 36).

For the relatively small numbers of children who seek justice through the courts there is a low rate of prosecution and conviction. A recent study suggests only one in 50 sex offences against children result in conviction (Stuart and Baines 2004). One in three children who report child sexual abuse are under the age of 8 years and yet a study of four police authorities found that prosecutions are extremely rare for this group. There is much concern that children with disabilities and children for whom English is not their first language are not sufficiently represented among the cases that proceed to trial (Utting 1997: 20.10).

One graphic example is that raised by the QC to the Waterhouse Inquiry. 'Police interviewed 2500 people leading to the investigation of 500 complaints of physical or sexual abuse and arising out of this inquiry 8 individuals were prosecuted. On the face of it this appears an

extremely small number. Only 6 were convicted' (G. Elias, QC to the Tribunal cited in Utting 1997: 20.4). When child sex abusers are convicted it is not uncommon for there to be a long history of previous incidents of abuse allegations which had not led to prosecution. The review which examined the history of thirteen cases of sexually abusive incidents in the Ian Huntley case stated that, 'even this is almost certainly not a complete list of the young women' (Kelly 2004: 32). Abusers commonly evade investigation for years before finally being brought to court.

There are 24 721 sex offenders on the Sex Offenders Register in England and Wales. This statistic includes offences against adults and children and only accounts for sexual crime convictions post-1997 (Home Office 2004). Suspected and known child sex abusers are monitored by the Multi Agency Public Protection Panels (MAPPP) in each authority which consider the current circumstances of registered sex offenders and potentially dangerous adults in the community and develop a multi agency risk management strategy to reduce the risk of further offending and protect the public (Home Office 2003). Concerns about a child sex abuser should be reported to the panel either to the chair or through one's own agency representative on the panel.

The process of criminal proceedings may itself be abusive to children. The court is an adult arena and is guided by the principles of criminal justice rather than the Children Act 1989. Some 16 out of 50 children interviewed in a recent study described the experience as extremely negative (Plotnikoff and Woolfson 2004). Whilst the investigative interview of the child using the Achieving Best Evidence Guidance (Home Office 2002) is favourably described by children as a child-centred process, the court appearance itself may be traumatic as children are frequently discredited as witnesses and they often have to undergo lengthy and harsh cross-examination (Davies and Westcott 1999: 28). Increased attention to the obtaining of forensic evidence and the identification of adult witnesses – such as former victims of the same alleged abuser or witnesses to the abuse – would take the onus of proof off the child and also assist in providing supportive corroborative evidence.

An evaluation of child protection policies and procedures

Although few child sexual abuse cases progress to criminal proceedings in the UK, children do gain protection through civil legislation and child protection procedures under the balance of probabilities standard

of proof. Since 1945 child abuse inquiries have provided a vast knowledge base for protecting children through the formal processes of professionals working together. The statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DfES 2006) provides the formal framework for good practice known to be effective in protecting children and very few children who die from abuse are subject to child protection procedures such as the Child Protection Register (Reder et al. 1994; Munro 2002). The guidance is implemented through local child protection procedures under the scrutiny of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

There is a myth that failure to protect children derives mainly from miscommunication between agencies. The picture is instead commonly one of a great deal of inter-agency communication but absence of analysis and non-compliance with statutory guidance. The key reason for such professional failure is staff employed within unsafe working environments, lacking in supervision, good management and training and overwhelmed with high workloads (CST 2005; Munro 2005).

Indeed, a considerable number of traumatized abused children do not gain access to protective child protection strategies. *Messages from Research* (DoH 1995) began a policy shift which emphasized that too many children were entering the child protection net. It was also suggested that the threshold defining child protection was set too high/low. This viewpoint continues to steer government policy away from proactive child protection intervention and towards universal policies which focus on prevention and involve a focus on all children and inter-familial child 'concerns' rather than the significant harm criteria defined in the Children Act 1989. This perspective is seriously flawed as child sexual abuse does not correlate with social and economic disadvantage and strategies which aim at an end to social exclusion and will not resolve the protection issues for children at risk of abuse which occurs in all social classes (Munro 2005; Munro and Calder 2005). The Green Paper *Every Child Matters* (ECM) (The Treasury 2003) and the subsequent Children Act 2004 define risk as children at risk of social exclusion, which moves professionals further away from the investigation of children at risk of child abuse. Strategies focusing on perpetrators, particularly those located outside the immediate family, are noticeably omitted – probation, the key agency with knowledge about child abusers, is absent from the hub of agencies described in ECM as needed to network in the interests of the child. During the 1980s and early 1990s agencies working together worked well to produce

hundreds of child protection investigations achieving justice for children. A backlash led to steady erosion of the child protection system and the language of child protection has become lost. Instead of a focus on child abuse, significant harm, risk, investigation and protection the words used are concern, need, inquiry and safeguarding.

Laming emphasized the importance of social workers being involved in investigation and analysis (Laming 2003: 9.593), yet since the introduction of *The Framework of Assessment for Children in Need and their Families* (DoH 2000) social workers conduct assessments to strict time-scales in a conveyor belt approach with fast turnover of cases (see also Reder et al. 1993; Reder and Duncan 1999). Government targets drive managers to close cases prematurely and keep the numbers on the Child Protection Register low. This trend was noted in a recent inspection report: 'councils have unusually high thresholds for responding to child protection referrals and in taking action to protect children' (CSCI 2005: 2.7). The threshold for Section 47 intervention is actually low: 'reasonable cause to suspect actual or likely significant harm' (Children Act 1989: 47). Haringey social work managers pursued a family support model of social work, emphasizing the needs of Victoria Climbié's carers as a refugee family for housing and financial support rather than a child protection investigative approach. When Victoria Climbié's aunt alleged sexual abuse of Victoria by Carl Manning, the referral did not result in formal child protection processes. There was no joint investigation with police, formal interview of the child, paediatric assessment or a child protection conference. Yet Victoria told the social worker, 'I'm not lying. I must tell you more. It's true' (Laming 2003: 6.395). It was thought that the referrer was using the allegations as a ruse to obtain housing and the child was unheard. Victoria did not achieve the status of being defined as a child in need of protection. 'She was labelled from the outset as a child in need' (Reder et al. 2004: 95).

Locating intervention within the needs of the child and family distracts attention from the abuse of children by organized networks of child abusers through trafficking, abusive images and sexual exploitation. A recent critique of the professional response to child sexual abuse was that of the inspection into the care and protection of children in Eilean Siar (SWIA 2005). Although no criminal prosecutions achieved convictions the review made a finding that three children were repeatedly sexually abused and concluded that there was an 'unhelpful imbalance in the weight given to the rights and duties of parents as against the needs and rights of the children'. Professionals

had been over-optimistic about the capacity of the parents to protect the children, and large amounts of information had been logged and shared as part of assessment but there had not been any analysis of the meaning of that information or proper debate among professionals enabling tough decisions to be made.

Laming recommended a police focus on investigation of crime 'completely and exclusively' (Laming 2003: 14–57). This has led police to withdraw from the joint investigation of actual or likely significant harm unless there is clearly an offence which has been committed. Social workers are now often left alone to conduct assessments and unless they find 'evidence of abuse' little proactive joint work takes place. The polarization of the two statutory agency responsibilities – the police focus on crime and the social work focus on assessment – 'leaves a gap in the statutory response to child sexual abuse which will lead to vulnerable children slipping through the protective net' (Davies and Jarman 2005: 814). One example of this approach is the statutory response to the accessing of abusive images of children. Detective Chief Inspector McLachlan, former head of Scotland Yard's Paedophile Unit has commented that the police focus on inter-familial sexual crime led to a lack of investigation of predatory child sex abusers (McLachlan 2003). In 2002 he had found abusive pictures of 13 000 young people and only 175 of the child victims were identified due to lack of police resources and cases not progressing to joint investigation or organized abuse procedures (DfES 2006: 6–8; Home Office 2002; ALG 2003: Ch. 11). 'The victims of these horrendous crimes – the children themselves – are not being found and helped' (Carr 2005). The police child abuse investigation teams only respond to cases of abuse within the family or by carers. There are very few police resources dedicated to the investigation of organized abuse of children.

Listening to children – making a referral

Sexually abused children come to the attention of professionals in a number of ways. There may be a direct disclosure, signs and indicators of child sexual abuse, admission by a known offender, discovery of abusive images of the child, or medical and/or forensic evidence. Children's disclosures are frequently met with disbelief as adults mirror the child abuse accommodation syndrome (Summit 1983) and excuse, minimize or deny the allegation. In one study half of 124 adults who had suffered child sexual abuse and spoken out at the time had not been believed (Mullen et al. 1996). The few children who do speak

about child sexual abuse may present as tearful and depressed but equally they may drip feed the information slowly over time constantly testing the response of the adult they have chosen to trust. Children do not wish to harm a positive relationship with an adult and will need to reassure themselves that the horror or the trauma of the disclosure will not frighten the adult away. Some children speak in a joking or matter of fact manner about the abuse which may lead the professionals mistakenly to question the validity of the disclosure. One girl wrote the allegation on the classroom whiteboard in a lunchtime with explicit diagrams of the abuse. A small boy shouted out in class 'I have some news – he puts his willy in my bum.' These children knew no other way. The manner of disclosure is an important factor to inform the investigators about the abuse. If the sexual abuse has been repeated over time it may be that the child's defence is to normalize the abuse and speak of it with lack of emotion. In a serious case review the author of this chapter conducted about Aliyah – a child of 13 years who died following sexual exploitation – it was clear that her presentation as a sparkling and bubbly child diverted professional attention from her desperation (Payne 1999). Children may report at seemingly inopportune times or for what appear suspect motives such as when they have misbehaved at school, or when parents are in conflict. 'The very problems that have developed in an effort to cope with the abuse are then seen as reasons to discount the reports' (APRI 2004: 35).

The first point of a child's disclosure is very important evidentially and constitutes evidence of early complaint in criminal proceedings. The knowledge that children frequently retract allegations (Summit 1983; APRI 2004: 35) makes it very important for the investigator to retain a perspective based on evaluation of the first disclosure. Professionals who are not in the role of investigators should respond to a disclosure through probing just sufficiently to allow them to be certain of the need to make a referral at the threshold of 'reasonable cause to suspect actual or likely significant harm' (Children Act 1989: 47). This is achieved primarily through the use of open questions such as 'tell me what happened', 'explain/describe to me' without presupposing what has actually happened to the child. It is important not to corrupt the child's innocence by implying abuse by someone who may be innocent (Sturge 1997).

The one assumption that may be made is that the child will blame themselves in some way for the abuse. Clarifying from the beginning that they are not responsible will enable the child to disclose further. Children may ask for the disclosure to remain secret. This presents a

dilemma for the professional wishing to provide the child with maximum support. However, there must be no collusion with the secrecy of child sexual abuse and the child must be reassured about the importance of their safety and the need to make the referral. It may of course be that the child then decides to say no more at that stage. A girl aged five repeatedly came to the author during supervised contact visits with a parcel. She demanded more and more sticky tape, brown paper and string and the parcel was made bigger each week. This was a secret she couldn't tell. After two years in a safe foster placement she told all. Children may speak of feeling dirty, contaminated by the abuse or abnormal. Such feelings must be acknowledged and not dismissed. Feelings are so powerful: children may resort to obsessional hand washing, showering or drinking bleach to 'cleanse' their bodies.

The initial disclosure must be recorded contemporaneously for evidential purposes. The interviewer's responses must be stated as well as the child's account in their own words. The interviewer may well not understand the meaning of the detail of the disclosure. In one case a child spoke to me of 'white pee'. It was only later in the investigation that it was realized he was referring to abuse by the abuser urinating on him. Another referred to the 'goliards' with a high level of anxiety. It took two years before the investigators realized he meant the 'followers of Goliath' in a Davidian religious cult. The context of the disclosure must also be recorded. Children commonly disclose after talks by the police in their class about Yes and No touches; such a context adds to the validity of the child's statement. Repetition and consistency in the child's statement and the addition of sensory detail also add validity. A child who spoke of digital penetration by her grandfather at the age of 13 had spoken in exactly the same detail at the age of 4. This had been recorded on file and was a strong test of validity over time. A child describing the smell of alcohol or tobacco on the abuser's breath or the sticky, gluey feel of semen is telling of direct sensory perceptions such as could not be said to have been obtained from viewing a video or having heard a 'story'.

The first point of disclosure may be through observed sexualized behaviour. Mary Bell describes visiting an old man and touching his genitals. She thought this was acceptable behaviour. As a report to social services this might have been the first indication that this child was being sexually exploited (Sereny 1999). Sexually abusive behaviour by young people should lead to child protection procedures which need to be organized in parallel to any criminal prosecution (ALG 2003: 152-8). The question that always has to be asked is 'how did the child learn this behaviour?'

The professional response post-referral

On receiving a referral social services will make checks with relevant agencies to see if the child is known and a strategy discussion will be held with the police (DfES 2006: 5.54). A decision will be made as to whether any intervention is required immediately to protect the child. An assessment may have to be swiftly made as to whether or not there is a non-abusive carer who can be a proactive protector of the child. Attempts will always be made to secure the child within their home environment. Social services can fund the alleged perpetrator to be rehoused temporarily away from the home. However, it may be necessary to remove the child from the household temporarily to allow time for the investigation to take place. This might involve the use of police powers of protection to remove the child to a place of safety or social services obtaining an Emergency Protection Order (EPO). A key omission in the Victoria Climbié case was that the child was not made safe prior to investigation. It was unsurprising then that the child did not communicate about the abuse to the police officer and social worker (Laming 2003: 6.253). An excellent and creative account of the sexually abused child's need to be safe prior to interview is the account of a 3-year-old girl called Tracey who needs a policeman in uniform in the interview room before she can speak of the abuse (Bray 1997: 50–66). An Emergency Protection Order can be sought with conditions such as for a medical assessment, a formal interview of the child or to prevent the alleged abuser having contact with the child. A decision will be made as to whether Section 47 inquiries are required and whether these will be conducted by a single or joint agency. Following inquiries a strategy meeting will be convened. This is chaired by a social services manager and attended by police and other relevant agencies (DfES 2006: 5.60). It is at this professionals' meeting that decisions are made as to whether the child should be formally interviewed, a child protection conference should be convened, a paediatric assessment is indicated and what plans need to be made to inform the parents of the strategy unless to do so would place the child at risk of harm. A paediatric assessment cannot be conducted without the child's consent, unless it is a life and limb situation; however, children will often be more willing to attend a paediatric consultation which enables them to gain an understanding of what would be involved in an examination and provides an opportunity for them to pose questions. The child protection doctor in each locality will make a decision about who should conduct any examination to ensure that it is correctly carried

out and to lessen the possibility of further examinations being required for evidential purposes.

The implementation of the above procedures has become confused since the introduction of the Framework of Assessment (DoH 2000; Calder and Hackett 2003: 3–60). The initial assessment of seven days tends to overshadow the decision to provide the child with safety and does not provide a risk assessment tool. The timescales are not relevant to investigation of child sexual abuse which may take many weeks or months but because of performance targets cases are closed after the initial assessment if there is no clear evidence to progress the case further along the route of child protection. There is a clear distinction to be made between investigation and assessment. A core assessment under the Framework focuses on the child and family and their needs and is now deemed to be an essential component of a Section 47 investigation subject to performance targets. In fact a child protection investigation may include a component of assessment but also involves evaluation of risk and focus on the alleged or known perpetrator. It is a different but parallel process. This was a key confusion in the Climbié case. Laming commented that he had ‘heard no evidence of what I would term a Section 47 inquiry ever having been carried out by Haringey social services’ (Laming 2003: 6.217).

The child protection conference is the most important tool in child protection. It brings together all key professionals with the parents to make a decision about whether or not the child’s name should be placed on the Child Protection Register and under which category (DfES 2006: 5.80). The abuse must be defined as of continuing concern. If the child has already been made safe there may not be a need for a conference: Children may attend but the experience may add to the child’s trauma. It is a decision for the independent chair as to whether the child wishes to attend for all or part of the meeting and whether the conference can be child-centred. It may be inappropriate for children to be exposed to details of forensic and medical examinations or information about the parental histories. If the child’s name is placed on the Register then a protection plan outlines what is required for the child to be made safe and a key worker is appointed to coordinate all aspects of the case working with a core group of professionals and non-abusive carers. The plan is reviewed initially at three months and after six monthly intervals until deregistration when the child is deemed to be safe.

The formal interview of the child by police and social workers according to the Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) Guidance (Home Office 2002) is primarily to collect evidence for criminal proceedings.

although the video may also be released for civil proceedings. The aim of the interview is to identify sources and levels of risk and to assist the investigation in relation to the need to protect the child. It is conducted according to the phased interview approach in a dedicated child-centred suite and essentially provides a child-focused environment to facilitate the child being confident to speak about what has happened. Children who have provided evidence on tape are found to be more relaxed than those testifying live in court (Davies 1995). The use of video would be usual unless it was known that the child had been filmed as part of the abuse. The decision to interview a child formally has to include consideration of the ability of the child to undergo cross examination in court though children as young as 4 years old have been deemed capable (Davies and Westcott 1999). Children with communication difficulties or where English is not the first language must be given every opportunity to provide evidence through the use of interpreters and intermediaries. Whilst the support of the non-abusive carer is vital they do not attend the interview. Following consultation with the child the interviewers will communicate with the carer after the process. The interviewers make use of drawing and toys to assist in the interview process (Wilhelmy and Bull 1999). If the strategy meeting does not advise a formal interview consideration may be given to a facilitative interview (Bentovim 1995). This provides a specialist assessment by a child psychiatrist or psychologist and is conducted as part of the joint investigation process to ensure that the information obtained could be used as evidence if indicated. It may or may not then lead on to an ABE interview. Such an assessment interview would be appropriate when a young child has a medical only presentation where sexual abuse is suspected but there may be an innocent explanation, where there are solely behavioural indicators of sexual abuse, where a young person has a psychiatric disorder or where there are specific issues relating to fear or intimidation. In such cases clarification may also be sought through the use of books such as *My Body My Book* (Peake and Rouf 1995) or the *Anti-Colouring Book* (Striker and Kimmel 1979) which allow the child to work with a trusted adult in exploring 'yes' and 'no' touches and be given open-ended opportunities to express feelings. Both during and after the investigative process professionals need to consider the therapeutic needs of the child. The Home Office provides guidance on the provision of therapy prior to trial (Home Office 2002) and methods such as storytelling can be simple non-interpretive mechanisms to provide healing to the child (Davis 1990).

