

Section 5 – Review & Implementation

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5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 When a child is considered to be at continued risk of harm and therefore the subject of a Child Protection Plan the Initial Child Protection Conference should compile an outline Child Protection Plan and a Keyworker (the Lead Professional) from Safeguarding & Specialist Services be appointed to lead all aspects of the inter-agency Child Protection Plan. It is good practice for a Keyworker to be nominated in advance of a child protection conference and their attendance must be viewed as a priority.

5.1.2 In the event that a Keyworker cannot be identified the relevant Service Manager (Children in Need) must be informed of the arrangements and a plan drawn up to secure the appointment of an appropriate Keyworker as a matter of urgency.

5.2 Keyworker – Lead Professional

Responsibilities

5.2.1 The Keyworker, working with Core Group members, is responsible for:

- providing a central information point for contact for all professionals to inform an ongoing assessment of the child's safety and welfare.
- ensuring that Core Group meetings take place.
- ensuring that they see the child/ren every two weeks to ascertain their wishes and feelings and keep the child up to date with the progress of the Child Protection Plan and any developments or changes.
- making arrangements in consultation/negotiation with parents for children to be seen on their own every other visit. In exceptional circumstances the Keyworker may delegate this task with the knowledge and consent of their line manager.
- ensuring the outline Child Protection Plan is developed into a more detailed inter-agency plan by co-ordinating input from family and all relevant professionals, ensuring that the main focus is in the child's best interest.
- ensuring the Child Protection Plan is signed and endorsed by all parties and circulated to all relevant parties within five working days of the first Core Group meeting.
- responding to all notifications of a change of address by a visit to establish that home circumstances are capable of meeting the child's needs.
- convening and Chairing all Core Group meetings apart from first Core Group meeting which must be Chaired by the relevant Team Manager (Children in Need).
- co-ordinating the completion of the Core Assessment.
- co-ordinating an inter-agency chronology of significant events that is compiled by all agencies with the relevant information.
- ensuring that any changes regarding the child such as new school, GP, etc. are communicated to all Core Group members and involved inter-agency staff.
- ensuring that the Safeguarding & Specialist Services records are updated to reflect such changes.

5.3 The Core Group

Function

5.3.1 The purpose of the Core Group is to co-ordinate the development and implementation of the Child Protection Plan that aims to promote the safety of the child. The existence of the Core Group itself cannot guarantee the safety of the child and members of the Core Group must be aware of this. An effective Core Group can however ensure good co-operation and provide a framework in which professionals and family members can work in partnership to the agreed plan.

5.3.2 If a Child Protection Plan is required the Initial Child Protection Conference should identify a Core Group who will be responsible for the implementation of the Child Protection Plan.

5.3.3 The first Core Group meeting must take place within 10 working days of the Initial Child Protection Conference. Subsequent Core Group meetings must be held every 4-6 weeks.

5.3.4 The Core Group will report back to the Review Child Protection Conference on the work that has been undertaken in relation to the Child Protection Plan, progress of child/ren and the outcome of any assessment undertaken.

5.3.5 Each Core Group member including family members is responsible for implementing the task agreed according to their role. All professional members of the Core Group should be clear about their authority to commit their agency's resources and time to the agreed actions and tasks. Any difficulty in implementing agreed plans should be reported as a matter of urgency to the Team Manager. The Child Protection Plan will be reviewed at every Core Group meeting and any necessary alterations made as circumstances change.

Membership of the Core Group

5.3.6 Membership of the Core Group should be identified at the Initial Child Protection Conference and should consist of appropriate professionals, family members and carers.

5.3.7 When it has been agreed by the child protection conference or by Core Group members that a parent or carer should not be included as a Core Group member the reason for this should be recorded. It is acknowledged that there are circumstances where family members should not be brought together, e.g. domestic abuse or where an alleged perpetrator has been prohibited from contact because of bail conditions. The Keyworker should enable parents/carers to communicate their views by other means.

5.3.8 Membership of the Core Group may change as the circumstances of the family change. There needs to be some flexibility to allow for these changes, e.g. the appointment of a professional working with one or both carers, such as a Probation Officer or Community Psychiatric Nurse. Professional members of the Core Group are representatives of their agencies and their role for the meeting should reflect this.

