



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

**The 'Childhood Experience of Care and Abuse Interview' and 'Parenting Role Interview' for
Child Safeguarding practitioners:
An evaluation in Kingston Safeguarding Services.
Final Report, 16th September 2012**

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This report concludes a 12-month project commissioned by the Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK) Safeguarding and Looked after Children teams to train social workers in two evidence-based assessment tools on childhood care and abuse and parenting designed by the CATS team (formerly Lifespan Research Group), mentor them in their reliable use in current cases and develop tools for mainstreaming these in ongoing practice. The project comprised (i) 6 one-day workshops for 6 social workers on the CECA and PRI interview methods; (ii) 10 mentoring sessions; (iii) a compilation of a portfolio of cases to illustrate the use of the method and (iv) a new workbook to aid future analysis of cases. All elements of the project were completed, with good (although not 100%) attendance of social workers at each session and evidence of good fit between the assessment tools and their use in both child protection and family support cases.

Background

Background to the project involves initiatives related to the recent Monro review of children's services, which advocated social workers being less reliant on computer systems and tick box approaches for producing their assessments. Reviews of good practice have emphasised use of evidence-based approaches, those dynamic and encapsulating full information about the child and family from varied sources to substantiate the Assessment Framework. These meant to be child focused and to include information from both parents involved and with a good range of information sources. Pilot projects utilising a less rigid assessment process show good assessment to be critical for good care planning.

Project aims

Aims of the project to successfully train and upskill workers in evidence-based assessment tools, and show applicability of the tool to analysis of current cases was achieved. This also involved some updating of workers trained in a prior pilot of the project. This technically involved 12 social workers, although a small proportion of the first cohort have left the service.

Implementation

Workshops were well-received with most social workers achieving good reliability in use of the CECA and PRI. The mentoring/surgery sessions showed social workers had understanding of how to apply the tools in specific cases. The anonymised portfolio of cases can be used for future training in the tools on site. At the surgeries social workers main requirements were to work with the evaluation team to map all the information on a current case into the conceptual framework provided by the CECA for risk and resilience. For child in need cases the PRI provides useful evidence for measuring changes in parenting role and behaviour from past parenting or over the course on an intervention, in conjunction with other measures that measure parenting directly. Mentoring around cases showed a good level of understanding of the assessment principles and was seen to aid with case analysis. The typologies of cases developed have been used to develop a graphic analysis workbook tool that is discussed.

Outputs

Outputs for social workers include the interview and rating scales and training materials for the CECA and PRI interviews; a workbook to indicate principles of analysis which will be distributed during dissemination. Output for management includes the interim and final report, a portfolio of cases for scrutiny and evaluation questionnaire analysis from each of the workshops.



Limitations

There were some challenges to implementing this project due to its coinciding with service reorganisation. This delayed the start of the project by four months mainly because staff were unable to free up time to commit to training dates. Service re-structuring, and duty rota's as well as high caseloads created barriers to full attendance at all workshops and meetings. Some of the surgeries had to be cancelled due to staff work loads. However, the workers were very engaged and committed to the sessions and evaluations of the workshops suggested these were successful in terms of learning and satisfaction. The mentoring made available in surgeries was viewed as helpful to ongoing work. Mentoring around cases showed a good level of understanding of the assessment principles and was seen to aid with case analysis and provide evidence for action taken.

Benefits

In summary then the CECA/PRI thresholds provide a clear framework for:-

- a) Structuring the information held on the cases and chronologies into the main areas of current risk (social adversity, parental psychiatric, parental violence, parental lack of care and control e.g. neglect, parental abuse, and child psychiatric).
- b) Seeing where more information gathering or interviewing is needed. The PRI is especially useful here to obtain a quick and greater insight into the subjective perceptions of the parenting role and this compared with evidence of actual parenting.
- c) Establishing severity thresholds for lack of care and control and/or abuse over specific time periods
- d) Development of workbook analysis tool to aid summarisation and analysis of the current risk for a case.
- e) When both father and mother are in the household summarising the risk from both, rather than focussing on the mother.

The workbook

A workbook to aid with thinking through case analysis was derived from experience with analysing the 10 cases in the portfolio. The workbook is yet to be distributed, but involves graphic illustrations of the key elements in the model (family context, parenting/maltreatment and child difficulties). Each section is itemised in terms of subsections (eg social adversity, parental psychiatric disorder, discord and violence in the family context). Diagrams allow for summarising of key aspects and these then placed in a calendar to aid with chronologies and in an overall dynamic model suggesting flow of influence ('drivers') indicated by arrows. The workbooks will require further testing for user-friendliness and instructions for how to complete. They are seen as documents for 'rough working' to aid thinking about a case prior to writing formal reports.

Dissemination

The final report, once agreed, will be distributed to managers and social workers involved in the project. A presentation of findings will be made at a joint meeting. CECA/PRI workbooks will be distributed to social workers involved in the project for them to trial on current cases.

Recommendations

Following the successful adaptation of CECA/PRI to case assessment and analysis in

Safeguarding and LAC services:

- The CECA/PRI learning is further mainstreamed and embedded in the assessment procedures at RBK (and Richmond if the two services are to be joined).
- Support is given to the social workers through additional workshops and/or mentoring sessions. Such training needs to be accommodated within case loads
- Workers are encouraged to utilise the CECA workbooks and the PRI interview packs which can be purchased from the research team.
- Managers discuss whether the Attachment Style Interview would be an additional tool to provide for the children's services to identify parental risk and resilience in relation to partner relationships; external support; problematic relationship patterns; anxious, avoidant and disorganised patterns; non-optimal service utilisation.