

WORKSHOPS ON THE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE OF CARE AND ABUSE— SCORING AND ANALYSIS OF CASE MATERIAL FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

One-day workshops run by Professor Toni Bifulco and her team at the CATS team at Middlesex University examine childhood experience of neglect and abuse.



Practice need for assessment tools: There is increasing need for standardised means of assessing abuse in families to help with Safeguarding services. This is particularly highlighted by the new Public Law Outline (PLO) which requires reduction in delays for applications for care or supervisions from 'application to disposal'. Tools that can aid with assessing and analysing the range and severity of abuse or negative parenting experiences can therefore aid best practice in the interest of children and families. Such tools are also useful in the Integrated Children's System to summarise or quantify characteristics of abuse for the Core Assessment. The CECA rating scales and definitions can be useful for such purposes as well as for aiding assessment in Parenting Support programmes.

What is the CECA?: The CECA is an evidence-based, standardised method of collecting information about childhood maltreatment used for more than two-decades. It includes a range of care and maltreatment scales including Neglect, Physical, Role Reversal and Psychological Abuse as well as the family context, including discord and violence. As a full interview measure it is used for research with adults and adolescents as a retrospective assessment of childhood. However, for practice contexts, the scoring system and benchmarked rating system can be used to systematise case record material, and inform categorisation of information collected from varied sources (child, family, witnesses etc). The scales are scored according to a set of definitions, rating rules and precedent 'benchmark' examples. The workshops cover definitions, scoring procedures and discuss practice use.

What will the workshops cover? The CECA workshops cover detailed definitions of neglect and physical and psychologically abusive experiences, operationalised indicators of maltreatment and benchmarked thresholds for rating severity in a systematic way. The workshops will also cover the impact on the child and family of maltreatment and discuss implications for practice. Learning will be through presentation, case 'vignettes' to rate, DVD of CECA interviews and group discussion. Instructions for how to add CECA ratings to chronologies will be outlined.

The workshops are suitable for: practitioners working with children and families; specifically social workers and psychologists in family support, Child Safeguarding and Looked After services and CAMHS.

Workshops can be held by arrangement on team sites for a group of up to 15 trainees. Individual enquiries should be made to Lifespantraining@mdx.ac.uk. Workshops will be arranged when sufficient numbers are collated.

Time and location: The workshops will run from 10.00 am to 4.30pm with a lunch break 1pm (not provided). All the training will take place either on team sites or in Central London.

Costs: The cost of a one-day workshop is £150 per person.



Neglect The workshop will explore definitions of parental care and neglect in relation to material care (being fed, clothed); regular household routines; health & hygiene; socialisation: neglect of friendships, school work, career options emotional needs & support. Gauging severity in terms of the pervasiveness of neglect and number of areas affected is discussed. The association with parental 'antipathy' (cold or hostile parenting) is discussed as well as other correlates of neglect in terms of social adversity. The relationship between neglect and psychological disorder will be outlined. Assessment and analysis of neglect in practice contexts will be discussed.



Physical abuse The workshop will explore definitions of violence in the home, specifically violence shown to child from adult household members. The type of attack (e.g. severe beatings, being hit with implement, punched, kicked, burned) and the potential for causing injury as well as frequency and context of the abuse are all examined and categorised. Domestic violence between parents will also be examined and the correlates of physical abuse identified. The relationship between physical abuse and psychological disorder will be outlined. Assessment and analysis of physical abuse in practice contexts will be discussed.



Psychological abuse The workshop will examine definitions of emotional abuse, and differentiate between hostile parenting and the more sadistic behaviours constituting the most severe abuses. This will include humiliation, terrorising, exploiting and corrupting behaviour. The association between psychological abuse and other abuses will be examined in the form of 'complex abuse'. The association with psychological disorders examined. Assessment and analysis of psychological abuse in practice contexts will be discussed.