The impact of child sexual abuse

Around 80 per cent of all child victims of sexual abuse experience Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Briere and Elliott 1994). PTSD may be caused by critical and shocking events that are a threat to life and the psychological well-being of the victims. The key symptoms are disturbed sleep patterns, experience of flashbacks, phobias, anxiety attacks, lack of trust, lack of social activities, depression, self-harm, addiction and suicidal ideations (Guy 2004). A proportion of medical complaints are also often thought to represent somatic equivalents of anxiety arising from the experience of abuse, unexplained symptoms being the body's response to stress (Putnam 1997). However, Nelson challenges this and compares physical disorders to accounts of child sexual abuse by adult survivors as well as to the physical effects of torture and child marriage (Nelson 2002: 52–3). She refers to violent repeated assaults on developing bodies untreated through lack of care or the desire to conceal the evidence. Attention is drawn to the impact on a child's back or pelvis of being crushed by a large man, of shoulders and necks bent back during oral abuse and throat rape leading to infections and difficulty in swallowing and breathing.

According to Strong (1998), a history of child sexual abuse was found in 50 per cent of eating disorder cases, 90 per cent of dissociative disorders and between 50–90 per cent of those who self-harm. Research conducted in adult male prisons also revealed that suicide and self-harm were more prevalent if prisoners had suffered child sexual abuse (Liebling and Krarup 1993). Van der Kolk observed immune system abnormalities in women with a history of child sexual abuse (cited in Strong 2005: 99) and 46 per cent of chronically hospitalized psychotic women were identified as having a history of child sexual abuse (Beck 1987). Mason-John describes in her novel about her experience of sexual abuse whilst a child in care, the many invisible friends she created to protect herself and how whilst suffering abuse she held her breath and squeezed herself out of her body and flew up onto the ceiling (Mason-John 2005: 34). The impact of child sexual abuse is known to be exacerbated if the abuser is in a close relationship with the child as the sense of betrayal is increased. Physical contact, abuse at a younger age, the use of force and threats as coercion and whether or not they were believed and supported are key factors affecting the impact on the child. In this context it is important to mention sexually abused children who have suffered female genital cutting and their need for specialist medical services such as those provided by the

African well women clinics. A detailed account of a girl's experience in modern-day slavery which covers the subject of rape of a child who had suffered the practice of female genital cutting is provided by Mende Nazer (2004).

Sexually abused children (victims) demonstrating PTSD need stability, therapy, secure social attachments and the possibility of joy (Cairns 2000: 144). Following Aliyah's death (Payne 1999) the author of this chapter had the chance to interview many of her friends, within the network of victims of the abuse, who said they needed safe houses, drop-ins and locally based helplines. Children being sexually exploited need exit strategies and places to find safety and be nourished. Nelson (2001: 41) writes of survivors valuing a 'listening ear', a person to offer 'warmth, respect, understanding, kindness and honesty'. Children who feel betrayed by the abuse of their parents may not wish to be placed in a family situation. The case for small group homes has to be made to provide a therapeutic environment where healing can begin. The Sexual Abuse Consultancy Service provides residential care and a valuable resource for children with therapeutic needs (www.saccs.org.uk).

However, the reality for child victims is that children once removed from their families are often passed from one placement to another. Aliyah (Payne 1999) had moved placement 68 times in her short life of thirteen years. Frampton (2004) claims this is not unusual. In a study of 3500 looked after children almost all noted they would rather have continued to have been abused than have experienced endless placement disruptions (Walsh 2005). As a further indictment of the system there is now a performance target to ensure children are placed within 20 miles of their localities. The result of this target is that authorities are moving children out of stable placements causing them further disruption (Smith 2005). For those on the streets the risk of sexual abuse is estimated as one in nine children (Biehal et al. 2003: 32) and for those fleeing abuse there is only one safe house in the country.

The adequacy of service and therapeutic facilities

Children who have been neglected or abused should get special help to get back their confidence and self-respect (UNCRC 1990: 39). The United Nations (2002) recommended that state parties provide for the care, recovery and integration of victims of child sexual abuse. Children need help to rebuild their sense of trust in adults. One boy, known to the author, could only envisage his future as a long distance lorry driver where his sense of isolation would find a place. The 'damaged goods

syndrome' is described by child victims as the feeling that they carry on them a sign showing the world that they have been abused. Children need reassurance about who does know about the abuse, particularly within the school environment, and to increase their self-esteem they need help to learn assertiveness and self-protection skills. Feelings of guilt for disclosing the abuse, disrupting the family or harming the perpetrator may exacerbate a sense of shame and children may state that they just wanted the abuse to stop and not for their entire world to change. Sexually abused children may have been introduced to adult activities such as drugs, alcohol and sexual practices as part of the abuse. Therapy is needed to restore the child's world and for the child to gain a sense of themselves as a child once again. One young woman, known to the author, mourned the loss of the 'best' year of her life spent within a sexually exploitative network. She had defined the experience as positive. Enjoyment of the feelings aroused as a result of the abuse has to be acknowledged and not denied and the child supported in redefining the experience as abusive. Anger may sometimes be directed not only towards the abuser/s but to the non-abusive carer for their lack of protection and the child needs help to disentangle the emotional confusion.

In the large majority of studies of group, individual and behavioural therapy, children's symptoms of distress and psychological disturbance following child sexual abuse decrease following therapeutic intervention. In research relating to girls, significant reductions were noted in depression and separation anxiety, and PTSD (Trowell 1998). The consistent support of the non-abusive carer and social work support, with integration of the therapy into wider case management, are both key factors in the therapeutic process being of sustained value to the child. The child's safety and the continuance of therapy over time are also important factors if a child is to benefit from therapy (Jones and Ramchandani 1999: 55). The most effective treatment seems to be cognitive-behavioural in achieving improvement of symptoms (Jones and Ramchandani 1999: 57) but it may be appropriate for the therapy not to focus solely on symptoms but to address the particular experience of sexual abuse. Group work can be particularly effective in reducing stigma and isolation and in normalizing feelings with peer support. However, about 25 per cent of child victims deteriorate following psychological treatment and the reason for this is not understood (Jones and Ramchandani 1999: 58). One study noted that for both children and families there was a 'web of conflicting emotions' about therapy and that whereas some children found it helpful to talk about the

abuse others said it was much too painful. Encouraging children to write down their experiences was seen to be helpful (Taylor 1994). The author's experience is of young people dictating into a cassette recorder in the quiet of their rooms often in the middle of the night. An innovative project in Lancashire offered a safe haven to children and families where they could talk at their own pace, at any time around the clock whilst knowing they were on neutral ground (Mapp 1995).

Despite the undoubted importance of therapy, one-fifth of children referred to the Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are refused a service and in 2003 a Department of Health briefing paper stated that there is a considerable shortage of any type of therapeutic facilities (cited in Corby 2004)

In a sample of 41 sexually exploited young people most said they had insurmountable problems with no one to turn to (Taylor-Browne 2002). A study by Young Minds (2000) exposed long delays in children accessing CAMHS services with a national shortage of child psychiatrists and in-patient provision. Often adult psychiatric beds are used for children; or children are left in police custody, secure accommodation or respite care. Parents are often under pressure to cope. There is lack of provision for 16–18-year-olds, it was common for children to have to wait between six months and a year for an appointment and access was particularly fraught for children from black and ethnic minority groups. Many children only accessed help after an emergency situation (Young Minds 2000). The Safeguards Review similarly highlighted that the help and treatment for abused children is still inadequate and one recommendation was for major improvements in the CAMHS system (Stuart and Baines 2004).

For child victims living in detention centres such as asylum seekers who may have suffered sexual abuse before entry into the country there is a concern at the lack of specialist mental health provision. 'CAMHS providers report that there is a lack of capacity and research evidence on which to base assessment and provision for victims ... with specific care needs including gynaecological problems following sexual abuse or rape' (CSCI 2005: 7.25). 'The lack of effective guidance and procedures agreed between the Immigration and Nationality Directorate and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards on child protection is of considerable concern. Such guidance should include immediate and continuing independent social services assessments, education and care plans and child protection team strategy conferences, which should inform decisions about continuing detention' (CSCI 2005: 7.39).

This chapter has been an attempt to assist those who dare to enter the world of the sexually abused child and provide an effective child-centred protective and therapeutic response by hearing the child's voice. One person who hears the child's voice can make a difference. This takes courage and persistence. It is, as Madge Bray says, a daunting task: 'When we enter this world we may find things which deeply disturb us. A child having sexual knowledge and experience clashes sharply with our belief in childhood innocence and our emotions are likely to be those of shock, horror and disgust. The discovery may make us want to beat a hasty retreat and slam the door shut' (Bray 1997: xv). If this chapter helps to keep that door open to the child victims of sexual abuse it will have achieved its purpose.

Notes

1. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical abuse, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways (DfES 2006: 1.32).
2. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, UK.

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Female Genital Cutting and Children's Rights: Implications for Social Work Practice

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Female genital cutting (FGC) is an ancient practice that affects girls and young women around the world, defining the identity of women in cultures where it is practiced. FGC is carried out for a range of social and cultural reasons. The United Kingdom as a point of inward migration receives families from countries and cultures where FGC is the norm. Protecting children from FGC in the United Kingdom is addressed through legislation, policy and practice guidance implemented through multi-agency working together to safeguard children. Health, social services, schools and the police need to have a sound knowledge base about FGC in order to ensure the safety of children within their social environment. It is argued that FGC is a children's rights issue, as well as a women's rights issue, because it infringes the right of the child to bodily integrity and to be safe from harm. Professionals should be aware of the importance of their role in proactively preventing this irreversible procedure to which children cannot consent. The concept of social construction of identity is discussed in order to analyse the importance of FGC in cultures where it is part of a tradition and to contribute to strategies to end the practice.

Introduction

In this article, two social workers who are currently senior lecturers at London Metropolitan University explore the issue of female genital cutting (FGC) and social work practice from a children's rights perspective. Liz Davies testified as a Child Protection Manager in the House of Lords regarding FGC in 2000 and has extensive experience in child protection social work. Donna Dustin has an interest in FGC in relation to international health and social policy and the construction of identity in a global context.

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FGC is a cultural practice inflicted upon girls and young women to which they cannot consent and which is irreversible. FGC is often identified as a matter of women's rights when women who have experienced FGC speak out about the damage it causes. However, FGC is practiced on girls and is therefore a children's rights issue. We will argue that although FGC is required to mark the identity of a girl as a woman in cultures where it is practiced, it constitutes an infringement of the child's integrity and causes significant harm.

The term 'female genital mutilation (FGM)' is often used to replace the traditional term 'female circumcision' in order to convey the damage done to women. It would seem that the term 'FGM' was intended to be a pejorative to convey the meaning that girls are physically mutilated in the practice. This can cause offence in the cultures where it is practiced. Although the degree of cutting varies in different traditional practices, the term FGC is a more neutral, non-blaming term, which still graphically represents the injuries that girls suffer. The term FGC will therefore be used in this article, rather than the term FGM (Kloumann, Manongi, & Klepp, 2005, p. 105; Zabus, 2001).

The implications for social work practice when a social worker is required to uphold a child's right to resist FGC will be examined from the perspective of the social construction of identity. Social workers implementing the paramountcy principle of the Children Act 1989 have a duty to protect children from FGC. Practice dilemmas in the implementation of legislation and ways of working with communities in the United Kingdom affected by the practice of FGC will be discussed.

Types of FGC

All types of FGC constitute significant harm to children (Children Act, 1989). In order for social workers to understand the physical, emotional and cultural impact on girls subjected to FGC, it is important for them to have knowledge of the different types of FGC practiced in different regions (Rahman & Toubia, 2001).

FGC is defined in *The London Child Protection Procedures* as a collective term for procedures that include the part or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. "It involves the use of instruments to circumcise, mutilate or alter female genitalia without reference to medical or surgical procedures and with or without the supervision of a registered medical practitioner" (Association of London Governments, 2003, p. 9.2.2).

The World Health Organisation (1997) defines four types of FGC. Type I is the cutting away of the clitoris. Type II is the removal of the clitoris and part or all of the labia minora. Type III is called infibulation. This is the most extreme form of FGC. It includes the removal of all of the external genitalia. The labia majora are cut to create a raw surface, which is stitched or held together in order to create a cover over the vagina. A small hole is left for passing urine and menstrual blood. Types I and II affect up to 85% of women who are circumcised (Rahman & Toubia, 2001). Type IV includes other non-classifiable procedures such as pricking, burning, piercing or

stretching of the vagina (Klouman *et al.*, 2005, p. 105). Introduction of substances into the vagina to cause bleeding to tighten or narrow the vagina is carried out in some cultures (Lockhat, 2004, p. 9). While these Type IV practices constitute abuse, the focus of this article is on procedures that involve cutting of the genitalia.

Considering the Risks Associated with FGC

It is recognised that "there are very few clinical studies or other systematic research on the primary victim of the practice—the girl-child" (Almroth *et al.*, 2005, p. 118). Health risks vary according to the severity of cutting. Girls who are cut are twice as likely to die in childhood as those who have not been cut (Smith, 2004). It is widely recognised that some girls die through infection and also through substantial loss of blood (Nazer & Lewis, 2004, p. 79) because of the rich supply of blood to the vagina. FGC contributes significantly to morbidity among girls, a large share of which does not come to medical attention (Almroth *et al.*, 2005, p. 118), which may be one reason for the dearth of research on the effects of FGC on girls. Deaths are often hidden or may be attributed to sorcery (Walker & Palmar, 1996, p. 48).

FGC is a harmful procedure that impacts on girls and women throughout their lives (Wright, 1996), but the process begins with FGC in childhood, when it can result in immediate problems such as urinary tract infection (Almroth *et al.*, 2005) and difficulties passing menstrual blood and urine (Lockhat, 2004, p. 105). At times the hole left after genital cutting is so small that blood and urine collect and cause infection. In extreme cases, it can take half an hour for a young girl to pass urine. It may take a child weeks or months to be able to walk again after FGC. There is a long recovery period after FGC during which the girl's legs may be tied together while the wounds heal and she would not be able to attend school. If scar tissue adheres to the pubic bone, difficulty with walking may be permanent. Girls are not helped with the process of learning to walk again because it is considered a women's problem in the same way that menstruation is a women's problem (Amnesty International, 2004, Sec. 1:6).

FGC involves psychological as well as physical sequelae. Adolescent girls suffer anxiety about the pain of menstruation and women may experience terror in anticipation of their wedding night, sexual intercourse and childbirth (Lockhat, 2004). Each life event may be accompanied by repeated mental trauma, as there is not only new pain but each event triggers memories of the original operation. Post-traumatic stress disorder and depression can result from FGC, although women "mildly" circumcised are less likely to suffer than women severely cut. These women were more likely to suffer post-traumatic stress disorder if they lacked community support, if there had been no use of anaesthetic and if they recollected the event as negative (Lockhat, 2004, p. 135). Girls who grew up in the West and have been sent home to their parents' country of origin to be cut can be depressed when they return and can not be able to concentrate well enough to study (Lockhat, 2004, p. 112).

FGC seems designed to prevent casual sex, but it also makes marital intercourse difficult. There is concern that young women who have been cut are more likely to be forced into anal sex because vaginal sex is difficult, and are thus at increased risk of

harm from this specific sexual practice. Prior to a girl's wedding, if the hole left for urination is too small for sexual intercourse, she may be cut again.

FGC can interfere with normal labour and delivery of children. Girls who have undergone some form of FGC are four times as likely to give birth to a stillborn child as uncut women (Smith, 2004, p. 13). For those women who are subjected to Type II and Type III FGC as a child, every birth is dangerous and involves the necessity for medical intervention to prevent the death of mother and child because scar tissue formed as a result of cutting does not allow normal stretching of the perineum (World Health Organization, 2000, p. 24). An episiotomy will be required to allow the child to be born.

Construction of Identity

In spite of these risks, the practice of FGC continues because it is required in order for a woman to be accepted as a woman in cultures where it is practiced. Social workers need to understand the reasons for the FGC and understand its importance from the perspective of those who practice it so that they will be able to help families resist the practice.

The reasons given for FGC, discussed below, are examples of beliefs that are treated as a social reality. These beliefs contribute to the social construction of the identity of women in cultures that practice FGC. The social construction of identity (Burger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 1995; Payne, 2005) is a useful concept in understanding the significance of FGC in traditional societies where it is practiced. Social constructionism is defined as "shared ideas which, for practical purposes, people treat as reality" (Payne, 1997, p. 6). The social constructionist perspective argues that social reality is not given or fixed.

Social or cultural truths are therefore not objective tangible realities. Truths are "arrived at" through history, language and tradition. Truth at a cultural level is "a set of ideas, practices and beliefs which coalesce—come together—to produce an overarching picture of reality" (Symonds & Kelly, 1998, p. 8). These ideas, practices and beliefs can be described as a "discourse". FGC is a powerful discourse within the groups where it is practiced. It defines the relationship between men and women and children.

