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<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b>Professional and Agency Roles and Responsibilities in Child Protection – ‘It’s Everyone’s Job’</b>
<b><u>Brief Course Description</u></b>	This is a small group exercise involving allocation of responsibilities to agencies involved in protecting children. It should be completed with a large group plenary for discussion and ‘unpacking’ the issues which arise. It is best used in multi-agency training programmes.
<b><u>Keywords</u></b>	Roles, responsibilities, It’s Everyone’s Job to Make Sure I’m Alright, inter-agency
<b><u>Required trainer skills</u></b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Beginner, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intermediate, <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced (preferably joint led by trainers from multiple agencies)
<b><u>Level of CP knowledge/experience required from trainer</u></b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Beginner, <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advanced
<b><u>Level of training</u></b>	
<b><i>Targets</i></b> <b><u>Awareness raising</u></b> <b><u>Foundation</u></b>	S1-1 Understanding that it's everyone's responsibility to protect children S2-3 Understand your role and that of other professionals/agencies and the relationship between them and how they fit together to protect children
<b><i>Contributes to</i></b> <b><u>Awareness raising</u></b>	S1-9 Be aware of some specific vulnerabilities and categories of abuse and neglect S 1 -10 Know your role, responsibilities and statutory powers. Know where to go to know what you can and cannot do, including sharing information
<b>What participants need to know already</b>	Participants should have attended single agency training and/or know their professional/agency role in child protection.

<b><u>Overview &amp; Objectives</u></b>	<p>This exercise will give participants the opportunity to look at the roles and responsibilities of departments of the local authority and other agencies and professionals, noting and discussing similarities, differences and issues that arise out of the drawing of boundaries and the variation in use of common terms and concepts.</p> <p>The exercise will challenge participants to examine their own roles and responsibilities and those of other agencies and departments of the local authority. To some extent the allocation of responsibilities is deliberately provocative and adheres to some stereotypes. This is in order to generate discussion of similarities, differences and issues that arise out of the drawing of boundaries and the variation in use of common terms and concepts. It is a relatively quick exercise designed to stimulate debate and to get participants thinking about a range of issues to do with definition of roles and working with other agencies.</p>
<b>Learning objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of similarities and differences in roles and responsibilities of different agencies in the protection of children</li> <li>• Clarify boundaries around the investigative role</li> <li>• Place the investigative role in the wider context of meeting children's needs</li> <li>• Highlight single agency contributions</li> <li>• Explore issues of inter-professional interaction and communication</li> </ul>
<b>Learning outcome</b>	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of the differences and similarities in the roles and responsibilities of various agencies and the relationships between them in the child protection system</li> <li>• Know about the boundaries around the investigative role</li> <li>• Understand single agency contributions in the wider context of meeting children's needs</li> <li>• Be aware of the challenges of inter-agency partnership and communication</li> </ul>
<b>How does the selected approach fit with the learning outcome?</b>	<p>Provides participants with the opportunity to learn about and debate the allocation of responsibilities to various roles/agencies. Understanding of how roles work together will be given more depth by discussion of the issues raised, and</p>

exploration of the language used. This will require more intervention/facilitation on the part of the trainer, who will need to tease out the underlying assumptions and help the participants to probe the meanings of commonly applied terms. The trainer will need to be able to spot assumptions that are built into intra-agency thinking and encourage further exploration.

## **Before the training day**

### **Audience**

This exercise is designed for interagency training purposes. It is designed to stimulate participants to think about how their own role is defined and about whether their understanding of the roles of others is accurate. Small groups which include members from a variety of agencies are most effective.

### **Length of activity**

- 45 mins

### **Group size**

- Minimum 10
- Maximum 25

### **Approximate timing (for group of 20)**

- 5 minutes introduction and distribution of materials
- 20 minutes exercise
- 20 minutes plenary and discussion

### **Materials**

- Laminated cards – one complete set per small group
- Flip chart and pens
- Blu-tack (plenty of)

### **Preparation**

Trainers should have good knowledge of the child protection system and the various agencies within it, particularly the local area information on interagency protocols for sharing information and working together. It may be useful to co-train with someone from another agency.

Prepare your materials:

Laminate the roles/tasks cards – you will need a complete set per small group (See Annex A)

Prepare the flip chart sheets for the small group exercise in advance – each group should receive a sheet with the name of an agency/professional group at the top. (If you want to guide the group you can also put the number of laminates that should end up attached to that sheet.) The agencies are:

- 1) *Police.*
- 2) *Health Professionals.*
- 3) *Education.*
- 4) *Reporter to the Children's Panel.*
- 5) *Procurator Fiscal.*
- 6) *Social Work.*

### 7) *Voluntary Organisations and the private sector*

You may need a flip chart and pens to take feedback or to note issues that come up in the plenary.

#### **Original context for training**

**Original context from which this learning activity is drawn**

West of Scotland Interagency Training

#### **On the training day**

The trainer introduces the exercise with reference to the legislative and policy context (see overview below, Annex B).

