

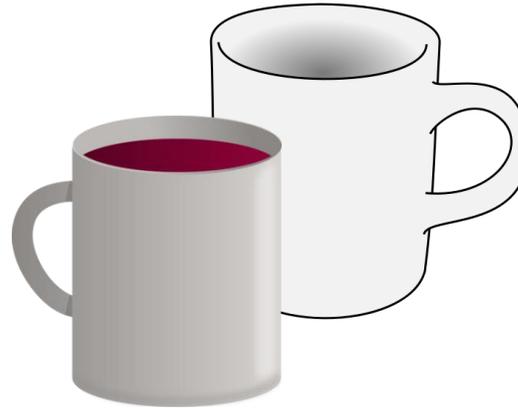
NEGLECT: Cumulative Harm

Leicestershire County Council Learning
and Development Service

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Housekeeping



Working Agreement

Commitment to make the training work

Take responsibility for your own learning

Child focus

Allow others to talk

Listen to others

Commitment to equality and diversity

Confidentiality

Prior learning

Respect others professional remit

Introductions

- Who are you?
- What area do you work in?
- What experience do you have of neglect?

Learning Outcomes

- To recognise signs and symptoms of children and young people who are, or may be, neglected.
- To identify concerns about parenting capacity that may contribute to neglect.
- To identify family and environmental factors which may contribute to neglect.
- To understand the importance of looking beyond single incidents (cumulative harm).

A UNICEF report in 2013 ranked 29 countries in different categories according to how its children are treated...

Where do you think the UK came...?

**Netherlands Romania Italy Norway Iceland Estonia Finland Austria Sweden
United Kingdom Germany United States Luxembourg Canada Switzerland
Hungary Belgium Latvia Ireland Slovakia Denmark Spain Slovenia Poland
France Greece Czech Republic Portugal Lithuania**

Overall?

A) 1

B) 16

C) 23

D) 7

The Netherlands was 1st, Ireland 10th and United States 26th

Ability to address
the material well
being of it's children

A) 14

B) 27

C) 3

D) 21

The Netherlands was 1st, United States 26th and Romania 29th

How children perceive their own wellbeing

A) 14

B) 24

C) 9

D) 28

Estonia was 9th, United States 23rd and Canada 24th

Ability to promote
the educational
wellbeing of its
children

A) 17

B) 13

C) 6

D) 24

Germany was 3rd, Slovakia 21st and Canada 13th

What percentage of child protection plans in England are due to neglect?

A) 22%

B) 34%

C) 45%

D) 55%

Source: Department for Education (2015)

In Leicestershire...

From April – June 2017

192 child protection plans are put in place

431 children subject to a child protection plan

1171 Single Assessments (large increase in recent quarters)

101 children subject of a child protection plan for neglect

259 cases in the last 12 months where neglect was identified as a factor

What is Neglect?



Working Together Definition

Neglect is the **persistent** failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

(Working Together HM Government 2010 :2013: 2015)