The basic tenet of the social construction of identity, first put forward by George Herbert Mead, is that the self is formed by its interaction with others (Mead, 1934 in Gergen, 2003, p. 122). A child's identity is shaped by their social environment; most significantly, of course, by their parents and their parent's beliefs, which are based in their history and culture. A child's identity is not a "given" at birth. Identity is not genetic or absolute. It is constructed or "put together" by the social forces acting on the child. The child is not passive in this process and interacts with these forces, but social and cultural factors are important in shaping a child's identity and how they view themselves.

Social constructionism involves shared meaning among groups of people or in cultures. Interpretations of what it is to be a man or a woman are produced by

powerful groups and individuals within the culture. In traditional societies, these interpretations are guided by the history of the culture. FGC is a shared idea among those who practice it. FGC contributes to "what it is" to be a woman in the culture where it is practiced. In these societies it is a social reality that women need to be cut in order to be considered women. To women in the culture, FGC may be considered normal and natural. It is being uncut that is unnatural and abhorrent (Chaudhry, 2004, p. 1).

The social construction perspective highlights the socially created nature of social life. This approach promotes the idea that society is actively and creatively produced by human beings. The practice of FGC illustrates the socially constructed identity of what it is to be a woman in cultures where it is practiced. The advantage of a social constructionist perspective is that if the social world is made or invented, rather than merely given or taken for granted, then social reality is not fixed and can change. This is a liberating perspective when working toward the elimination of the cutting of girls. The possibility of changed attitudes to what it is "to be a woman" in societies that practice FGC is one that social workers need to keep in focus when working with families where girls are at risk of FGC.

Reasons for FGC: Rationalisations for the Practice

Some of the socially constructed reasons that contribute to the continuation of FGC will be reviewed to contribute to the understanding of why the practice of FGC is fundamental for to the identity of girls and women, and therefore why it is so difficult to resist from within the culture.

Although FGC is practiced for cultural and traditional rather than for religious reasons, religion is often cited as a reason for the practice. FGC is practiced by some Christians, Muslims, Jews and other indigenous religious groups. However, the practice predates modern religions such as Christianity and Islam. Neither the Bible nor the Koran nor the Hadith (collections of the sayings of the Prophet Mohammed) advocate FGC and many Muslim groups do not practice FGC (Rahman & Toubia, 2001, p. 6) However, women who practice FGC "often interpret it as a religious custom and link it to their religious identity" (Johnson, 2000 in Klouman *et al.*, 2005, p. 112).

Perpetuation of tradition in relation to criteria for marriageability seems to be a major reason for continuing FGC. Women play a key role in the socialisation of children and they are expected to see that their daughters are cut. The status, security and the economic prosperity of a woman may depend on whether she is married, which may well be dependant on whether she has been cut. It is women who usually act as cutters. It is commonly mothers and/or older women relatives that hold the girl down while she is being cut (Midgley, 2001, p. 6). Mothers believe that if FGC is not carried out on their daughters, they will not find a husband, they will not be accepted within their culture and they may have no role in society. However, some mothers are said to be sad to see this happen to their daughters (Henley, 1999, p. 8; Nazer & Lewis, 2004, p. 77), but feel forced to consent to FGC by social pressure.

It is possible that women (i.e. mothers) who have experienced FGC may not have had a chance to work through their feelings, including anger, at being cut, and are therefore inflicting it upon their daughters (Hedley & Dorkenoo, 1992, p. 29). A campaigner who advocates the end of FGC has spoken of being verbally attacked by cut women for advocating the abolition of FGC (Walker, 2005).

Control of sexual behaviour is one of the reasons for FGC. It is thought that FGC will "curb a girl's sexual desire, helping to keep her chaste before marriage and faithful to her husband afterwards" (UNICEF Egypt—Real Lives, 2006). It should be noted that FGC has also been carried out in the western world to control women's sexuality, as a treatment for masturbation and to "cure" mental illness (Dorkenoo, 1995, p. 135). However, when carried out in the West, it was practiced on adult women rather than children.

A further range of rationalisations put forward to justify FGC have emerged in discussion with students and colleagues from a range of cultures. One reason given for FGC is that FGC removes all vestiges of the male penis (i.e. the clitoris) and makes a woman wholly a woman. If the vagina is considered ugly, FGC makes a girl more feminine. In some cultures it is believed that if the child's head touches the clitoris during childbirth the child will be deformed. A mistaken belief is that FGC prevents a prolapsed uterus, when in fact FGC may disguise a prolapsed uterus and delay treatment. It is thought that FGC prevents worms getting into a woman's vagina or may prevent bicycle accidents—if an uncut girl is riding a bicycle and her clitoris is stimulated by the bicycle seat, she could have an orgasm and lose control of the bicycle. In some nomadic cultures, where people were constantly under attack, it was believed that FGC prevented rape.

The cultural concept of what it is to be a woman is a powerful one in any society. From this perspective, it is clear that ending the practice of FGC in communities where it has been tradition will bring turmoil and uncertainty to the relationship between men and women. Social workers need to understand that members of such societies will be anxious about what will happen if FGC is abandoned. This is not to defend FGC, but to help those who are working to end FGC understand why there is resistance to ending it.

FGC, Children's Rights and Child Protection

It is estimated that 4,000 FGC operations are conducted on girls in the United Kingdom each year (FORWARD, 2001). Typically the procedure is performed on girls between the ages of four and 13 years but it can be done just after birth or just prior to marriage (Smith, 2004). Although the Children Act (1989) applies to children up to the age of 18, available statistics about FGC include the incidence of FGC only up to the age of 16. Seven thousand girls under 16 are at risk of FGC in the United Kingdom (DfES, 2004). Over 74,000 women in the United Kingdom have undergone FGC (Smith, 2004). This is important from a child protection perspective because it means that there is cultural pressure on these 74,000 women to have FGC carried out on their daughters.

In the United Kingdom, FGC has been the subject of legislation since the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act (1985) and the Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003), which prohibited the taking of girls abroad for FGC under penalty of up to 14 years imprisonment. Many countries have based their laws prohibiting FGC on international law such as Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Article 37a of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1990). Both state that no one should be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Other relevant articles of the United Nations Convention cover the best interest of the child as the primary consideration (Article 3.1), the protection of the child from all forms of mental and physical violence, injury or abuse and maltreatment (Article 19.1), and require state parties to take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children (Article 24.3) (UNICEF, 1990). Any non-medical alteration to the bodies of girls should be opposed on principle. The fundamental point about the rights of children not to be subjected to FGC is that "they do not have the capacity to make a decision freely, with full understanding of the health consequences of FC/FGM" (Centre for Reproductive Rights, 2003, p. 16).

With regard to procedures that are not medically required there is a difference between the surgical alteration of a child's body and an adult's body. There are generally no objections to adult woman altering their bodies through surgical procedures should they wish to do so. Adult women make choices to undergo plastic surgery on their bodies or to surgically enlarge their breasts, which may have harmful consequences. These practices could be regarded as mutilation of their bodies, but they are choices made by adult women. What is unconscionable is inflicting irreparable damage to a child's body before they have the ability to make an informed choice.

Social Work Intervention to Protect Girls

Referral to social services is commonly through health professionals who have concerns about a woman who has been cut and her attitude toward continuing the practice with her own children. In the Midlands, one-third of parents surveyed said they would still consider FGC for their daughters (All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health, 2000a, p. 25). In assessing risk, parents should not be the sole focus as suspected perpetrators. In 16% of cases where FGC has taken place, either one of the parents may have opposed FGC but the decision is overridden by family elders or community leaders (Lockhat, 2004, p. 99). This situation may confront social workers with the need to work with extended families.

Social workers have a duty to intervene (Children Act, 1989; Department of Health, 1999) if they consider that a crime has been or is about to be committed or if civil legislation and child protection protocols are needed to safeguard the child. It is important for social workers to understand that the threshold for beginning a Section 47 enquiry is low: "reasonable cause to suspect actual or likely significant harm"

(Children Act, 1989). Social workers are required to convene strategy meetings under the guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfES 2006) and involve a specialist-trained advisor from a non-governmental organisation in a Social Services/Police joint investigation (Centre for Reproductive Rights, 2003). A child protection conference may be the way forward to ensure a protection plan for the children but consideration should also be given to the use of Family Group Conferences. A useful summary of this process is available in Marsh and Crow (1997). While not replacing a child protection conference, a Family Group Conference can be held within Section 47 procedures in order to maximise the assessment of and involvement of the community and family network in safeguarding the child through the use of a culturally sensitive process.

In the United Kingdom there are a number of African Well Woman clinics where reconstructive surgery is available to all girls and women who have been cut. The Children Act, (1989) could be used to ensure a child's right to this surgery, which would enable them to correct the more serious effects of FGC. Children of an age and understanding to give informed consent could request this procedure themselves without parental agreement, and parents who would not allow the reversal could be challenged through the courts.

Alternatives to traditional cutting put forward to ameliorate the negative outcomes of FGC are minimalisation, legalisation and medicalisation. However, attempts to save the tradition by replacing more extreme forms of FGC with minimal cutting such as genital piercing or pricking that only create "a drop of blood and would be largely symbolic" (Bruni, 2004) still represent an infringement of bodily integrity. It has been suggested that one way to sanitise the cutting of girls would be to make FGC legal and have it carried out under anaesthesia in a hospital environment. This is unacceptable in our view. Medicalising FGC and making it legal to perform FGC in a hospital setting would have the advantage of reducing death and infection. However, cutting still creates damage that affects women throughout their lives. Even if medicalisation was accepted at a cultural level, it would still leave women with the ongoing sequelae of FGC and make them dependent upon subsequent unnecessary medicalisation of childbirth. Medicalising FGC would address some of the health hazards brought about by unhygienic practices, but it is tantamount to condoning the possible severe long-term damage done to girls by the procedure. The position taken in this article is that any non-medical alteration to the bodies of girls should be opposed on principle. Any compromise on this principle should be opposed.

Social workers need to participate in wider preventative child protection programmes (Davies, 2007) and support women and men who are opposing the practice within their cultures. They need to work closely with their local community support networks and initiate contact within the remit of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Parents who decide against the practice require support. This requires social workers to understand the cultural perspectives and dilemmas and consider implementing children in need procedures (Children Act, 1989, Sec. 17). Where social workers are able to prevent the cutting of a young girl, they should be aware that being uncut may have negative psychological effects on the girl or her

family. Uncut girls need support to construct their identity in the culture as uncut women. This may be difficult for European/western women to recognise as a problem for uncut girls, but if the tradition dictates being cut as a marker of identity in their culture, as part of their social construction as women, they may suffer psychologically or socially as a consequence of not being cut. Work with these girls and their families should include culturally appropriate counselling that recognises the conflicts that they have had to face.

FGC and Social Work Practice

The dilemma for social workers is how to prevent FGC and still have the girl recognised as a woman within the culture. As a result of the increasing levels of migration around the world, social workers in the United Kingdom now deal with FGC as a practice issue and are key professionals in the struggle to end FGC in the United Kingdom. Increasingly, social workers have to confront challenges raised by FGC, particularly in their work with refugees and unaccompanied minors. Social workers and other professionals remain largely unaware of FGC or the legislation, policy and practice guidance designed to address it (All London Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health, 2000a, p. 13). There have been no prosecutions and legal intervention is minimal (BBC News Online, 2004). In relation to this form of child abuse, there is an absence of proactive intervention strategies at both the individual and community level.

Social workers need to understand the nature and extent of FGC, the meaning of the practice in cultures where it is carried out, reasons for its continuation and, most importantly, their professional responsibility to intervene to protect children who are likely to suffer or who have suffered significant harm as a result of FGC. To ignore this subject is to be discriminatory and to deny black and ethnic minority female children the same level of protection as any other child victim of significant harm in the form of physical injury. "Failure to protect a black child at risk of mutilation would be a perverse form of racism" (Hedley & Dorkenoo, 1992, p. 15).

FGC involves the whole of the culture where it is practiced, including the relationships between men, women and children. As FGC is a children's rights issue as well as a women's social, health, cultural and psychological issue, efforts to end the practice should be directed at many levels in order to bring about change. Cooperative working with specialist groups such as FORWARD (2006) is essential if interventions to stop FGC are to be both effective and culturally sensitive. These groups are emphatic that FGC must be ended in their own cultures and social workers need to work with them at a case and community level.

Some social workers do not acknowledge the seriousness of FGC because they regard it as a cultural practice and they do not want to be accused of racism or cultural imperialism. Ending FGC may conflict with their professional values, which advocate respect for diversity and cultural values that differ from the values of the majority. However, it can be assumed that British social workers would not condone other cultural forms of damage to girls and women if they became aware of it.

Cultural practice such as foot binding or the cultural expectation that a woman will throw herself on her husband's funeral pyre are not accepted in Britain, and FGC is no different.

FGC may continue to be practiced as a symbol of resistance to western culture. On entering the United Kingdom, immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers may continue the practice FGC as a statement of allegiance to their culture when many other aspects of that culture have been lost. In striving to achieve change and to protect children social workers need to understand these dynamics.

It may be asked what right western professionals have to demand an end to a practice in a culture that is not their own. Some social workers may see interference with a predominantly cultural practice as racist or oppressive. The response to this position is based on the concept of social justice and human rights. Social justice supersedes issues of culture and should be pursued across all cultures (GSCC, 2002). "Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly" (King, 2003 in Gurgun, 2003, p. 178). FGC is a concern for all people, not just the concern of women in cultures where the practice takes place. To ignore FGC is to practice "anti-racist racism" and to practice in such a way as to disadvantage black children. "Torture is not culture. . . if a white child is cut . . . it would cause a scandal. Why should we be quiet if it is a black child? She does not suffer less. . . What hurts a white child hurts a black child" (All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health, 2000b, p. 56).

Some social workers do not regard FGC as abuse because they consider it to be a one-off assault. The DfES (2004) guidance reinforces this mistaken view. FGC creates permanent and ongoing damage, pain and altered functioning throughout the life of the young girl who is subject to FGC. It is a permanent change to the body. It does not have to happen more than once to be considered a dangerous practice. It is also not a one-off assault. It is not uncommon for the cutting to be repeated at various stages of the child's life (possibly being re-cut if the original cutting was not severe enough) and for the woman to be "prepared" for her wedding night by being cut open.

Social workers may believe that if a girl has been cut, there is nothing further they can do. Professionals can be "paralysed into inaction" and collude with parents and carers (Dorkenoo, 1995, p. 146). Under the professional dangerousness of the "rule of optimism" they convince themselves that all is well with the child and family (Reder, Duncan, & Gray, 1993, p. 90). This position ignores the continued risk to the child and the risk to the sisters of the girl who has been cut. If one girl in a family has been cut, the social worker needs to work with the family toward preventing other girls in the family from being cut and instigate child protection protocols.

Children need channels to report their fears about FGC. The subject is shrouded in secrecy and children are often afraid to speak about it because of anxiety and confusion. "It's a secret and it's a secret society. It's not to be revealed to anyone" (Walker & Palmer, 1996, p. 303). Prevention programmes in schools are important. Teaching staff need to become familiar with the language used to describe FGC and how to note behaviour indicative of FGC, such as long periods in the toilet and

school absences. Specialist classes for refugee children are advisable for teaching children about FGC.

It should not be assumed that black and ethnic minority social workers are better placed than white social workers to work with families where FGC is an issue. This may not be the case. Such a family may expect that worker to collude with them, understand the cultural necessity of being cut and condone the practice. Undue pressure may thus be put on these social workers. They may be placed in a conflict of interest position that would be difficult for them without support of their colleagues and managers. Managers should not put pressure on black and ethnic minority social workers to work in areas where they may suffer a perceived conflict of interest, but the realities of practice in bureaucratic organisations may not allow the kind of sensitivity that should be shown to them. These issues need to be explored in social work teams.

At the community level, social workers need to help immigrant and refugee communities with practical realities (i.e. housing, food, clothing, benefits, employment, and legal rights) in order to develop trust and work with them. One of the goals of such work should be helping them understand that FGC is illegal and not an option for them. This ongoing work has to be balanced against the immediacy of the risk of FGC being performed. There may be times when it will not be possible to develop a trusting relationship with parents and carers if the child is at immediate risk of genital cutting. The framework and context of work are important. Respect of culture is not an excuse to avoid action if it is needed to protect a child.

Changing Attitudes to FGC

In Britain there is increasing awareness of the issue of FGC. The media in all its forms are important in shaping attitudes to FGC. FGC should be discussed openly. An example of this happening is a movie on current release, "Moolaade", which is the story of the impact on a community where there has been a rebellion against FGC. The book by Waris Dirie (Dirie, 2001) called *Desert Flower* is an example of a Somali fashion model in the public eye who has been willing to talk about her experience of FGC. There should be initiatives aimed at allowing and facilitating discussion of FGC from all perspectives. A good example of public discussion within a community where FGC has been traditionally practiced is a Somali radio station in London, which broadcasts debates within the community about the practice of FGC (Dirir, 2005). Recent broadcasts have brought together traditional leaders in the community, adult women who have been cut and girls to discuss the implications of FGC. The media have an important role to play in challenging existing practices and changing attitudes and expectations in communities.

Legal measures to end FGC need to be accompanied by policy measures that raise public consciousness (Centre for Reproductive Rights, 2003, p. 17). Educational programmes need to be carried out that allow open discussion of the practice in an environment that does not "blame the victim". Blame and secrecy create a climate that promotes the practice. Public Conversation Exercises (Gurgen, 2003, p. 55) need to be carried out. Open discussion will reveal the negative impact of FGC on the

individuals and cultures where it is practiced and will allow other perspectives to emerge. Cultural values that underlie FGC need to be respected, but there also needs to be recognition that it is possible for this to be accomplished without physically harming girls or young women.