##### **The activity**

Split the larger group into smaller groups of around 6. Each group is given an envelope containing a set of laminated cards and the prepared flip charts, along with plenty of blu-tack.

The task of the small groups is to allocate the responsibilities by attaching the laminates to the appropriate piece of flip chart paper with blu-tack. They should be instructed to make a decision about each laminate even if they feel it could be allocated to more than one sheet. The groups have 20 minutes for this task.

At the end of the allocated time ask the groups to stack their flipcharts in order (as given above). Two representatives from each group should be identified to manage the 'marking' process.

The trainer gives the 'answers' for each sheet in turn. As she does so, the two representatives from each group find the correct laminate and put it back in the envelope. This is when confusions or differences will be picked up and debates will be brought to the surface. In particular the trainer should be seeking to stimulate debate about the decisions that have been made about allocating tasks/responsibilities. (See Annex C for some issues that are likely to come up).

<b>Conclusion</b>	At the end of the exercise the group should be encouraged to think further about their own role in the processes of child protection and about their communication with other agencies.
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**Reflecting on what has been learned**

Following the exercise, or as part of an evaluation, the participants should be encouraged to complete a personal learning log in which they are asked to reflect on their learning and its implications for their practice. They should be encouraged to share this with their line managers. Line managers should be supported to assess any change in the participant and identify ways in which the learning can be used and enhanced.

**The next training step**

This exercise is part of an overall programme of interagency training. It can be a relatively light-hearted exercise and is not intended to be agonised over. It can be used as a vehicle to go on to examine parts of the process in more detail.

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## **ANNEX A**

All children have the right to protection and all adults have responsibilities to ensure that children receive such protection.

The Children (Scotland) Act (1995) states that the welfare of children is the responsibility of the whole local authority. In practice the responsibility for making enquiries into allegations of child abuse remains with the Social Work function on behalf of the local authority.

Each agency has specific duties and/or powers in relation to children and they are required to work together for the welfare of children. This is made explicit in Section 21 of the Children (Scotland) Act (1995) and by The Scottish Office Guidance 'Protecting Children, A Shared Responsibility'.

It's Everyone's Job to Make Sure I'm Alright (2003) and the reform programme that has followed have concentrated minds on the issues of single and inter- role and agency responsibilities.

The Getting it Right for Every Child Implementation Plan (2006) further underpins a widespread children's services reform in which particular emphasis is placed on 'joined up working' and on inter-agency co-operation.

## **Prevention**

### **Protection of the victim and other potential victims**

### **Detection of the offender**

**Notify Reporter of the commission of offence(s) where child involved**

**Report to Procurator Fiscal if criminal offence has been committed**

**Assist in education and awareness programmes**

**Investigate allegations of crime**

**Gather evidence**

**Attend case discussions and/or child protection conferences**

**Carry out investigative interviews**

**Make joint enquiries with Social Work Services**

**Arrange medical examinations as necessary**

**Interview suspects**

**Attend court**



## **Emergency powers under 61(5) of the Children Scotland Act 1995**

**Identification of abuse**

**Assessment of vulnerable children**

**Attendance at case discussion/child protection conferences**

**Referring concerns about a child to Social Work/Police/Reporter**

**Delivery of personal safety programmes in schools**

**Monitoring children on the Child Protection Register**

**Assist in compiling/delivering child protection plan**

**Assist in inter-agency assessment of child's needs and identify possible supports**

**Duty to make further enquiries before deciding what action is appropriate**

**May decide that no further action is required**

**May refer the child to the Social Work Department on an informal basis for advice, guidance and assistance to the child and his/her family**

**Arrange a Children's Panel (if he/she believes that compulsory measures of supervision are necessary in respect of the child)**

**The local representative of the Lord Advocate**

**Must be satisfied that a crime has been committed**

**Considers whether the evidence is sufficient, admissible and reliable**

**Considers whether or not to prosecute**

**May use a wide range of alternatives to prosecution e.g. fixed financial penalties, warning letters etc.**

**Consider whether necessary to cite child to give evidence in court**

**May apply to the courts for child to give evidence using screens, CCTV etc.**

**Can provide wide range of services/programmes aimed at preventing/reducing risk of child abuse or helping families recover from abuse**

**Can offer advice and consultation to statutory agencies working with children who have special needs/communication difficulties**

**Responsible for the physical and psychological wellbeing of their patients**

**Contribute to inter-agency plans to protect a child**

**Provide support and assistance**

**Responsibility for ensuring that the health needs of a child are being met**

**May take referrals from Social Work/Police/Education/Legal Departments regarding assessments and management of a child's health**