Identifying Neglect

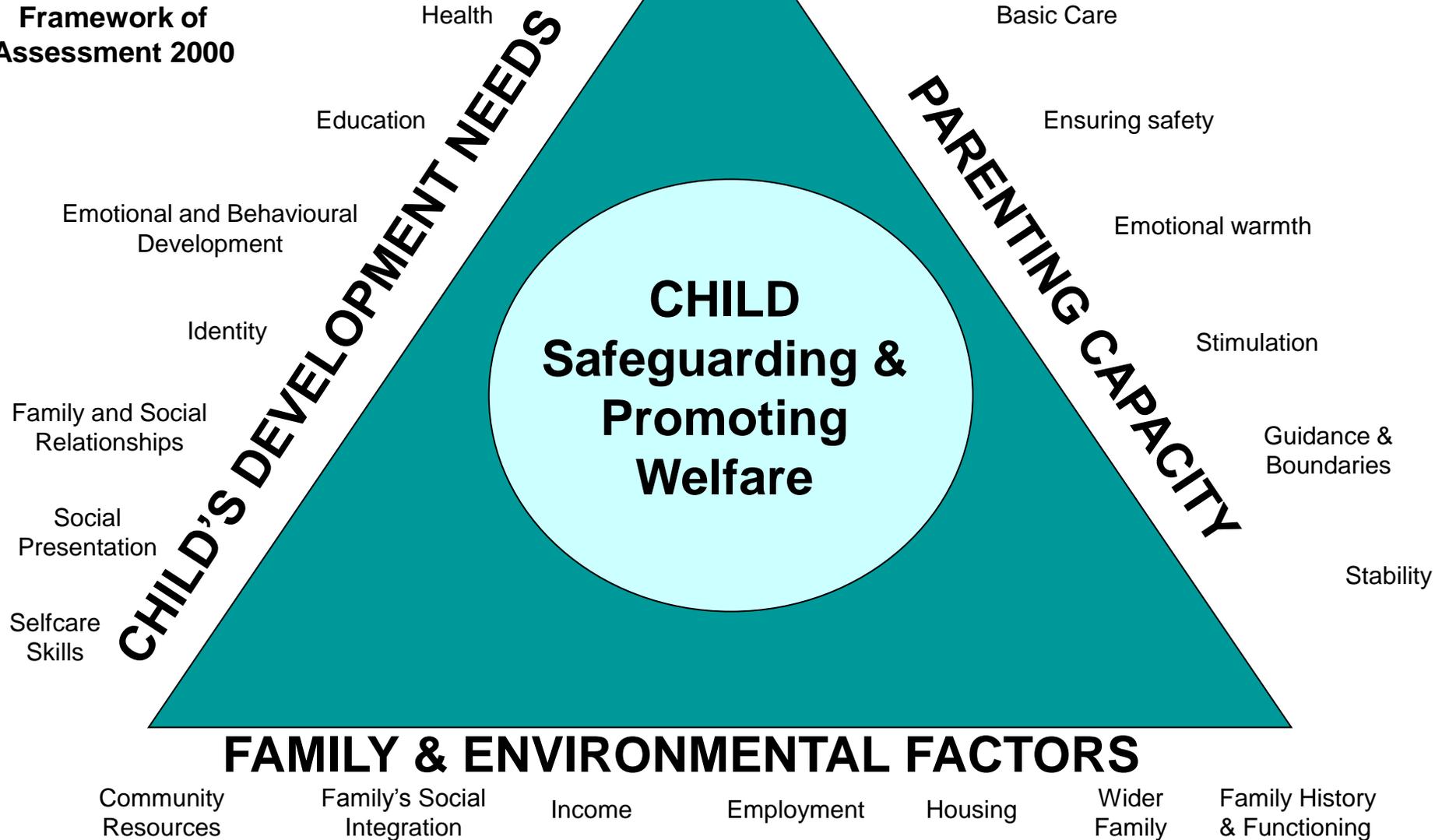
“Neglect is not a static, single event but a cumulative process that occurs over time”

(Sneddon, 2010)

Our views on neglect are subjective, more than any other type of abuse

This creates barriers to identifying when concerning behaviours start to become neglect and when neglect becomes a child protection issue