Conclusion

It has been argued that FGC is a children's rights issue. It is clear that social workers have a responsibility to prevent FGC on girls in a family where FGC is part of the family's tradition and heritage. Social workers are responsible for preventing FGC being carried out on girls. This presents a dilemma for some social workers who may feel that they should ignore and thus implicitly condone the practice of FGC. Social workers are trained to respect cultural practices in a diverse, multicultural society such as Britain. However, social workers need to understand that not all cultural practices are equally valid. If a cultural practice is illegal, social workers are required by the Social Work Code of Ethics (GSCC, 2002) to work toward ending it. Through sensitive work, both parents and extended families may be enabled to understand the reasons their daughter cannot be cut either in the United Kingdom or "at home" in their country of origin.

FGC is a cultural issue and a women's issue. However, it is first and foremost a children's rights concern. Social workers who work in these situations will need emotional and practical support both within their organisational context and within the local community. Social workers need to work with non-governmental organisations (Centre for Reproductive Rights, 2003, p. 17) representing the culture of the child's family who are campaigning for the eradication of FGC. It should not be assumed that social workers with origins in cultures that practice FGC are best placed to work with families with a history of FGC.

The practice of FGC will not end until the cultural requirement for FGC ends. This could take a very long time. In the meantime, social workers in a multi-cultural society need to understand the threat to girls in cultures where FGC is traditionally practiced and recognise their professional obligation to be vigilant in their work with these families.

Some children may gain protection through their own actions, but, importantly, it is parents deciding not to carry out FGC on their daughters, understanding their reasons for not doing so, communicating their reasons to other parents and supporting each other that will end the practice. There are parents from cultures that traditionally practice FGC who are making a conscious decision not to cut their daughters. They need to be supported and valued as positive role models, referred to as "positive deviants" (Centre for Reproductive Rights, 2003, p. 21; UNICEF Egypt—Real Lives, 2006). An awareness of laws against FGC needs to be actively promoted among local communities. Once one woman stops, "she would stop other women from practicing. The community is the word of mouth" (All-Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health, 2000b, p. 29). It is changing the cultural requirements relating FGC to "being a woman" that will end the practice of

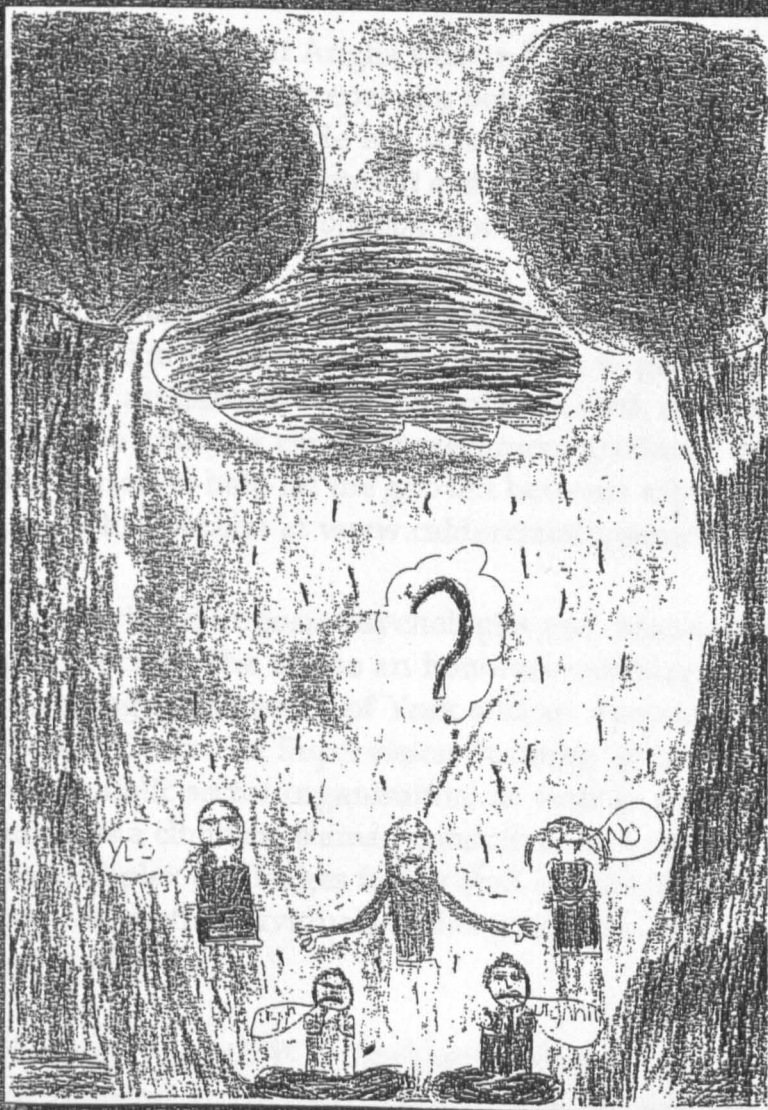
FGC. With increased knowledge and understanding, social workers will be better equipped to work in an anti-oppressive way toward the eradication of the practice FGC.

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Contemporary risk assessment in safeguarding children



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Reclaiming the Language of Child Protection: Mind the Gap Family Support Versus Child Protection: Exposing the Myth

Liz Davies

I was following the family support model of social work. That's what we were taught on my course and that is what Haringey practised. Child protection was only for emergencies.

(Lisa Arthurworrey (LA) in conversation with the author, April 2004)

Lisa Arthurworrey, social worker for Victoria Climbié, was clear that she was doing the job her employer wanted her to do. She empathised with the carer being a refugee needing services to enable her to care for the child she said was her daughter. This was the approach Arthurworrey's various managers required throughout the eight months that she was the allocated social worker. 'It was my managers and not I who instructed that this was not a child protection case which required a Section 47 inquiry but instead a family support case which is more routine general support of a family' (LA, 2004: 100). The Duty and Investigation Team procedures she was following contained 'nothing requiring the social worker to liaise with the police to make checks or hold joint strategy meetings' and a notice displayed in her office declared 'No police' (LA, 2004: 144). Laming commented that in the case he had 'heard no evidence of what I would term a Section 47 inquiry ever being carried out by Haringey Social Services (Laming, 2003: 6, 217). Ann Bristow, Haringey Director of Social Services, considered that Lisa Arthurworrey 'was not an inexperienced social worker in the context of the position in many London Boroughs' (Bristow, 2004: 32). Yet Lisa Arthurworrey had no training in joint investigation or investigative interviewing of children. She had never worked on a case with police before and whilst she thought she was conducting a Section 47 inquiry in fact she had little idea what it would involve to do so. 'I thought that what I was doing was a S 47. No one told me otherwise' (LA, 2004: 64). Neither of the strategy meeting minutes convened by managers in the case even mentioned a Section 47 inquiry (LA, 2004: 101). Reder and Duncan reviewed the case and

commented: 'A referral received by social services which indicated the likelihood of non-accidental injuries to Victoria was labelled from the outset as 'child in need'. This framed all of that departments subsequent activities on the case so that no child protection assessment was performed' (Reder and Duncan, 2004: 104).

Arthurworrey's successful appeal at the Care Standards Tribunal (CST) of the Secretary of State's decision to place her name on the Protection of Children Act List importantly challenged the use of the list for cases of poor professional practice (Jarman and Davies, 2005). Judge Pearl, chair of the Tribunal, concluded that 'there has been another victim of the failures in Haringey in 1999 and early 2000 and we see Ms Arthurworrey as such a victim ... Ms Arthurworrey is today suitable to work with children' (CST, 2005: 143). He said that 'the office environment was chaotic, the reference tool totally inadequate and the mistakes made by Ms Arthurworrey in dealing with Victoria's case must be considered within that context as well as her inexperience, lack of training and lack of any effective supervision'. The General Social Care Council, however, eighteen months later refused to accept her application to the Social Care Register.

The tragedy of Victoria's murder may well have taken place whatever social work philosophy had been followed at the time. However, it is important to recognise that the London Borough of Haringey's lack of focus on protecting children reflected a national trend actively promoted by government since the mid-1990s. A warning of the policy's impact on future tragedies was given when in 1996 the Director of Social Services in Oxford wrote, following a case involving the manslaughter of two children, that: 'It is important the mistakes are seen in the context of the publication of the Department of Health's *Messages from Research* which promoted the value of family support. These messages were in the forefront of the

minds of the workers involved at the time this case was investigated' (Robertson, 1996).

In this chapter it will be suggested that since the mid 1990s the refocusing of children's services away from child protection work has represented a backlash following the success of child protection investigations across the country and that this trend has now accelerated since the publication of the Green Paper, *Every Child Matters*, with an increased emphasis on prevention as the prime solution to child abuse (HMG, 2003). It will be argued that the concept of prevention in this context is a pretence camouflaging the reality of a wide scale destruction of child protection services known to protect vulnerable children. Family support has been framed as diametrically opposed to proactive child protection investigation and prevention is presented as the opposite of interventionist strategies. It will be suggested that the government has reinforced these policy divides in order to segregate service provision between the two extremes of prevention/family support and child protection. This has allowed for the restructuring of service delivery to 'child in need' teams, has increased centralised control of child protection work and has facilitated privatisation of family support services. A service focus on the needs of children and their families has diverted attention from the proactive investigation of perpetrators outside of the family network.

Child protection reduced to common sense

As a specialism, child protection social work seems to be fast disappearing and protecting children is increasingly perceived as a simple and obvious task. Media comment, at the time of the Employment Tribunal decision to uphold Haringey's dismissal of Lisa Arthurworrey, was that much of her role as Victoria's social worker was common sense. 'Common sense dictates that 19 pages of medical evidence have to flag serious reasons not to be cheerful about the outcome for a child' (Roberts, 2004). 'These mistakes seem due to a lack of common sense rather than inadequate guidance and supervision' (Batty, 2004). In her evidence to the Employment Tribunal Bristow said that it was common sense to know that a child of eight years old should be in school (Bristow, 2004). Yet, because each of the six

charges against her were far from simple when analysed in an organisational context, one question needs to be asked: 'which is not why Lisa Arthurworrey got it wrong but why anyone would have expected her to get it right' (Davies, 2004a). Parton in his submission to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry clarifies this point: 'At its crudest this was handled as a "family support case" when it could and should have been handled as a "child protection case"'. The essential question becomes "is it possible to hold both possibilities open and equally valid at the same time?" I suspect that this is a much more complex and demanding task that appears on the face of it ... It almost certainly requires well-trained, experienced and very able staff' (Parton, 2002: 4).

There is considerable lack of understanding about the level of training needed for child protection investigation as a complex task. Monaghan, whose report formed the basis of the Haringey case against Lisa Arthurworrey, stated that: 'Lisa had been trained to attempt to get all relevant information from a child where there was suspicion of abuse' (Monaghan, 2004). This was contradicted by Laming who stated that she 'was not trained in the Memorandum of Good Practice and could not therefore see a section 47 child protection inquiry through to its conclusion' (Laming, 6: 10). Both demonstrate a lack of understanding that social workers and police must complete joint investigation training as well as training in investigative interviewing skills. Arthurworrey had completed a multi-agency 'working together' awareness course but DS Cooper-Bland who had delivered this course said in his evidence to the CST that: 'I cannot see how the Haringey course could equip a social worker to carry out an investigation. It was not the aim of the course to provide that level of instruction' (CST, 2005: 91). Judge Pearl in his concluding comments restated the author's statement that: 'Without training at an advanced level I would not expect Ms Arthurworrey to have understood how to properly investigate an allegation of child abuse. I would not expect her to have understood her role as a social worker in relation to that of the police, the detailed function and purpose of strategy meetings and conferences or how to assess and confront parent/carer responses in relation to child abuse allegations'. He concluded that the basic social work training she was given did not prepare her for the responsibilities she had in Victoria's case (Davies, L. cited in CST, 2005: 93).

The recent version of *Working Together* (DfES, 2006: 95) re-designates the levels of training required and loses the clarity of the previous document's three tier approach which specified the need for joint investigation and interview training for those engaged in the statutory investigation of child abuse (DoH, 1999). This has been replaced with a third tier now, including a wide range of professionals and stating broad, vague and ill-defined training requirements. Specialist advanced level investigative child protection training is increasingly difficult to access with variable commitment to such courses by Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and no associated performance targets. The training standards also omit to emphasise these specialist training requirements (Shardlow, 2004). In London, such training is in crisis as the numbers of police child protection trainers has been reduced to four whereas there were previously thirty-two i.e. one for each Borough. This significantly reflects a shift in police commitment to joint working in the capital.

A recognition of specialist training requirements also demands an understanding that the child protection task draws on a well documented knowledge base. Reder and Duncan, with reference to the Climbié case comment that:

Recommendations accumulated over 30 years of fatal child abuse inquiries do not seem to have transformed the performance of child protection systems ... since the findings of any next inquiry could reasonably be predicted before it has taken place, we would like to propose that no further public inquiries are commissioned before all training and resource deficiencies identified over the last 30 years have been remedied.

A recent Community Service Volunteer project, involving volunteers working alongside social workers with children whose names are on the child protection register, illustrates one concerning implementation of the 'common sense' approach. Based on a project in California, which does not operate within a child protection service comparable to that of the UK, these volunteers have only one day training in child protection, visit families at least three times a week (including when professionals are not available) and offer their life experience and flexible approach (Leason, 2004, Child Abuse Prevention Council of Sacramento, 2001). Child victims of abuse need professional social workers, not a volunteer. The work is too complex.

The former Minister for Children has added to a simplistic perception of the social work task by speaking of a young person being taken to McDonalds every day of the week by a different worker from a range of agencies and adding that: 'at the moment the professional silos in which people operate do not impact effectively on that child's needs' (Hodge, 2004). This example actually indicates that multi-agency planning was not in place for this young person. By demeaning the social work task, professionals are undermined. Instead, recognition of the importance of each specialism, separate but working together confidently and complying with multi-agency procedures, is awarded little profile. Munro states clearly that: 'Victoria would have been saved if professionals had followed basic principles of practice' (Munro, 2003). Silos were not the problem but the lack of compliance with procedures, which would have provided the opportunity for expert analysis and professional debate.

A view that child protection work is simple feeds into the belief that social workers can mechanistically implement managerial instructions and manage large caseloads based on sets of instructions rather than quality supervision. The Haringey Director of Social Services acknowledged that although Arthurworrey's workload was higher than the accepted norm of 10-12 cases, she did: 'not accept that this was necessarily excessive at that time' (Bristow, 2004: 33). She also did not acknowledge the complexity of the 19 (including 10 child protection) cases for which Arthurworrey held sole responsibility. The Monaghan Report did not consider workloads at all but Laming agreed that there was no proper system of caseload weighting in place (Laming, 6, 577) and that no-one seemed to have given any thought as to whether Arthurworrey had: 'sufficient time to deal adequately with Victoria's case' (op. cit. 6.57). The CST panel were:

... unimpressed with the theory suggested by Mr Monaghan of the 'baton being with Ms Arthurworrey'. A more telling image would be of the most inexperienced member of the team attempting to retain a hold on an errant hot air balloon when everyone else had lost interest. We can think of no instance throughout the entire period when Ms Arthurworrey was given real help and support from her managers. Likewise we can think of no instance when her handling of the case had ever been criticised by a manager, and no instance of her ever attempting to conceal or dissemble any errors she may have unwittingly have been making.

(CST, 2005)

Munro comments on the work context stating that: 'the staff responsible for Victoria Climbié were not incompetent through malice or laziness and they cannot be made competent by hectoring or bullying them' (Munro, 2003). Arthurworrey certainly referred to her experience of a top-down, conveyor belt culture: 'we were regarded as children who should be seen and not heard' (Laming, 6, 19).

Professional boundaries are becoming increasingly blurred with the development of common assessment frameworks, core training and the merging of health, education and social services within Children's Trusts.

Social work as a profession is under attack and like police are rarely mentioned within the Green Paper (HMG, 2003). Social workers do provide a buffer between the child and family and the state and represent children's views in a way that has perhaps become too uncomfortable for those who exploit children.

Proactive working together does protect children

There is little doubt that agencies working together to protect children is effective. The Safeguarding Children Joint Inspector's Report was clear that there were good working relationships between agencies and that: 'In the vast majority of individual cases examined the children were protected from risk of further harm' (DoH, 2002). Studies of serious case reviews demonstrate that very few of the children who died had been the subjects of child protection procedures (Reder et al., 1993; Reder and Duncan, 1999). Abused children are most at risk when either they are not referred to social services at all or from the point of referral they are not defined as in need of protection. They slip the protective net.

The author's experience as a team manager in the London Borough of Islington, where she exposed extensive abuse of children within the childcare system, provides a model of joint investigation of abuse at practitioner level. All agencies worked with social services to identify the abuse and to intervene to protect. Each professional felt confident within their specialism and complied with legislation and policy specific to their role and agency. Each communicated in a context of mutual trust and respect and with common goals. Judgements were made to act in

the best interests of children within a context of a vast industry of child abuse targeting and entrapping children in the community and within the local agencies and systems. There was no difficulty in sharing information within Section 47 procedures and formal analysis took place through the structures of strategy meetings and child protection conferences. Young people coming to the attention of social services were silent about the abuse but through rigorous investigation the abuse network became apparent. Detailed mapping of names, places and forms of abuse slowly made sense of the clues and innuendos the young people were providing and their behaviour spoke loudly of the impact of the abuse on their lives: family conflict, running away, drug and alcohol abuse, crime, mental health problems, self-harm and attempted suicide. Social workers made time for the young people. Their needs were prioritised.

A range of information was collated in order to identify the young people who were victims, the child sex abusers and those within the child care systems who were colluding with the abuse network. Probation Officers and police provided information about known sex offenders and about young people being exploited by abusers to commit crime. Education social workers and teachers knew of abusers targeting children and identified child victims, noting patterns of behaviour and absences. Health visitors, GPs, midwives and school nurses also noted signs of abuse and had current and historic knowledge of abusive families. Paediatricians liaised with the Genital Urinary Medicine and family planning services and collated information about sexually abused children coming to their attention. Child and adult psychiatrists treated victims of the same abuse networks. Housing and environmental health officers knew of community concerns about houses used by abusers and procurers. Lawyers and Guardians ad litem made links across cases and local journalists were an important source of archived information. Most importantly, the local community reported their concerns.