**Take referrals**

**Check records**

**Make enquiries**

**Co-ordinate an inter-agency assessment on the needs of the child**

**Make joint enquiries with the police**

**Convene case discussions and/or child protection conferences**

**Refer children to the Principal Reporter**

**Apply to the court for statutory orders**

**Supervise children on behalf of the Children's Panel**

**Co-ordinate ongoing inter-agency intervention**

**Identification and assessment of risk**

## **Monitoring and support of children at risk**

## **Provision of support services to children and families who have experienced abuse**

### **ANNEX B**

#### **Answers to Roles and Responsibilities Exercise**

##### **Police**

- 1) Prevention.
- 2) Protection of the victim and other potential victims.
- 3) Detection of the offender.
- 4) Notify Reporter of the commission of offence(s) where child involved.
- 5) Report to Procurator Fiscal if criminal offence has been committed.
- 6) Assist in education and awareness programmes.
- 7) Investigate allegations of crime.
- 8) Gather evidence.
- 9) Attend case discussions and/or child protection conferences.
- 10) Carry out investigative interviews.
- 11) Make joint enquiries with Social Work Services.
- 12) Arrange medical examinations as necessary.
- 13) Interview suspects.
- 14) Attend court.
- 15) Emergency powers under 61(5) of the Children Scotland Act 1995.

##### **Education**



- 1) Identification of abuse.
- 2) Assessment of vulnerable children.
- 3) Attendance at case discussion/child protection conferences.
- 4) Referring concerns about a child to Social Work/Police/Reporter.
- 5) Delivery of personal safety programmes in schools.
- 6) Monitoring children on the Child Protection Register.
- 7) Assist in compiling/delivering child protection plan.
- 8) Assist in inter-agency assessment of child's needs and identify possible supports.

### Reporter

- 1) Duty to make further enquiries before deciding what action is appropriate.
- 2) May decide that no further action is required.
- 3) May refer the child to the Social Work Department on an informal basis for advice, guidance and assistance to the child and his/her family.
- 4) Arrange a Children's Panel (if he/she believes that compulsory measures of supervision are necessary in respect of the child).

### The Procurator Fiscal

- 1) The local representative of the Lord Advocate.
- 2) Must be satisfied that a crime has been committed.
- 3) Considers whether the evidence is sufficient, admissible and reliable.
- 4) Considers whether or not to prosecute.
- 5) May use a wide range of alternatives to prosecution e.g. fixed financial penalties, warning letters etc.
- 6) Consider whether necessary to cite child to give evidence in court.
- 7) May apply to the courts for child to give evidence using screens, CCTV etc.

### Voluntary Organisations and Private Sector

- 1) Can provide services/programmes aimed at preventing/reducing risk of child abuse or helping families recover from abuse.
- 2) Can offer specialist advice and consultation to agencies working with children who have special needs/communication difficulties.

### Health Professionals

- 1) Responsible for the physical and psychological wellbeing of their patients.
- 2) Contribute to inter-agency plans to protect a child.
- 3) Provide support and assistance.
- 4) Responsibility for ensuring that the health needs of a child are being met.
- 5) May take referrals from Social Work/Police/Education/Legal Departments regarding assessments and management of a child's health.

### Social Work

- 1) Take referrals.
- 2) Check records.

- 3) Make enquiries.
- 4) Co-ordinate an inter-agency assessment on the needs of the child.
- 5) Make joint enquiries with the police.
- 6) Convene case discussions and/or child protection conferences.
- 7) Refer children to the Principal Reporter.
- 8) Apply to the court for statutory orders.
- 9) Supervise children on behalf of the Children's Panel.
- 10) Co-ordinate ongoing inter-agency intervention.
- 11) Identification and assessment of risk.
- 12) Monitoring and support of children at risk.
- 13) Provision of support services to children and families who have experienced abuse.

## **ANNEX C**

### Tutor's Notes for Plenary

- This is a deliberately provocative exercise. While the allocation is technically correct, here are a number of statements which could apply to any, or all agencies eg assess risk. What matters is to explore how decisions were made about final allocation was made. It should provoke thought about what is said by individual agencies in their procedures and help participants to explore the boundaries that have been drawn around their role, sometimes apparently and inappropriately so as to prohibit involvement/assumption of responsibility. Some agencies' activities (e.g. voluntary agencies and the private sector) are deliberately under-represented and this should stimulate debate about the nature of the sectors.
- General statements such as support, monitor etc are not particularly helpful in inter-agency working but unfortunately are often prevalent in child protection procedures and guidance. To ensure good collaborative practice, workers need to 'get behind' these statements and identify what exactly, for example, "monitor" or "support" means to a Health Visitor and to the social worker. Given the different remits of each agency these generic terms will ultimately mean very different things in relation to actual service provision and intervention.
- Child protection is not simply about formal investigations, but ultimately protecting children.

- Protecting children requires a co-ordinated approach. Good practice in child protection is based on effective collaboration among all the agencies who work with children and upon a whole process, not just investigation.
- While the detection and identification of abuse is clearly crucial, the follow up response is equally important and requires the continued support from all the agencies with a role to play.

The facilitator should make use of the discussion to stress the importance of shared responsibility, collaboration and co-ordination. It is important that the distinction between the Child Protection System and the wider processes of protecting children is highlighted.

There is also an opportunity for the group to consider recovery.