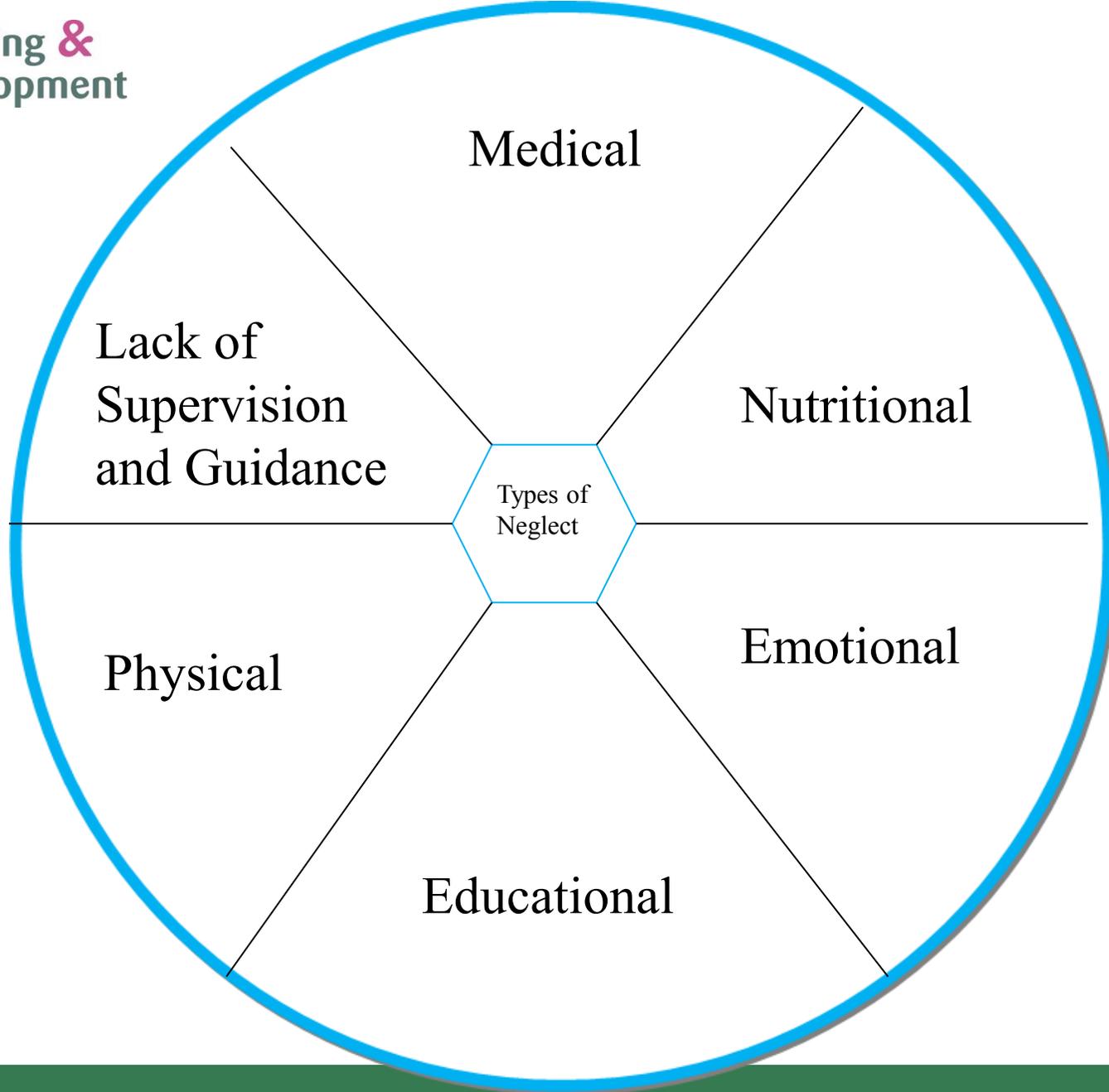
Framework of Assessment 2000



Children can experience different forms of neglect

- Medical neglect
- Nutritional neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Educational neglect
- Physical neglect
- Lack of supervision and guidance (Horwath 2007)

Consider the impact on learning for each form of neglect



Activity

Behaviour:

- The impact on behaviour is often greatest when neglect starts early in a child's life, or if the child is both neglected and emotionally abused.
- Neglected children may present as aggressive and hostile, for example, the child may be prone to angry outbursts or lashing out towards others.
- Neglected children may be more impulsive than other children, and may show features seen in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), for example, poor concentration or impulsive behaviour.
- Neglected children specifically, may be particularly quiet or withdrawn.

NSPCC and Cardiff University, 2014

School Performance:

- Neglected children can often have more difficulty than their classmates carrying out complex tasks.
- Neglected children are likely to have a lower IQ than their classmates
- Despite poor performance in some areas, neglected children may be better at problem solving, planning and abstract thinking than other children.
- Neglected children can have fewer effective coping skills than other children.