Professionals work together well when they feel confident, well supported, trained and supervised against a backdrop of legislation and procedures. In Islington, police and social work practitioners were instructed by their managers not to comply with guidance. They were told not to convene conferences or work jointly and not to interview children. In the absence of support

from management the practitioners continued to progress their investigations despite some receiving direct threats and others being scapegoated. On leaving the authority the author took information to the Paedophile Unit at New Scotland Yard and with the assistance of the media the child abuse scandal was exposed leading to a number of Inquiries (White, 1995; Fairweather, 1998).

Islington was only one of hundreds of joint investigations into child abuse across the country from the mid-1980s onwards (Bennetto, 2001; Wolmer, 2000). The abuse of children was undoubtedly widespread. Phil Frampton provides a recent account of abuse within the care system. He speaks of being: 'the scum, the rotting detritus of societal inadequacy that collected itself in the silent waters where human indifference met society's net protecting itself with welfare. We were neither meant nor expected to fare well ... In Britain they housed children for paedophiles to sodomise' (Frampton, 2004: 286).

Investigations such as that at Castle Hill School, Shropshire, provided the basis of much learning about joint investigation (Brannan, 1992) as did, among others, Operation Badger (Bird and Hennessey, 1997) and Operation Michigan (Jeffrey, 1996).

The decline of good practice in child protection – two recent examples

Given the wealth of knowledge about how to protect children from abuse, along with excellent legislation, national and local guidance, it has to be questioned how the situation arose, leading Laming to state: 'It is clear to me that the agencies with responsibility for Victoria gave a low priority to the task of protecting children' (Laming, 2003: 1, 18). This view was reiterated by the Joint Chief Inspector's Report which stated: 'councils have unusually high thresholds for responding to child protection referrals and in taking action to protect children' (CSCI, 2005). A subsequent summary of an inquiry in Haringey also raised similar issues.

In March 2004 the Haringey Area Child Protection Committee published the *Executive Summary of the Serious Case Review* on 'Adam' aged two years old who had suffered serious accidental burns to 28 per cent of his body following pulling a boiling kettle onto his head. There was a history of concern and a previous

burn. Following the incident there was no professional face-to-face contact for eight days with the parents and limited time spent with the child. The GP, who had considerable knowledge of the case, was hardly involved. However, the summary provided no reference to Section 47 investigation or child protection conference. The Director of Social Services expressed concern that, given the knowledge about the mother's mental health: 'professionals hadn't realised the trigger for child protection had been reached' (BBC, 2004; Jayarajah-Dent, 2004; Martin, 2004).

The many referrals regarding child victims of Ian Huntley were not collated or addressed within child protection procedures and his offending escalated to the murder of two children. There is no doubt that each case of the young people Huntley sexually abused coming to the attention of police and social services should have triggered organised abuse procedures: 'Abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people' (DfES, 2006: 6.7; Home Office and DoH, 2002). Sir Christopher Kelly refers to 13 cases and that: 'even these are not likely to be a complete list' (Kelly, 2004: 32). He comments that: 'Huntley's penchant for relationships with vulnerable girls below the age of consent was well known in the local community', and 'we know from media reports that he had a number of other relationships' (op. cit. 215 and 32).

There may have been more than one abuser. One woman spoke of a lot of young men in a flat that Huntley visited (op. cit. 117) while another came to know Huntley through an adult male (op. cit. 78). Patterns of targeting were evident and there were links through school, friendships, places, and being known to social services. It was possible to analyse the connections, even possibly to predict who might have been his next victim and detect the escalation of offending behaviour. Instead, Kelly acknowledges that: 'connections were not made' (op. cit. 1) that: 'in practice each case was treated in isolation' (op. cit. 209) 'there was a focus on individual cases with no attempt to consider the wider picture' and 'decisions to close cases were not informed by proactive gathering of information' (op. cit. 224).

Yet neither Richard, whose remit was to 'urgently inquire into child protection procedures,' nor Kelly, in his analysis of social services role in the case, make mention of the organised abuse procedures or their lack of implementation (Richard, 2004; Davies, 2004b;

Kelly, 2004). The reports focus on the importance of police intelligence systems rather than joint investigation processes.

It seemed as if the lessons from the many investigations of organised abuse of the 1990s which led to successful prosecutions had not been learnt.

This point is emphasised by the narrow remit of the Home Affairs Committee of investigation into past cases of abuse in children's homes which was to consider possible miscarriages of justice. Quite remarkably it did not include any consideration of whether or not the system achieved justice for children by the conviction of perpetrators which is key to the healing process for children. Sarah Nelson states in her research with women survivors of child sexual abuse: 'the survivors felt strongly that they should have been protected at an early age and that the perpetrators should have faced legal justice many years before' (Nelson, 2001).

Effective joint investigation was resource intensive and also led to legal claims against the authorities (Osuh, 2007). High profile people were exposed or close to being exposed. The Islington scandal, like many others across the country, included components of ritual abuse although this was denied by the Inquiry (White and Hart, 1995). A parliamentary question about ritual abuse research, which included the Islington case, conducted by the Metropolitan Police, received the response that 'It will be for the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police to decide what information he wishes to make public' (Alton, 1994). The research was never published. Events in Belgium of large child abuse networks intimated similar issues in the UK although there had not been the equivalent of the white march where thousands of the Belgian public demonstrated for children (Pyck and Eeckels, 1998). A recent critique of the professional response to organised child sexual abuse was that of the inspection into the care and protection of children in Eilean Siar, Scotland (SWIA, 2005). Although no criminal prosecutions achieved convictions the review made a finding that three children were repeatedly sexually abused and concluded that there was an 'unhelpful imbalance in the weight given to the rights and duties of parents as against the needs and rights of the children' (2005: 17). Professionals had been over-optimistic about the capacity of the parents to protect the children, large amounts of information had been logged

and shared as part of assessment but there had not been analysis of the meaning of that information or proper debate among professionals enabling tough decisions to be made (2005: 21).

Police and social workers working together effectively, targeting abusers and protecting children, presented a threat to those in power. Abuse is abuse of power and as such it involves all echelons of society. It remains to be seen when and if child protection ever becomes a political issue influencing voting patterns and gaining a mention on political manifestos. Children do not vote and therefore have little political voice.

The backlash

Minimisation of a proactive interventionist approach to child abuse developed following the refocusing debate and interpretation of the findings of *Messages from Research* (DoH, 1995). The latter was a collection of studies commissioned prior to the Children Act 1989 but it gained the status of policy. 'While there was never an overt instruction for social services to refocus their work away from investigation, it is common knowledge that they understood that this was expected of them' (Reder and Duncan, 2004). It was argued that social work was too forensically and incident led and that too many children were being caught in the child protection net (DoH, 1995: 16). Particularly since the introduction of the *Framework of Assessment for Children in Need and their Families* (DoH, 2000) social workers were being told to change their approach to child protection – to pull away from colleagues in the police and work at a preventative level with health and education. However, 'simply re-labelling allegations as Section 17 children in need doesn't address the thorny issue of how children can be protected' (Douieb, 2004). The use of words such as *risk*, *protection* and *investigation* were discouraged and replaced with *need*, *safeguarding* and *enquiries*. Policy became focused on assessment rather than assessment of risk. One recent example is that of Kelly's report which emphasised that: 'The review team gained the impression that ... some staff in the social services department adopted a rather mechanistic approach to the management of cases rather than one based on the assessment of risk and the application of professional knowledge (Kelly, 150: 35).

The timescales of the Initial and Core assessment took over from intervention moving swiftly from a child protection referral to action to protect (DoH, 2000). The detailed proactive collation of information about children and perpetrators, the mapping and seeking of patterns and complex multi-agency work often over months was no longer understood. Most importantly, children no longer had the time and space to trust professionals enough to share their horrific stories. The ADSS submission to the Bichard Inquiry stated that social services 'does not deal with the risks to children from outside their families unless the behaviour of the child is exposing them to risk' (Bichard, 2004). However, it is an essential aspect of the Section 47 duty for social workers to work with police in the investigation of perpetrators. The skills of a detective are relevant for social workers (Munro, 2003: 170). These skills are of analysis, forming and testing hypotheses and probing beneath the surface. Instead, Kelly reported cases brought to swift closure and Arthurworrey spoke of being under pressure from management to close the case four months prior to Victoria's death. 'I was told to close Victoria's file on 15th November and again on 23rd December and again on 18th January. In my mind there were still issues which needed to be resolved' (Kelly, 2004: 14; LA, 2004: 169). Judge Pearl confirmed that 'the managers should have been driving the case forward' (CST, 2005: 139).

Current methods over-rely on children providing evidence. The Kelly Review demonstrated that cases were closed because the child withdrew or retracted allegations or didn't want to proceed to prosecution (Kelly, 2004). But why is it expected that a child who has suffered so much should provide information? Information must also be sought from other sources such as forensic evidence or adult witnesses, to take pressure off the child. A child may have a positive view of the relationship and not define it as abusive. Four of Huntley's victims defined him as a boyfriend. Children may be directly threatened or convinced that the sexual activity is acceptable. It is important to match the complexity of the interventions with the complexity of the abuse.

Such a clear shift away from proactive investigation made it apparent that 'refocusing' spelt a backlash. Islington child victims of abuse would have gained no protection without multi-agency strategies and the extent of the child

abuse industry was obviously vast and clearly indicated that the protective net was actually nowhere near large enough. But the government was emphasising a message that some practitioners had struggled against in Islington – to pull back from joint investigation with the police and those who continued to struggle to protect children were at risk of being labelled 'over-zealous'.

Many children requiring protection do not access protective systems. In 2006 there were 25,400 children's names on the Child Protection Register, which represented a decrease of 26 per cent since 1995. The categories of physical and sexual abuse were half that of 2001 (DfES, 2006). Comparisons with statistics of known child sex offenders and sexual crimes against children illustrate that the number subject to protection planning is very small indeed (Breslin and Evans, 2004). Statistics of the number of child victims of abusive images indicate how few enter the protective systems. Operation Ore involved 7,200 men in the UK accessing a gateway to abusive images of children but few of these led to Section 47 investigations in relation to the children placed at possible risk. Max Taylor, Director of Combating Paedophile Information Networks in Europe: 'found pictures of 13,000 individual children in 2002. Of these, 25 have been identified in the UK, 50 in Europe and 100 in the US and the rest of the world' (Sunday Herald, 2003). Carr stated that: 'the victims of these horrendous crimes – the children themselves – are so often not being found and helped' (Carr quoted in Police Oracle 2004).

Similarly, children trafficked for domestic or sexual slavery are unrepresented on the Child Protection Register. Operation Paladin Child analysed the cases of 1,738 unaccompanied minors entering the country at Heathrow airport in a three month period and found 28 were untraceable. Of these, 29 per cent were under the age of 11 years (Reflex, 2004). Of course, the majority of trafficked children will be entering the UK accompanied and are even less likely to be identified than those unaccompanied. Of the many children who go missing in the UK there are no police statistics of those children who are not found. In a study based in the north of England, 48 illegally trafficked children were missing from care, representing almost half the sample (Beddoe, 2007). The Children's Society research 'Still Running 2', identified two-thirds who said they had not been reported as missing

to the police (Rees and Lee, 2005). They were 'throwaways' who were lost to child protection systems.

The Joint Inspector's Report *Safeguarding Children* commented that they couldn't be confident of the child protection response to young people in prison. Since 1990 there have been 29 deaths of young people in prison without serious case reviews or public inquiries being held. There is also concern about children who are held in segregation and treated as adult prisoners and the use of lengthy prison sentences for non-violent crimes. The same report was also critical of the lack of protection for asylum seeking children in detention centres (CSCI, 2005; Davies, 2007: 26). Concern can also be extended to the protection needs of UK child soldiers following the Deepcut Review where young recruits died in questionable circumstances. The review debated the application of the Children Act to young people in the armed forces (Blake, 2006).

Dr Adrian Falkov's research on the children who died from abuse who had a parent with mental illness confirmed that professional attention was primarily on the parent and not the child (Falkov, 1996) and to this list may be added the protection needs of disabled children which was also of concern to the inspectors, while children physically abused by adults in the name of 'reasonable chastisement' are denied the right of equal protection under the law of assault as adults. There is no doubt that there are numbers of children who require the protection of a very large child protection net. Between 1994 and 2004, 29 children from 13 families were killed during contact arrangements (Saunders, 2004). If rigorous child protection investigation is not conducted by social workers and police then it may be predicted that the courts will have increased difficulty in making safe decisions for children where there is parental conflict, and lack of evidence will lead to delays in risk assessment rendering children more vulnerable prior to decisions being made.

Perhaps it was awareness of the wide scale need of children for protection that has steered policy away from child protection work – a perspective influenced by Farrow, Director of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, Washington DC. He points out:

If a growing number of families are seeing their incomes shrink, are having trouble obtaining the basics of food,

clothing and shelter and are plagued by substance abuse, rates of child maltreatment will go up, not down. The reason a community's overall family support system is critical to effective child protection is that it creates the possibility of stemming the flow of vulnerable, at risk families.

(Farrow, 1997: 48)

Little and Axford describe a recent Dartington Report as requiring 'a shift in emphasis to focus on prevention . . . ensuring resources are not sucked into a continual fire-fighting exercise to support children whose social and psychological needs have become entrenched'. The authors acknowledge that both prevention and intervention are essential elements to effective children's services but there is no mention of protection in the entire article (Dartington, 2004; Little and Axford, 2004). Children will always need fire-fighting social workers to intervene to protect them and they also may well need protection when they have entrenched needs – because the cause of such needs may indeed be adult abuse of power.

The *Framework of Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families* (DoH, 2000) was accompanied by a training programme which was swiftly implemented (DoH et al., 2000). In contrast, there were no such government initiatives to promote *Working Together* (DoH, 1999), the statutory guidance concerning inter-agency working. Recognising the dangers in this procedural split Laming recommended a merging of the *Framework of Assessment and Working Together* (DoH, 2000; DoH, 1999; Laming, 2003: 17.111). However, instead the government produced the leaflet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' with its plethora of flow charts. Charles Clarke at the launch of the Green Paper stated: 'as a single set of guidelines we intend to eliminate any need for local bodies to produce their own' (DoH, 2003; Clarke, 2003). The mass of information in this document about data protection has confused practitioners who now seem to lack confidence in sharing information within Section 47 investigations and more seriously, some practitioners might be led to think that this limited leaflet replaced *Working Together*. There is no replacement for locally agreed multi agency procedures clearly based on national guidance which cater for local need and reflect good practice owned by practitioners. All current protocols relating to child protection are now based upon the Assessment Framework

model which is not an appropriate tool for investigative work.

Retaining the paramountcy of children's best interests

The splitting of assessment from protection led to a division replicated in service restructuring. New structures implemented after the *Framework of Assessment* were a move towards increased privatisation (DoH, 2000). The statutory element of child protection work was to be minimised and separated off from family support services which would then become available for privatisation. Farrow presented the case for community partnerships, not just as an assessment approach, but as a means to offer help to families through a community based delivery system (Farrow, 1997). The Children's Trust 'presents a statutory basis for partnership working' (DfES, 2004: 1). The partnership will be accountable to central rather than local government with funding streams dependant on the fulfilment of government targets. The intention is clear there will be 'proportionate intervention in localities that fall below minimum standards' (DfES, 2004: 28). Local democratic control of children's services will be increasingly undermined. Glendinning usefully analyses the role of partnerships under New Labour.

Partnership working benefits powerful partners. Such partnerships reinforce power inequalities that are already in existence ... They divert resources away from the core business of welfare service delivery ... The private sector cannot be controlled within the present political climate by central dictat and any claims that improved welfare outcomes can be achieved by public-private partnerships should be treated with scepticism

(Glendinning et al., 2002: 243)

It was therefore no surprise at the launch of the Green Paper to see the Wyeth pharmaceutical company awarded prominence on the initial flyer as co-hosting the conference with the Institute of Public Policy and Research – although they later withdrew (IPPR, 2003). Wyeth markets medical supplies for children. Children's Trusts organised through partnerships with the private sector would obviously open up markets to such providers. 'Wyeth has already worked in partnership with a number of organisations to help support health education and best practice within the NHS' (Wyeth, 2004). The distinction

must be made between the concept of partnership working and partnerships with the private sector. In *Every Child Matters: Next Steps*, this philosophy is unequivocally stated:

We will commission a study to scope the current and potential market for providing children services to inform a strategy for greater contestability. This may include incentivising excellent local authorities or other organisations to set up trading companies or other organisational models able to franchise or contract to provide a successful business model.

(DfES, 2004: 28)

Checks and balances are important in child protection. *Working Together* has been effective because the multi-agency approach allows for balance and scrutiny (DfES, 2006). Increased privatisation places financial interests in the fore and therefore demands a high level of rigorous monitoring. The centralisation of children's services solely within the Department for Education and Skills, and Ofsted as a single centralised inspectorate, creates structures with a considerably reduced possibility of counteracting corruption or abusive systems. Social work is now centrally regulated by the General Social Care Council which has set the scene for removal of many child care social work positions from local authorities and repositioning within the private sector as well as in extended schools and children's centres, both of which may eventually become subject to privatisation.

Losing the language of child protection

An obvious aspect of the reprogramming of social work intervention in child protection was to alter the language used and to introduce the concept of safeguarding in the sense of minimisation of harm and promotion of wellbeing rather than protection from significant harm (Parton, 2006: 7). The *Every Child Matters* agenda has promoted prevention within safeguarding but the protection aspect has been almost lost (House of Lords, 2003; HMG, 2003). The very language of child protection needs to be reclaimed and prevention re-established within the concept of protection.

The new focus is prevention of abuse and solutions located solely within a family context. Yet abuse of children by strangers is grossly

underestimated. For example, a Home Office report states that 56 per cent of all police-recorded child abductions involved a stranger (Newiss and Fairbrother, 2004). Risk is framed within the concept of disadvantage which deflects attention from abuse as an issue often unrelated to poverty and taking place in all sectors of society. Sexual abuse and other exploitation of children is not correlated with disadvantage. Even if child poverty was eliminated there would still be extensive networks of powerful adults abducting, marketing, murdering, and raping children for profit and exploitation.

Children are also defined as at risk of presenting a problem to society rather than as at risk of abuse by adult perpetrators. Universal, preventative policies to promote welfare instead: 'tackle youth offending, truancy, anti-social behaviour and improve life chances. The policy package presented by New Labour is thus primarily focused on advancing social order and a work ethic rather than averting child abuse' (Douieb, 2004). Yet research confirms that of children in custody significant numbers have suffered physical and sexual abuse (Monaghan, G., 2003: 20-1; SEU, 2002). Abuse of children by organised networks of abusers, evident on an unprecedented scale, is absent from the new agenda. *Keeping Children Safe* lists a children's safeguarding system for the 21st century but omits any reference to targeting abusers and seeking justice for abused children (DfES, 2004: 11). It is highly significant that *Every Child Matters* does not include probation, which has a key part to play in identifying and managing child abusers, in the information hub and the new training standards omit probation as a key professional group relevant to child protection work, failing even to make note of the omission. However, as the standards are said to reflect the frameworks contained in the Green Paper perhaps this omission should not surprise (HMG, 2003: 54; Shardlow, 2004: 3).

The decline of proactive child protection in two key areas of practice – the police role and the child protection register

Since Recommendation 99 of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry there has been a move towards a police

emphasis on the investigation of crime rather than of likely or actual significant harm in Section 47 inquiries. This represents a significant reduction in police involvement in child protection joint investigation work:

The Working Together arrangements must be amended to ensure the police carry out completely and exclusively, any criminal investigation elements in a case of suspected injury or harm to a child including the evidential interview with a child victim.

(Laming, 2003: 14.57)

This is in stark contradiction to the Achieving Best Evidence Guidance which requires a child-centred interview conducted collaboratively:

Provided both the police officer and social worker have been adequately trained in interviewing vulnerable and/or intimidated child witnesses there is no reason why either should not lead the interview.

(Home Office, 2002: 1: 2, 74)

This narrowing of the police role has been reiterated by Bichard who stated that social workers must report crimes to police, but did not comment on the need for joint investigation of significant harm – a threshold which may or may not include allegations of crime (Bichard, 2004: 139). The police child protection teams now screen referrals and it is the author's view that social workers are finding it increasingly difficult to engage police in any child protection matter that does not constitute a potential or actual crime.

Child protection is a grey area demanding multi-agency debate and analysis, not rigid barriers to collaborative processes. It is of concern that in *Every Child Matters: Next Steps*, the police role is defined only as within the Youth Offending Team with no mention at all of the police child protection or community safety teams. The Multi Agency Public Protection Panels gain a small mention in this document in relation to safeguarding children within public protection arrangements, but there is no reference at all of joint working to bring abusers to justice (DfES, 2003: 4.19 and 4.24).

Most concerning is the abolition of the child protection register by April 2008. The register was completely airbrushed out of the revised *Working Together* (DfES, 2006), thus implementing the intentions stated in *Keeping Children Safe: The child protection register will become redundant*

and can be phased out gradually across the country alongside the introduction of the Integrated Children's System' (DfES, 2003: 77). Department of Health research is quoted as identifying some 'worrying practices', but the source of the research is not stated. It is said that professionals fear the use of the register as a passport to services or consider that there is a lack of attention paid to a child whose name is not on the register – but surely such concerns signify the need for training rather than a total annihilation of the system? (DfES, 2003: 75). Although Thomas states that 'they know they will have access to better services if their child is on the register so they threaten their children so they get put on it' (Valios, 2003), this pathologisation of parents and misuse of the process is not evidenced. A ministerial response to a parliamentary question has confirmed that 'no research has been commissioned by the DfES specifically on the use of the child protection register' (Dhanda, 2007).

The Child Protection Register is the most important tool professionals have in protecting children. It is tried and tested and has implemented the findings of many child abuse inquiries since the 1970s. If Victoria Climbié's name had been on the register she would have had a child protection plan to keep her safe and hospitals and police would have been alerted to the risks and professionals would have followed her care from borough to borough. She would have had a key worker with statutory responsibility to coordinate all relevant information and to implement the planning with other professionals. Most importantly, the case would have been analysed and debated in a multi-agency setting and responsibilities would have been shared across agencies.

Laming expressed his own concerns about current practice:

I was told that staff feel under pressure to reduce the number of section 47 inquiries. As a result, there is widespread practice of driving down child protection case conferences and the number of children whose names are placed on the child protection register.

(Laming, 17.110)

However, he unfortunately proceeded to condemn these important procedures:

There is the danger that other agencies may make unwarranted assumptions of the level of help and support being

given to a child whose name is on the register. It is for this reason that I now have considerable doubt about the usefulness of these registers in the safeguarding of children.

(Laming, 17.110)

In conversation with the author and Lisa Arthurworrey at the Victoria Climbié Memorial Lecture (26th February 2007) he said he had thought the Register was a 'comfort blanket' for professionals but acknowledged that he was 'not an expert in child protection'.

Performance targets became more achievable if registration was kept to a minimum. Because of this some children have been excluded from the protection of the register such as older children and children Looked After. There may be: 'a conscious decision to remove those children's names from the child protection register on the basis they are already significantly protected by statute' (Dobson, 2004: 24). Care planning is distinct from child protection planning and there may be risks posed through contact or other situations that expose the child to abuse. Registration must be agreed between professionals making considered judgements, not by managerial imposition.

Some authorities have already disposed of the register prior to the deadline of April 2008. Children will now be defined as 'subject to a Child Protection Plan'. The Custodian of the Register, which is currently a highly specialist senior social work post, is to be replaced with an essentially IT role 'designated manager for managing and providing information about a child'. ContactPoint, a database for every child in the country, the Common Assessment Framework, which targets one in three families and the Integrated Children's Systems for recipients of social work services, each form part of a massive web of information which is being streamlined into place about children and their lives in the UK (ARCH, 2007; Anderson, 2007). What is actually needed is a National Child Protection Register for children identified as at high risk of harm which should include a register of missing children. This would represent a justifiable level of state intervention into family life. Instead, the new systems based on assessment represent an unprecedented form of population surveillance. The information available online to a wide range of agencies will make children vulnerable to child abusers. Non-professionals will have access to the

information who will have no accountability to professional bodies. Emergency services will have to trawl the databases for every child instead of being instantly alerted to a child whose name is on the register. The question has seriously to be asked why an excellent protective system has been destroyed?

The current government shift to prevention aims to reduce referrals overall, not just reduce those on the register. In North Lincolnshire, where the single assessment process is now in place, there has been a reduction by 64 per cent of referrals to social services (HMG, 2003: 58). Early intervention to prevent the downward spiral of abuse is very important. If the young people in Islington hadn't been poor and homeless it is clear abusers would not have had such an easy time in accessing them. However, a key aspect of real prevention is to remove abusers from the child's world – which has little mention in recent policy.

An alternative approach to community involvement is to create protective networks of adults within the community in order to inform investigation of abuse and to increase, rather than decrease, appropriate reporting. Such a model is unapologetic in striving to protect children from abuse and to seek justice for them by prosecution of the abusers.

A redefining of prevention

A focus on prevention is essential in order to gather intelligence from the local community which can lead to the arrest of child abusers. Most members of the public are not aware of how to report child abuse. Community awareness strategies involving positive local media coverage, posters, public meetings and exhibitions can engage those members of the public who may form a network of protective adults for children. Neighbourhood mapping to identify child support networks enables close working with professionals to inform the investigation of crimes against children (Nelson, 2004). Laming suggested that 'the general view was that the 'eyes and ears' of the community are not used enough in the identification of children potentially in need' (Laming, 2003: 17.30). Such community involvement should increase appropriate reporting to social services and police.

An Area Child Protection Committee prevention project in North London, between

1995 and 2000, included members from social services, police, probation, education, health and local survivors organisations. The objectives were to raise public awareness of child protection work, encourage reporting and to promote a positive view of child protection work. Posters were widely distributed in the community stating: 'Children may need you to see. Children may need you to hear. Children may need you to speak out about physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. The difference between child abuse and child protection could be you'. Public meetings covered topics such as 'Listening to Children,' 'Child Abuse Everyone's Business and Domestic Violence-Change is Possible.' An extensive database of identified protective adults was established through mapping local groups and specific individuals working with or having contact with young people. A 'Knowing the Basics' awareness programme addressed the 'What, How and When' of child abuse (*What is Abuse? How to refer abuse? When to refer?*). Key members of the network attended a two day introductory child protection course alongside professionals. All the training included survivors as contributors. Organisations were then assisted in establishing internal child protection procedures and safer care protocols and with these in place they could be affiliated to the ACPC. It was the view of ACPC members that an increase in referrals, particularly those of physical abuse and neglect, had demonstrated that the community awareness strategy had resulted in abusive situations being appropriately reported at an early stage.

The network of protective adults also played a key role in the safe implementation of community notification strategies. When a child sex abuser was released into the community some of this network were able to inform professionals of any noted contact with young people. They also reassured the community that there were professional systems in place to protect local children. Some worked closely with police and social services in the investigation of complex abuse networks and this led to the police child protection team allocating time for proactive investigation work. In this way concerns about individual adults were collated and analysed and led to joint investigation. It was clear that effective protection of children depended on professional liaison with the local community (Davies, 2004c).

Conclusion

*Society pays for its neglect.
Children become adults.*

(Frampton, 2004: 290)

Safeguarding children requires a dual strategy of protection and prevention. The concepts are not mutually exclusive. Prevention is in itself protective by increasing appropriate reporting of child abuse and engaging the community in the targeting of abusers. Proactive protection should result in the prevention of further abuse by removing abusers from the child's world. The current splitting of prevention from protection, and of family support from investigation, diverts scarce professional resources from rigorous protective processes addressing all forms of abuse within all sectors of society. Effective child protection requires a professional response. If a community network is in place to inform that response, through both appropriate referral and involvement in investigation strategies, children will have an increased chance of protection from all child abusers, not solely those within the family. Current government policies and proposed legislation are propelling professionals swiftly into the abandonment of proven effective methods of protecting children in favour of universal and unrealisable solutions to narrowly defined concepts of child abuse.

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WORKING TOGETHER — TRAINING TOGETHER

Joint investigation in child protection

By Liz Davies and Debbie Townsend

Primarily designed for use as a training manual, this book is a practical guide to joint investigation in child protection. It can help all professionals involved in safeguarding children to:

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- focus on the children involved
- develop suitable investigative skills
- understand the roles of fellow professionals and other agencies in order to work effectively with, and if necessary challenge, them

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- focus on the children involved
- develop suitable investigative skills
- understand the roles of fellow professionals from all other agencies sufficiently well to work effectively with, and if necessary, challenge them.

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Liz provides consultancy to the media and writes widely on child protection issues. In 1972, she began her social work career in mental health services and later whilst a team manager in Islington she exposed extensive abuse within the care system. In the 90s as a child protection manager and trainer in the London borough of Harrow, Liz developed her specialism in child interview skills and the investigation of organised abuse networks. In 2005 she was the expert witness for Lisa Arthurworrey, social worker to Victoria Climbié, in her successful appeal to the Care Standards Tribunal. She is currently writing a PhD through prior output entitled *Protecting Children: A Radical Contribution to Policy and Practice Development*.

Debbie Townsend is an independent child protection trainer and consultant. She contributes to the social work programmes and delivers the post qualifying child protection training at London Metropolitan University. She began her police career in 1975 and worked in East London on major investigation teams which included the investigation of organised and institutional abuse. As a detective with the Metropolitan Police, she worked in a child abuse investigation for 16 years and took the lead in designing and delivering single and multi-agency child protection training in 10 north London boroughs. In 2005, she contributed to a resource book for law enforcement officers on good practices in combating child trafficking, published by the International Organisation for Migration and the European Commission. Debbie is also involved in the development of a national police training programme for child abuse investigators at foundation and advanced level and is a recognised expert in investigative interviewing of child witnesses. For the last 23 years she has organised holidays every year for 60 vulnerable children from east London authorities through her work with the charity 'Police Summer Camp Project'.

Introduction and Overview

This introductory chapter is intended to provide an overview of the historical context and underlying *raison d'être* for writing the ensuing and timely text. It also appears in the companion volume *Investigative Interviewing of Children: Achieving Best Evidence: Working Together – Training Together*.

Trained staff will be better staff. The quality of care will be improved and the children will be safer.

(Utting, 1997: 12.7)

how to assess and confront parent or carer responses in relation to child abuse allegations.

(CST, 2005: 91–3)

The lack of emphasis on joint training in recent inquiries and policy documentation

Lisa Arthurworrey, Haringey social worker to Victoria Climbié, had completed a multi-agency 'working together' awareness course but Detective Sergeant Cooper-Bland, who had delivered this course, said in his evidence to the Care Standards Tribunal (Lisa Arthurworrey v Secretary of State) that:

I cannot see how the Haringey course could equip a social worker to carry out an investigation. It was not the aim of the course to provide that level of instruction.

Judge Pearl concluded in the hearing that:

Without training at an advanced level I would not expect Ms Arthurworrey to have understood how to properly investigate an allegation of child abuse. I would not expect her to have understood her role as a social worker in relation to that of the police, the detailed function and purpose of strategy meetings and conferences or

One of the key recommendations, from the tragedy of the death of Victoria Climbié, should have been that police and social workers conducting Section 47 investigations and video recorded interviews of children must receive specialist training at advanced level. Yet, there was no such recommendation and there remains no such statutory requirement. Reder and Duncan (2004: 112) with reference to the Climbié case, commented that:

... since the findings of any next inquiry could reasonably be predicted before it has taken place, we would like to propose that no further public inquiries are commissioned before all training and resource deficiencies identified over the last 30 years have been remedied.

Lord Laming, however, did state that Arthurworrey, 'was not trained in the Memorandum of Good Practice and could not therefore see a Section 47 child protection inquiry through to its conclusion' (Laming, 2003: 6.10), but failed to address the importance of both joint investigation and child interview training. This view contrasted with the statement of Judge Pearl

who concluded that the basic social work training she was given did not prepare her for the responsibilities she had in Victoria's case (CST, 2005: 111). Training gained much mention in the Victoria Climbié Inquiry recommendations for social workers but included only general references to the need for training for 'effective joint working', 'inter-agency working', 'appropriate training' and 'continuing training' (Recommendations 14, 15, 20 and 31). It also stated that managers were to ensure that no case should be allocated, 'until his or her manager ensures he or she has had the necessary training to deal with it properly' (Recommendation 52). The only more detailed recommendations about training (Recommendations 37 and 100), stated that social workers and police must be trained to equip them with the confidence to question the opinion of professionals in other agencies and the police recommendation (103) solely stressed the importance of single agency skills in criminal investigation (Laming, 2003).

The key mistake in the case of Victoria Climbié was that she was responded to as a child in need and not a child in need of protection. Lisa Arthurworrey had been trained in the assessment (sometimes called the family support) approach and thought child protection was only for emergencies. She had no understanding of how to conduct a Section 47 investigation jointly with the police. Lord Laming commented that in the case he had 'heard no evidence of what I would term a Section 47 inquiry ever being carried out by Haringey Social Services' (Laming, 2003: 6. 217). Reder and Duncan in their review of the case stated that, 'A referral received by social services which indicated the likelihood of non accidental injuries to Victoria was labelled from the outset as 'child in need'. This framed all of that departments' subsequent activities on the case' (Reder and Duncan, 2004: 104).

Importantly, this approach led to a lack of joint investigation. Given the professional expertise which informed the Victoria Climbié Inquiry, and the substantial influence of the recommendations in shaping the future of child protection work, it was astonishing that joint investigation training did not gain a mention.

A similar omission was evident in the Bichard Inquiry following the conviction of Ian Huntley for the murders of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman (Bichard, 2004). Neither Lord Bichard nor Sir Christopher Kelly, in his serious case review, mentioned advanced level child protection training. Kelly, in examining professional responses to the 13 cases of young women sexually exploited by Huntley, concluded that practice had fallen below an acceptable level. He identified inexperienced staff with poor supervision, yet his comment about training was solely that it should be adequate to support processes in 'Working Together' and the handling of child protection cases (Kelly, 2004).

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfES, 2006) stated clear responsibilities on Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to identify training needs, use this information to plan and commission training and evaluate training to ensure that it meets local needs. The procedures recommended that training sub groups should be established to include people with sufficient knowledge of training needs and processes to enable them to make informed contributions to the development and evaluation of a training strategy. Yet, the inspection report *Local Safeguarding Children Boards – A Review of Progress*, made no comment about the implementation of training programmes. The report did state that police involvement in the LSCBs ranged from excellent to marginal, but did not evaluate the level of involvement of the police role in training (DCSF, 2007). The Boards were urged to shift from 'an operational child protection board

to a strategic safeguarding board' which gave an emphasis on broadening the task before there was any indication that essential child protection training was actually in place (DCSF, 2007: 9.6). The inspection report, *Narrowing the Gap*, again paid little attention to child protection training other than to state that, 'safeguarding arrangements are supported by good quality multi-disciplinary training and there is a demonstrable commitment to training from all partner agencies *through the local safeguarding children board*'. It offered no detail of what level of training was being provided to exactly which professionals or agencies (Ofsted, 2007: 13).