Effects of Neglect

Relationships with Other Children:

- Neglected children may have difficulty with friendships and have more problems socialising, than other children do.
- The neglected child may have few friends, and be perceived by other children as more likely to be aggressive or disruptive.

Relationships with Parents/Carers:

- There may be a lack of emotional warmth between parent/carer and child.
- Some parents are more negative in comparison to non-neglecting parents.
- The parents may make more demands of their children, and are unlikely to respond to requests from their children for support.

NSPCC and Cardiff University, 2014

Emotional or Self-perception Issues:

- Neglected children may have little self-confidence.
- Neglected children are more likely than their classmates to experience symptoms of depression.
- Neglected children can have difficulty interpreting emotions, such as anger or sadness.
- Neglected children may also experience more mood swings than would be expected for their age, or show levels of affection towards others, which are inappropriate for the situation.
- Neglected children may see themselves as being worthless to others.
- Many of these children give up on tasks before they have even started, because they simply do not see the point in trying.

NSPCC and Cardiff University, 2014

Neglected Children...

- ..are most likely to be under 4 and those under 4 are most likely to be seriously harmed or die as a result of neglect
- ..have some of the poorest long term health and developmental outcomes
- ..are at high risk of accidents
- ..are vulnerable to sexual abuse
- ..are likely to have insecure attachment patterns
- ..are less likely than other children to:
 - develop the characteristics associated with resilience
 - have access to wider protective factors

Adverse Childhood Experiences – ACE's

Physical abuse

Emotional abuse

Sexual abuse

Physical neglect

Emotional neglect

Mental illness

Mother treated violently

Incarcerated relative

Substance abuse

Parental separation



Break

Identifying when parenting capacity results in neglect

Research tends to have focused on mothers and has suggested them to:

- be more likely to be poor and struggle to manage money
- be less able to plan and control impulses
- be less confident about future
- be less equipped with sense of self-efficacy
- have psychological and psychosomatic symptoms and experience depression
- have had poor educational attainment
- have a high sense of alienation
- lack of knowledge of children's developmental needs
- lack emotional maturity
- be physically and emotionally exhausted
- struggle to meet dependency needs of children
- experience feelings of apathy and futility

(Kadushi 1988, Polansky 1981, Crittenden 1996, Gaudin 1993, Giovannoni 1979, Horwath 2007, Mayhall and Norgard 1983, Taylor and Daniel 2005, Stevenson 2007)

Less research on fathers, but where the child experiences neglect the father figure is more likely to:

- be unemployed
- be a less supportive partner
- be violent to the mother
- misuse substances.

The man in the household is:

- more likely to be the non-biological parent,
- likely to have been in the relationship less than 5 years.

(Coohey 1995, Featherstone 2001)

Research

In a study of 555 families referred to children's social care about concerns of neglect or emotional abuse of the children:

- 57% had no wage earner in the household
- 59% lived in over-crowded housing conditions
- 10% had had 5 or more house moves in the previous 5 years
- 47% households headed by a lone parent
- 26% of parents and 24% of children had a disability or long term/serious illness
- 56% of parents reported high levels of emotional stress.

(Thoburn et al, 2000)

Socio-economic deprivation

- *‘poverty is not a predictor of neglect: it is a correlate of neglect’.*

(DiLenonardi, 1993, in Horwath, 2007)

- The majority of people living in deprived circumstances parent their children effectively, but it is a lot harder.
- Deprivation can interact with other stress factors resulting in children’s needs not being met adequately.

Activity

In groups discuss how these parental issues could contribute to neglect:

- The parent's own experiences of being parented
- Learning disability
- Maternal depression and parental psychiatric illness
- Parental substance misuse
- Abusive relationships with partner/domestic violence

Accumulation of risk factors

- Parenting is increasingly affected as stress factors accumulate
- We know from research and evidence that when there are additional complicating factors this can have a diverse effect on a parents ability to parent affectively.
- What complicating factors do you think these could be?

A child's experience of neglect

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROIGfGGx80U>

6 year old Susan

- Lewis is 8 years old and of dual heritage. He describes life for a child in a chaotic household, where there is limited parental supervision. He acknowledges the difference between his own home and the homes of his friends.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPsBpqqMii4>

- Steve is father to the youngest two children, and step-father to Liam. Steve, who is black and 36 years old, describes the struggle of parenting and family life from his perspective.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPIwsAsZF3c>

- Fiona is the mother of the three children, white and 38 years old. She shares her experience of growing up in care and how this impacts upon family relationships and relationships with agencies.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IQQ0VnXL5g> scene 1 (How not to do it)

- School Teacher in discussion with a Head of Year about a neglected young person, Liam Evans. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeWFYpEO4qk> scene 2 (how to do it!!)

Cumulative harm

- Cumulative harm may be caused by an accumulation of a single adverse circumstance or event, or by multiple different circumstances and events,
- The unremitting daily impact of these experiences on the child can be profound and exponential, and diminish a child's sense of safety, stability and wellbeing.

(Bromfield and Miller 2007)

Impact of cumulative harm

- Stress is normal and releases chemicals in brain to help us respond, but prolonged stress can damage the developing brain.
- Cumulative harm can overwhelm even the most resilient child; attention should be given to the complexity of the child's experience.

(Bromfield and Miller 2007)

No Neglect

3-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN



Extreme neglect



- Prolonged exposure to trauma triggers physiological changes in the brain.
- Neural circuits are disrupted, causing changes in the hippocampus, the brain's memory and emotional centre.

- This can cause brain shrinkage, problems with memory, learning and behaviour.
- A child does not learn to regulate emotions when living in state of constant stress.
- Associated with greater risk of chronic disease and mental health problems in adulthood.

Still Face Experiment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apzXGEbZht0>

Cumulative harm affecting adult life

- An accumulation of adversities can continue into adult life.
- Many parents of neglected children are also suffering from the impact of adverse circumstances in their childhood.
- An accumulation of factors will also increase the likelihood of a child suffering neglect.

Identifying cumulative harm

Frequency

have there been previous allegations for similar issues?

Type

signs that child has experienced other types of child abuse and neglect in addition to those reported?

Severity

has caused or likely to cause significant harm if repeated over a prolonged period?

Source of harm

does current situation make child more vulnerable to other perpetrators?

Duration

how long have problems that lead to current involvement been present?

(Bromfield 2005)

- Each involvement with a family being treated as a discrete event which means that:
 - Information is not accumulated from one report to the next
 - information is lost over time
 - There is an assumption that problems which presented in previous involvements were resolved at case closure
 - Files are not scrutinised for pattern of cumulative harm.
- Language used to describe events is vague or unspecific- reduces context and meaning.
- Departmental language not understood by others.
- In the process of reframing children's and families experiences into departmental language the child and families' subjective experiences can be lost.

(Bromfield, Gillingham and Higgins 2007)

Neglect Tool Kit

<http://Irsb.org.uk/>

Summary

- Neglected children have the poorest outcomes in terms of health and development.
- Neglect is present in a high number of children on child protection plans.
- Importance of how the impact of neglect affects learning
- A parent's capacity has a significant impact in terms of children being neglected.
- It is vital to understand a child's family and environment, as this makes the neglect more complex.
- It is important to understand the impact of neglect to the child and how this can have ongoing impact in adulthood.

Any Questions?



A word cloud of various farewell phrases. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with 'goodbye' and 'thankyou' being the largest. Other prominent words include 'regards', 'sayonara', 'farewell', 'cheerio', 'ciao', 'adieu', 'cheers', 'seeya', 'toodle-oo', 'Auf-wiedersehen', 'Arrivederci', 'so long', 'culmination', 'adios', 'godspeed', 'envoi', 'conclusion', 'leave-taking', and 'Au-revoir'.

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