In order to understand why this essential training has been virtually ignored in such key recent inquiries and policy documents, it is necessary to explore the range of requirements specified in different editions of *Working Together* and to examine this in the context of the changing nature of child protection work since 1995, when the prevention or 'child in need' agenda first came to notice and when 'assessment' replaced 'investigation'. The history of both the joint investigation and the child interview courses will be explored in this context.

The development of joint training

In 1984, a working party was set up by the Metropolitan Police to review methods of conducting and recording interviews with victims of child sexual abuse. This became known as the Bexley experiment and was the beginning of a seven day training course to address the emotional content of the investigation process.

The first two days were wholly devoted to developing an atmosphere within the group that would be conducive to building trust and interdependence. The trainees felt that they were able to get

to know and trust each other and share their feelings and ideas openly which is the foundation on which successful joint investigation depends.

(Metropolitan Police and London Borough of Bexley, 1987)

The training promoted social work and police involvement jointly at all stages of the investigation even, if agreed, during the interview of a suspect. It was said that joint work enabled a flow of information between the criminal investigation and the therapeutic work (Metropolitan Police and London Borough of Bexley, 1987 and Wattam, 1990: 23).

Prior to the implementation of the first *Working Together* arrangements, police and social workers struggled to work together effectively as the following case study illustrates:

In 1988, Liam Johnson, age 18 months, died from multiple injuries. He was said to have been dead for about 6–12 hours before his father arrived with him at the hospital. There were two key professional tasks. The police were pursuing criminal investigation particularly in relation to the father. The social workers were assessing the father and other family members as future carers for the seven year old sibling. Both investigations took place in parallel. The police did not share the witness statements with the social workers although these contained much information that would have assisted the assessment. The social workers did not share their findings with the police to assist the criminal investigation, yet the social workers were meeting regularly to interview the accused father, and they were also interviewing the sibling about events preceding the child's death. The sibling was made a Ward of Court and material gathered for the criminal proceedings was not available to the hearing. Attitudes to the father's contact differed between the civil and criminal proceedings

and important medical evidence, reserved for the criminal trial, was not available to the civil case. The sibling remained in long-term foster care and the father received a sentence of 10 years imprisonment for manslaughter. The social workers had not realised that they themselves may have been at risk, whilst working with the father, because information about him, known to police, was not shared with them (Lawson, 1989).

This division, between the work of the statutory agencies, is in stark contrast to the joint working of the late 1980s and 1990s that led to many investigations of familial, institutional and organised abuse, the prosecution of perpetrators and the protection of hundreds of children. Initially, police and social workers were very reluctant to work together. In fact, the authors of this book probably found themselves on opposite sides of the barricades in the demonstrations of the 1970s. The early training needed to address stereotypes and fears about working together. Yet, when both police and social workers worked together, a powerful combination of knowledge and skills did enable excellent practice to take place to protect children. However, early developments relating to joint training mainly focused on the investigation of sexual abuse. The Report of the Inquiry into Child Abuse in Cleveland stated that:

... we regard training as an issue of central importance in ensuring that the special needs of children who have or may have been sexually abused are properly recognised and met ... it was our overwhelming impression that the training provided nationally is inadequate ... many social workers experienced difficulty in responding to sexually abused children because they had not received the training to the task they were undertaking.

(Butler-Sloss, 1988: 15.2 and 15.6)

The report recommended that training should be properly coordinated and validated on a national basis.

In response to this Inquiry, the National Children's Bureau published a detailed resource about training entitled *A Positive Model. Standards for the Development and Evaluation of Materials for Training in Child Sexual Abuse* (Armstrong and Hollows, 1989). This provided an excellent analysis of the dilemmas and difficulties in such training. 'Different professional groups have different cultures and that extends to learning too ... training must develop strategies for dealing with groups of individuals with very diverse experience and expectations of training' (1989: 2). The authors emphasised the importance of sensitivity training specifically related to personal feelings about abuse:

... training packages should carry explicit reference to the fact that training activities in the field of child sexual abuse stimulate a range of intense personal reactions. These may include disclosure by members of the course, anger at the trainers, heated controversy within the group over issues like gender and power, fresh perspectives on management and supervision issues and powerful responses to the plight of children.

(Armstrong and Hollows, 1989: 13)

The training pack provided extensive advice to trainers about how to build a supportive training environment, allow participants to progress at their own pace and enable exploration of difficult emotional subjects. The authors recommended that the trainers should model their approaches to working with children and suggested the involvement of two trainers because of the probability of disclosure from some participants, either of their own or others history of child abuse. This pack significantly influenced the content of joint investigation courses at the time.

The recommendations of the Report of the Inquiry into the Removal of Children from Orkney, in February 1991, repeated the Cleveland statement that child witness interviews should 'be undertaken only by those with some training experience and aptitude for talking with children' (Butler-Sloss, 1988: 12.34.2). It stated that interviewers should have a high calibre of professional skill. Joint training for social workers with police was specifically recommended as:

... the cooperation of the two agencies cannot be undervalued ... workers who undertake joint interviews should train together ... common training can help to improve trust between them and help towards their mutual cooperation to the greater benefit of the children ... in particular the importance and difficulty inherent in the work of interviewing children in cases of alleged sexual abuse requires to be more fully appreciated by the police force.

(Clyde, 1992: 19. 12–22)

Both inquiries stemmed from the investigation of numerous allegations of child sexual abuse and much public criticism of the 'overzealous' approach of the professionals involved. Whilst much was learnt from both inquiries about improved methods of investigation, both police and social workers in these cases were providing a message that the public was unwilling to listen to at the time, about the extensive prevalence of child sexual abuse.

Since the publication of *Working Together* (DoH, 1991) police officers and social workers have been tasked with working jointly in conducting child abuse investigations, and police forces began to set up specialised child protection units which by 1996 were implemented throughout England and Wales. In 1991, the Department of Health published

Working with Child Sexual Abuse. Guidelines for Trainers and Managers in Social Services Departments, and Chapter 3 specifically concerned training in investigation skills (DoH, 1991). The aim of the training was to 'equip staff to carry out a competent investigation of a child sexual abuse referral, taking action as necessary and making an informed contribution to case conferences' (DoH, 1991: 3.2.1). Much detail was specified as to the course content and it was clear that this advanced level training must build on an introductory level foundation course. Four specific competencies were included. Those:

- Built on an understanding and knowledge of normal child development and various aspects of sexual abuse.
- Built on an understanding of the law, agency policy and procedures.
- Associated with good communication skills.
- Related to an ability to interpret behaviour and weigh information, in order to reach conclusions and make decisions based on knowledge, facts and experience.

In particular, the guidance differentiated between a risk assessment and a needs assessment (DoH, 1991: 4.3.3). Risk assessment was to focus 'principally on those factors which are predictive of future abuse'. Training, it was said, should address what evidence or other information there is that the abuse has stopped, how far the abuser is acknowledging responsibility for the abuse and recognising the consequences, and how far the mother or an abusing carer acknowledges the abuse and recognises the consequences. It should also teach a risk assessment of the particular circumstances of the abuse and the impact on the child. If the abuse had ritualistic elements then staff were advised to focus on the issues of possible, sexual, emotional and physical abuse to the

child. Also in 1991, Detective Sergeant Williams wrote of the need for training in investigations concerning the ritual abuse of children, as the police had some cases, but no-one qualified to conduct the training (Williams, 1991).

When the *Memorandum of Good Practice* was published in 1992, joint training courses for police and social workers were delivered by the Area Child Protection Committees (Home Office, 1992). The Open University had been commissioned by the Department of Health to produce a training package which was available from 1993 (Stainton Rogers and Worrel, 1993). The training was known to be variable in length and content, but initial research of interviews conducted with children showed them to be of good quality. However, a need for 'an agreed curriculum and properly accredited national standards for trainers and training courses' was still important (Davies et al., 1995). Respondents stated their need for training in the interviewing of children with special needs, those children whose first language was not English and familiarity training for managers. They also requested increased practice in conducting the interviews.

In 1994, a Metropolitan Police survey of joint work in six local authorities concluded that 'it was worrying that many child protection staff (two thirds of whom had over two years experience) appear to have had no training in fundamental areas of child protection work' (Smith and Clarke, 1994). The survey identified agreement between police and social workers about the need for joint training in the identification of child abuse, assessment of significant harm, preparation for and participation in child protection conferences, child development, anti-oppressive practice, direct work with children and work with disabled children. Birchall and Hallett also studied post qualifying child protection training in London and found it 'very limited and unevenly

spread' with 49 per cent of a range of professionals surveyed having undertaken no training at all in child protection and 37 per cent who had completed less than one week of training. 14 per cent of the sample had received over one week of training and this was generally received most positively (Birchall and Hallett, 1995: 45). Holton and Bonnerjea (1994: 33), in a survey of 91 social services departments, found that 84 per cent had no formal assessment of competence following the child protection training programme. Hughes et al. (1996) interviewed police in ten forces and found that they mainly lacked knowledge about child development, the behaviour of perpetrators, and training in the interviewing of suspected perpetrators. A national training programme was once again proposed.

By 1995:

... it was clear that there has been considerable growth in the number of people employed specifically to provide inter-agency child protection training. These posts were funded by the Area Child Protection Committees, social services or the voluntary sector. Those providing the training need to be able to command respect from different agency representatives, the facilitative and diplomatic skills need to be complimented by an extensive technical knowledge base and up-to-date information.

(Hendry, 1995: 227-9)

When social services training mainly became contracted out to the private sector some of these local, specialist training posts were no longer in place.

Following many child protection investigations of organised abuse within residential care establishments, Sir William Utting, in *People Like Us, The Report of the Review of the Safeguards for Children Living*

Away from Home, recommended the importance of training for child care professionals in knowledge about the:

... profiles and methods of perpetrators of child sexual abuse. The sexual abuse of children living away from home occurs in circumstances in which the abuse often goes undetected and is not disclosed, sometimes for many years. For this reason, if abuse of this sort is to be detected in time to help the child victim, reacting to allegations is not enough and proactive approaches to discovery are needed. This requires attention to be directed to the behaviour of the potential perpetrator. Training is necessary to raise awareness of how perpetrators behave and their methods of abusing children.

(Utting, 1997: 12.35)

Davies et al. concluded that: 'joint training is not only an efficient way to deliver training, but also promotes effective working practices between the police officers and social workers (Davies, 1998: 10). In an analysis of 12 police forces, the research showed that courses were between five and ten days duration. The feedback received from a debrief of the video recordings of training interviews was found particularly useful. Nine areas of knowledge to be covered by joint training were identified:

- Inter-agency working, Section 47 procedures and child protection conferences.
- Law and legal issues; civil and criminal law.
- Technical aspects of interviewing.
- Phased interview approach, including planning and preparation.
- Child development, including memory, suggestibility, use of language, and children's fears.

- Information about sexual abuse, sexual behaviour and perpetrator tactics, grooming and behaviour.
- Evidence gathering and investigation, including that of organised abuse, medical and forensic issues.
- Working with children and families, including disability, trauma and ethnic minority issues.
- Job stress and coping.

Respondents also expressed a need for refresher training, a point which has been restated recently by Davidson et al. who showed that police generally completed child interview training only once and that no update courses were offered, despite regular updates on guidance from the Home Office (Davidson et al., 2006: 251).

By the mid to late 1990s, joint investigation training had generally developed into a two week course with the second week focusing on investigative interviewing. The courses were delivered to police and social workers by local, specialist police and social work trainers employed by their agencies under the remit of the local Area Child Protection Committee. There had been considerable research and analysis of the required content of the training developed from the recommendations of inquiries and the training packages provided by the Department of Health and Home Office. Police and social workers were trained to work in specialist teams, sometimes sharing the same office. The NSPCC established some joint investigation teams and skilled practitioners investigated many cases of complex child abuse, protecting the children and bringing abusers to justice (Wolmar, 2000). This model of working was also promoted by Spence and Wilson (1994: 13), who suggested that, 'by working together, the team can accomplish the goals of all investigative agencies in a more efficient manner and with enhanced results'.

Working Together as a policy document: examining developments

The first edition of *Working Together* in 1988 recommended joint specialist training for:

social services staff, the NSPCC, the health services and police who will be involved in the investigation of cases and subsequent intervention . . . specialist training should include child care law, the concept of child protection and the assessment of danger and alternative forms of intervention'.

(DHSS, 1988: 8.3–5)

It was suggested that social services should take the lead role in the provision of this training and recommended that staff investigating child sexual abuse needed specialist training.

The 1991 edition of *Working Together* more specifically referred to police and social work joint training to:

. . . enable members of each service to understand one another's role fully, to learn how to work together on a joint interviewing team on cases which may lead to criminal proceedings and above all how to interview children who may have been badly abused by other adults in such a way as to encourage them to provide information without further hurting them. Interviews must always and only be conducted in the best interest of the child.

(DoH, 1991: 7.2–3)

It was the role of the Area Child Protection Committee to scrutinise the provision of inter-agency training (DoH, 1991: 2.12).

In 1999 the title of the guidance significantly changed from *Working Together to Protect Children* to *Working Together to*

Safeguard Children. Three levels of training were required to promote *Working Together*:

- Introductory training for those in contact with children and parents.
- Foundation level training for all staff working with children and parents and carers.
- The third level for staff working together who, 'co-work on complex tasks or particular areas of practice that have specific knowledge or skill requirements e.g. joint enquiries and investigations, investigative interviews, complex assessments'. At this level training should 'establish and maintain partnerships of mutual trust and respect' and should include 'understanding of legal frameworks and levels of accountability of decision making in other agencies' (DoH, 1999: 9.15).

It was the role of the Area Child Protection Committee to help improve the quality of child protection work and of inter-agency working through specifying needs for inter-agency training and development and ensuring that training was delivered. The role included 'to encourage and help develop effective working relations between different services and professional groups based on trust and mutual understanding' (DoH, 1999: 4.2).

The revised edition of *Working Together*, published in 2006, restated the three levels of training required. Introductory and awareness training for those in regular contact with children and those who work regularly with children should be in place. A third level was for 'those with a particular responsibility for safeguarding children, such as designated or named health and education professionals, police, social workers and other professionals undertaking Section 47 enquiries or working with complex cases, including fabricated and induced illness' (DfES, 2006: 4.19). These

levels were reflected in the London Child Protection Committee document *Competence Matters. A Multi-agency Safeguarding Children Training Framework for London* (Jacob and Hobbin, 2006), which based the three levels of training on those specified in an NSPCC publication, *Training Together to Safeguard Children* (Charles and Hendry, 2000). Level three training, described in *Competence Matters* for those working together on particular areas of practice, was therefore aimed at a wide range of professionals, but differed from the 2006 national procedures by retaining the need to establish and maintain partnerships of mutual trust and respect, and by specifying the need for this advanced level training for those conducting joint enquiries and investigations, investigative interviews and complex assessments.

The subsequent NSPCC training package, *Safeguarding Children, a Shared Responsibility*, which was the government recommended package to accompany recent policy changes, separated the training package into three levels. Level C, the most advanced, was for:

... social workers, police, paediatricians, senior nurses with particular responsibility for safeguarding children, operational managers and designated or named safeguarding managers. People who hold particular professional/organisational authority and a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy to act on child welfare concerns including those where a child is or may be suffering significant harm. They work extensively within an inter- or multi-agency context.

(NSPCC, 2007: 1, Trainer Guidance)

In Chapter 5 of the accompanying reader, *Working Effectively in a Multi-agency Context*, Horwath advises that

multi-disciplinary training should take place at every level, but makes no mention of specialist joint investigation training: just as in the same chapter, her description of the social work and police role noticeably omits any concept of joint investigative work (Horwath, 2007: 24).

Working Together (DfES, 2006) specified that the detail of training for specific levels should be decided locally, and there was therefore no requirement on LSCBs to provide specialist advanced level training (DfES, 2006: 4.22). The specific need for police and social work training in investigation and joint interviewing was thus omitted. Inter-agency specialist child protection training had now been replaced with generic skills in safeguarding for a wide range of professionals. The role of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards shifted from 'improving the quality of child protection work' (DoH, 1999: 4.2), to that of ensuring both single and inter-agency training, on safeguarding and promoting welfare, was provided to meet local needs (DfES, 2006: 3.22). It stated that relevant training must be provided by organisations to reach relevant staff, but no reference was made to the specific need of police and social workers to train together at an advanced level. It was also stated that the LSCBs did not have to deliver the training themselves, but should establish a sub-group to identify training needs and must ensure that trainers have sufficient knowledge, including that trainers on complex cases should have the relevant level of knowledge and skills (DfES, 2006: 4.23). There is no detail provided of who should conduct the level three training and what qualifications they might need. The purpose of broad based inter-agency training was outlined as aiming to achieve better outcomes for children:

- A shared understanding of the tasks, processes, principles and roles and

responsibilities outlined in procedures and local arrangements for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

- More effective and integrated services at both the strategic and individual case level.
- Improved communication between professionals including a common understanding of key terms, definitions and thresholds for action.
- Effective working relationships including an ability to work in multi-disciplinary teams.
- Sound decision making based on information sharing, thorough assessment, critical analysis and professional judgement.

(DfES, 2006: 4.3)

Training to assist the co-ordination of separate services had now become training to make integrated services more effective. Improved working relationships now concerned only training to provide staff with an ability to work together in multi-disciplinary teams, and there was no continued emphasis on the importance of building trust and mutual understanding which had previously been a central learning objective. Employer's responsibilities were defined as ensuring that staff were confident and competent to carry out their responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, rather than the former responsibility to carry out child protection responsibilities. Although stating that employers must provide adequate resources, support training and release staff to attend courses, the procedures provided no clarity about which partnerships or bodies were responsible for delivering training, and did not address the thorny issue of which organisation should finance the training of police and social workers in investigative and interviewing skills (DfES, 2006: 4.5). There

had always been a difference between those areas where the ACPC had financed and delivered the training and those where, because this specialist training only involved two agencies, it was seen as a local authority responsibility. This dilemma remained unresolved, leaving a gap in provision.

Delivery of the specialist training was formerly by a police officer from the local Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT) and a local authority social work trainer. These professionals developed skills based on experience which reflected the recommendations of local serious case reviews. As with other council services, local social service training became outsourced under 'best value' policies with training largely becoming the responsibility of the local authority human resources teams. The role of experienced, specialist social work child protection trainers, who possessed local knowledge, was lost. Commissioned trainers were of varied competence and were rarely locality based. The police child abuse investigation teams became reduced in size across the country and their specialist training role also diminished. In London, for instance, the Metropolitan Police which had 32 police child protection trainers, one for every Borough, set up a central team of three officers who could not respond to the training needs of the London Boroughs children's services. The resourcing of police CAITs nationally is not known. Tony McNulty, Minister of State, Home Office, in a response to a parliamentary question stated that, 'the number of police officers employed specifically in child protection work is not collected centrally and is an operational matter for involved police forces and their child protection partners' (McNulty, 2007). *Working Together* (DfES, 2006), contained only broad generalisations about the quality of trainers and did nothing to address these serious deficiencies.

The introduction of training standards

Working Together stated that all work in this field should be consistent with *The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce*, which became the broad base of knowledge required throughout single and inter-agency training and included:

- Effective communication and engagement with children, young people, their families and carers.
- Child and young person development.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child.
- Supporting transitions.
- Multi-agency working.
- Sharing information.

(DfES, 2005: 4)

Following the green paper *Every Child Matters* (Treasury, 2003) and commissioned by the Department of Health with the involvement of the General Social Care Council, Shardlow and colleagues from the Salford Centre for Social Research published *Education and Training for Inter-Agency Working: New Standards*. The concept was to have the same standards applicable to each occupational and professional group. They recommended a core curriculum to be mandatory at each professional level for all staff on inter-agency working. These standards were to be incorporated into professional standards and the LSCBs were required to provide financial provision for inter-agency training based on the standards. The Salford team identified eight key operational standards with related training standards:

- Roles and responsibilities: Be clear about own roles and responsibilities in relation to those of others.
- Critically evaluate and challenge: Respect, critically evaluate and when necessary challenge the views of other practitioners.

- Consult and communicate: Consult and communicate effectively with other practitioners.
- Evaluate: Evaluate the judgements and conclusions made by themselves or other professionals about particular clients or cases.
- Ethics and confidentiality: Use and communicate relevant information with due regard for the preservation of the client's confidentiality as is appropriate.
- Collaborate with others: Collaborate with other practitioners to enhance the effectiveness of decision making.
- Review: Review the progress of inter-agency collaboration at regular intervals at strategic and individual case levels.
- Recording: Record inter-agency communication and assessments.

(Shardlow et al., 2004)

These standards did acknowledge the need for advanced level training and Shardlow's team emphasised that: 'all training in relation to inter-agency work at a specialist and advanced practitioner level should take place with practitioners from other relevant disciplines and organisations' (Shardlow, 2004: 3). There is also mention of the standards being inclusive of minimum standards of work 'as suggested by legislation and guidance' (e.g. *Best Evidence* and *Working Together*) (Shardlow, 2004: 12). However, 'suggested' should have been 'required', and the formulation of broad, generic standards did not further a recognition of the importance of the need for specialist training of police and social workers conducting Section 47 investigations.

The Shardlow report was a response to the recommendations of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry report which had, in Recommendation 99, undermined the concept of joint working (Laming, 2003). This

called into question the social work role in joint work with police by stating that:

... the Working Together arrangements must be amended to ensure the police carry out completely and exclusively any criminal investigation elements in a case of suspected injury or harm to a child including the evidential interview with a child victim.

This recommendation essentially focused police work on the investigation of crime rather than involvement in making joint enquiries about actual or likely significant harm. As a result, when a level of crime cannot be proven or is not able to be pursued through criminal proceedings, social workers now investigate much child abuse as single agency. This recommendation also exacerbated a policy shift away from joint working imposed since the publication of the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families* (DoH, 2000). Detective Chief Inspector Bird reflected this difficulty when he expressed concern that, 'social workers are reluctant to be identified with the investigation process ... they are present at an interview as spectators but take no part in putting questions to the victim'. He advocated a return to joint police/social work teams and the need for some social workers to specialise in this area of work (Bird, 2002).

The impact on training of the policy shift from investigation of risk to assessment of need

This split between the police investigation of crime and the social work role became further entrenched in *Working Together* where a Section 47 enquiry was wrongly redefined as a core assessment (DfES, 2006: 5.60). An initial or core assessment may inform an investigation but is a distinct and separate process which should always involve

consultation with police and a decision as to whether the investigation is conducted by a single or joint agency. Assessment involves a tick box approach to completing a triangle of three components – the child's developmental needs, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors. The change in approach was summarised by Stevenson who wrote that:

... the forensic approach to significant harm with its emphasis on concrete physical evidence and hard facts may be quite incompatible with the acceptance of the concept of developmental harm.

(Stevenson in Charles and Hendry, 2000: 12)

This model of practice now forms the basis of all government protocols for children – the Common Assessment Framework, Initial and Core Assessments and all the Integrated Children's Systems with standard forms including those for child protection conferences and Section 47 strategy meetings. It is essentially a mechanistic, performance management tool and does not replace a child protection investigation. Assessment focuses on the needs of children and their families and not on targeting perpetrators of child abuse and/or seeking justice for children. An investigation of actual or likely significant harm conducted jointly with police, must always involve a focus on strategies to target perpetrators and to assess risk to the child. Initial and core assessments are not assessments of risk and the prescribed timescales required for their completion cannot be applied to a joint investigation, as 'to gain an abused child's trust, collate information about an alleged abuser, gain the cooperation of a non-abusive parent and have multi-agency debate and analysis of the risk of harm to a child may take months of complex work' (Davies, 2007). Munro and Calder, in their article, *Where has Child*

Protection Gone? discuss how in current policy:

the very words of 'child protection', 'child abuse' and 'risk' have virtually disappeared from the language and how within this agenda victims of abuse are in danger of being lost . . . They are being merged with all other groups of children in need.

(Munro and Calder, 2005: 439)

The current emphasis on assessment protocols brings with it certain risks that:

- There may be delay in the immediate protection of abused children whilst the seven-day initial assessment is processed.
- Key information in the possession of the police is not obtained soon enough to protect the child.
- Because an assessment of need requires parental permission for all checks there is a risk that parental consent is sought to interview a child who has made an allegation and the child may be at increased risk of harm as a result. A Section 47 investigation allows checks to be made without parental consent if it is thought that to do otherwise might place the child at risk.
- Without a prompt response of a Section 47 strategy meeting, and decisions being made about the method of investigation, an assessment of the child and family's needs will not be effective in evaluating the risk to the child of actual or likely significant harm. The skills of questioning, challenging, confronting and understanding the concepts of professional dangerousness – the blocks to professional recognition of child abuse which are essential to effective child protection work, may not be evident in an assessment process.
- The assessment process is too prescriptive and may interfere with the exercise of

professional judgment. Assessment involves excessive professional time spent on data entry and there is managerial emphasis on surveillance of computer input rather than professional supervision. Skilled, trained professionals working in safe working environments protect children effectively, whereas social workers inputting data will not alone protect children. Social workers ticking boxes will not protect children. Managers counting the ticks will not protect children. Government officials awarding stars for the right number of ticks will not protect children.

- The strict application of timescales may lead to premature closing of a child protection case when for example, children retract initial allegations in response to threats or through fear or when there is not thought to be sufficient evidence and a proactive investigative approach is not implemented.
- Because every Section 47 is required to be a core assessment, which is very demanding of professional time for every child in the family, there is a likelihood that, because of scarcity of resources, cases will be kept at level of Section 17. For instance, if a child makes an allegation of abuse by a teacher how relevant is it to conduct a core assessment on every child in the family? Whether or not a Section 47 includes an assessment process should not be prescribed but should be a matter for professional judgment and decided at a strategy meeting.

In the context of this confusion in policy, and the move away from proactive child protection, following the introduction of the *Framework for the Assessment* (DoH, 2000) multi-agency training on assessment processes was performance targeted and financially supported by government, whereas *Working Together* (DoH, 1999)

received no government funding to assist training. The NSPCC published *The Child's World: Assessing Children in Need. Training and Development Pack*, and through a national initiative, PIAT (Promoting Inter-Agency Training) played a key role in training child protection trainers to refocus their training towards assessment processes and away from reactive interventionist strategies to protect children. At a number of conferences trainers were encouraged to move away from joint police and social work courses to a much wider audience, thus implying that the specialist requirements of these agencies were no longer relevant in the context of the implementation of the *Framework for the Assessment* (DoH, 2000).

Whilst training cannot do it all, it has a crucial part to play in effecting these changes and is able to do so by adjusting training content and through purposeful attention to audience, thus changing the shape and boundaries of the core inter-agency territory.

(Charles and Hendry, 2000: 40)

Glennie and Horwath wrote of the need to continue and accelerate child protection being seen as part of the broader provision for children in need:

Existing training strategies have been adapted, audiences retargeted and training programmes adjusted to ensure that inter-agency child protection training is not focused narrowly on safety and protection issues but takes a more holistic account of the developmental needs of children. In other words, if inter-agency training is to be effective in the current climate, it must be broadened conceptually to take account of both safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

(Glennie and Horwath, 2000: 148–9)

In the transition from the old to the new the essential need for police and social workers to gain specialist training gained little mention and the suggestion that a focus on 'safety and protection issues' was in any way 'narrow' went unchallenged at the time.

However, the *Achieving Best Evidence: Guidance* subsequently reaffirmed the joint working relationship by stating that:

... having responsibility for the police criminal investigation does not mean that the police should always take the lead in the investigative interview. Provided both the police officer and social worker have been adequately trained to interview child witnesses in accordance with the guidance set out in this document, there is no reason why either should not lead the interview. The decision as to who leads the interview should depend on who is able to establish the best rapport with the child.

(CJS, 2007: 2.12)

The guidance also states that:

... a special blend of skills is required to take the lead in video-recorded interviews. The lead interviewer should be a person who has or is likely to be able to establish rapport with the child, who understands how to communicate effectively with interviewees who might become distressed and who has a proper grasp of the rules of evidence and criminal offences.

(CJS, 2007: 3.98–3.104)

The guidance also repeated the Association of Chief Police Officers guidance on *Investigating Child Abuse and Safeguarding Children* (ACPO, 2005: 6.2), in stressing the importance of specialist training in line with occupational standards:

... specialist training should be developed to interview witnesses with

particular needs This should include interviewing young witnesses, traumatised witnesses and witnesses with a mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability impacting on communication. Such training should include working with intermediaries. Specialist interview training should also be developed in respect of the techniques in the cognitive interview. It is important to note, however, that training alone is unlikely to deliver effective performance in the workplace. Training needs to be set in the context of a developmental assessment regime. Such a regime should deliver a means of quality assuring interviews, while developing, maintaining and enhancing the skills of interviewers. The regime should be supported by an agreed assessment protocol. In the case of police interviewers such a protocol should take account of the National Occupational Standards for interviewers and witnesses developed in Skills for Justice.

(CJS, 2007: 0.4)

The importance of training being within an organisational learning context was also emphasised by Bostock et al. (2005) who advocated the need to learn about the investigation of risk not only from the outcomes of serious case reviews but from 'no harm' incidents where learning could take place outside of a blame culture.

Summary

Since 2000, policy changes post-Climbié have seen a chasm develop between police and social workers in the investigation of abuse which represents a step back to the situation that existed at the time of the Liam Johnson case. The joint investigation of significant harm by both agencies, the complex joint risk

assessment at the stage of initial referral, and the suspicion of harm, are rapidly sinking into history. The main tool of joint work, the strategy meeting, is now frequently replaced by a discussion on the telephone, which has the effect of excluding key agencies and denies professionals the opportunity to debate and analyse the issues face to face. The child protection register, which was the main multi-agency tool for protecting children identified as at high risk of harm, has now been precipitously abolished. This decision was made on the basis of no research at all. A ministerial response to a parliamentary question confirmed that 'no research has been commissioned by the DfES specifically on the use of the child protection register' (Dhanda, 2007). Specialist Child Abuse Investigation Team police officers have been replaced at child protection conferences by civilian staff and their access to advanced level training is minimal. Abuse which takes place outside the family fits poorly into a system based on the five outcomes for children which focuses professional attention on issues of social inclusion within disadvantaged families and on children as potential criminals rather than victims of child abuse (Treasury, 2003). By changing the definition of 'at risk of significant harm' to mean 'at risk' of a number of poor outcomes, the government has effectively relegated child protection to a sub-category of a larger concern about children's welfare. This implies that abuse is designated as merely one of a range of difficulties that a child may face, rather than as significant harm or a serious crime against a child.

The vast networks of serious crime against children which joint work began to confront during the 1990s are now largely being ignored. The numbers of children for whom a protection plan is needed has halved in the last five years for those defined as at risk of physical and sexual abuse (DfES, 2007). The current failure of existing child protection

systems has led to separate systems being developed for specified forms of child abuse such as domestic violence, sexual exploitation and for trafficked and missing children. Establishing separate systems would not be necessary if the *Working Together* procedures were being fully implemented. Having multitudes of different protocols for separate child abuse circumstances will only lead to confusion and variation in practice between localities and will complicate the systems unnecessarily when, in fact, every form of child abuse can be effectively investigated using *Working Together* procedures.

The need to promote joint investigation training at this time could not be greater. The consequences for children of the gap in this provision has been illustrated by the recent report *An Inspection into the Care and Protection of Children in Eilean Siar* (SWSI, 2005), which criticised an over-emphasis on the family support model in the case and recommended the need for social workers and police to be trained in appropriate and up-to-date courses in joint investigation. During October 2003 in the Western Isles, 13 adults were arrested in Scotland and England in relation to the possible abuse of three girls in one family, and nine adults were subsequently charged with rape, lewd, libidinous and indecent practices and behaviour and making indecent images or pseudo images of children on a computer. The basis of the allegations were statements made by the three girls and their mother. However, there was no trial and there were no convictions. The report described that over 100 professionals had been involved with the family; there had been 29 conferences, 21 statutory reviews and 24 children's hearings about maltreatment of the children. The authors concluded that the three children had experienced severe and prolonged physical, sexual and emotional abuse by the father and his friends, that social workers and managers

failed to protect the children and that they should have acted sooner to protect them (SWSI, 2005: 296).

Other recent reviews of child deaths from abuse make the same point. In the case of Aaron Gilbert, who died age 13 months from head injuries, the serious case review executive summary stated that: 'the social worker did not initiate an immediate child protection investigation . . . the error of judgment could have been identified and the case relabelled as a child protection case' (Swansea LSCB, 2006). Although there was a referral about physical abuse and neglect, the case was defined as family support.

Similarly, in Swindon, in the case of Kimberley Baker who died of starvation at 11 months old, it was said that an initial assessment had been pursued rather than a child protection investigation. The executive summary pointed to the fact that the focus was on the mother's and children's health rather than identifying child protection concerns (Burchall, 2007).

In Newcastle, Alexander Gallon died at the age of four months, following a fire. His mother was convicted of infanticide. The executive summary identified that Social Care Assessment Officers were completing initial assessments and recommended that: 'the identification of any child protection issues should be made by a worker qualified and knowledgeable in this area' (Weightman, 2006).

In another Newcastle case, Baby O, aged three months, died of multiple injuries, and the executive summary concluded that: 'analysis of risk was limited across agencies. This could have been avoided if information sharing and planning between all relevant agencies had been consistent throughout, and a comprehensive risk analysis and protection plan drawn up' (Weightman, 2006).

Brief executive summaries provide very limited information about these tragic cases.

Given the number of recent child deaths from abuse where child protection procedures have not been implemented, there is a very urgent need to review the impact of current safeguarding policy on practice.

Conclusion

Armstrong and Hollows emphasised the need for joint training to start from where individuals find themselves and to build on their current experience and competencies so that they may mobilise a fuller range of skills and personal qualities to do the work in hand:

... we see that process as vesting a value in the worker. It can only take place if value has already been invested in the trainer from within the organisation by managers and policy makers, a value which must be reflected in resources developed for their use by those outside the organisation.

(1989: 1)

Morrison has written about knowledge and learning being about processes not products, at a time when child protection training is operating amidst radical external change including an erosion of state welfare, competitive market solutions and a devaluing of professionalism. He emphasised that child protection training:

... is to equip staff with the values, frameworks, knowledge, skills, personal discretion and strengths necessary for the exercise of judgements, discretion and decision making which enables the organisation to fulfil its child protection goals and responsibilities.

(Morrison, 1997: 31)

Importantly, he supported training in which:

... the status quo may be confronted and innovations are attempted. The unresolvable nature of many issues is openly acknowledged and struggled with from which unexpected or creative resolution may come ... this is an agency culture in which thinking and feeling and not just doing are legitimised.

(Morrison, 1997: 33)

Reder and Duncan (2004: 109) reinforced this view that: 'the key aims of training are to arm practitioners with knowledge, skills and the capacity to think'.

Thinking means questioning and critically examining evidence and this can be uncomfortable for those working to protect children and to challenge powerful child abusers.

There are many police officers and social workers struggling against the current tide of public policy in order to protect children and seek justice for them by prosecution of the perpetrators. The task has become more, not less, difficult, and training to support specialist practitioners, given the lack of government recognition of the task and the scarcity of competent and experienced trainers, has become more inaccessible than ever. Strong commitment to the work of keeping children safe from harm must include a determination at all levels of police and social work child protection practice to make joint investigation training central to their Local Safeguarding Children Board agendas.

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