Practical Consideration for Core Group Meetings

5.3.9 The venue of the Core Group meetings should be flexible and determined by the needs of the Child Protection Plan and/or a family. Consideration should be given to the individual needs of the members in deciding upon the venue and the meeting may take place at different locations during the period between conferences. Possible venues may include family home, school, health surgery, nursery, and Safeguarding & Specialist Services office.

5.3.10 The attendance of family members should be facilitated in terms of transport arrangements and childcare needs. Consideration should also be given to the individual needs of any members of the group. These may include:

- disabled access to the building;
- language interpretation and translation services;
- services to people with sensory loss.

The First Meeting of the Core Group

5.3.11 The first meeting of the Core Group (to be held within 10 working days of the Initial Child Protection Conference) should:

- confirm appropriate membership of the Core Group.
- explain to the child and family the roles and functions of the Core Group and how the family can obtain support from each of the Core Group members.
- draft a written working agreement for family members, the child where appropriate, and professionals.
- ensure all relevant information is available to Core Group members.
- progress the inter-agency chronology.
- begin to develop the detailed Child Protection Plan, outlining the aims and objectives and work required to do this.
- agree arrangements to complete the Core Assessment in order to complete the Child Protection Plan at the subsequent meeting.
- identify specific roles and responsibilities of each Core Group member in relation to developing Child Protection Plan and completion of the Core Assessment.
- determine who will see each family member and the purpose of this.
- agree a way in which the progress of the family will be measured.
- agree lines of communication.

- make arrangements for future meetings.
- in the case of an unborn child subject to a Child Protection Plan, it is crucial that the hospital discharge arrangements are clear, documented and understood by the agencies involved. (Please refer to **Safeguarding the Unborn Baby**¹ procedures in Section 6 of these procedures)

The Second Meeting & Subsequent Meetings of the Core Group

5.3.12 The second meeting and subsequent meetings of the Core Group (held every 4-6 weeks) should:

- share the completed or progressed Core Assessment, and any changes in the child's or family's circumstances.
- agree the desired outcomes for the child and family.
- complete the detailed Child Protection Plan as contained as developed by the outline Child Protection Plan agreeing the overall aim of the plan and timescales for providing services and carrying out tasks.
- review the specific objectives in order to achieve the overall aim.
- progress and evaluate the inter-agency chronology.
- review working practices and inter-agency arrangements, including membership of the Core Group to promote effective working together to achieve the desired outcomes.
- agree and sign a working agreement between family members, professionals and the child where appropriate.

"All members of the Core Group have equal ownership of and responsibility for the Child Protection Plan, and should co-operate to achieve its aims". Working Together to Safeguard Children²

¹ <http://durham-lscb.gov.uk/Procedures/Section-6.pdf>

² <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00060/>
Durham LSCB Child Protection Procedures
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5.4 Monitoring Meeting

5.4.1 A Monitoring Meeting must be held in respect of every child with a Child Protection Plan, it should be held one month after the Initial Child Protection Conference between the Independent Reviewing Officer who Chaired the conference and the nominated Keyworker. The remit of this meeting which must be recorded and a copy placed on the child's file should include:

- Accuracy of data entered on the Child Protection List in respect of each child;
- Review of action taken in respect of recommendations made at the Initial Child Protection Conference;
- Endorsement of the detailed Child Protection Plan.

5.5 The Child Protection Plan

Aims of the Plan

5.5.1 The aims of the plan are:

- to safeguard the child from further harm;
- to promote the child's health and development; *and*
- to support the family in promoting the welfare of the child (if this is in the child's best interests).

Content

5.5.2 An inter-agency Child Protection Plan must be formulated for every child made subject of a Child Protection Plan. The Child Protection Plan should be developed in two phases. An **Outline** Plan will be drawn up at the Initial Child Protection Conference by the Chair and developed into a **Detailed** Plan at the first Core Group meeting by Core Group members.

5.5.3 The Detailed Plan should:

- specify the reason for a Child Protection Plan and identify the risks of significant harm.
- describe the identified needs of the child, and what therapeutic services are required.
- include specific, achievable, child focussed objectives intended to safeguard the child and promote his/her welfare.
- include realistic strategies and specific actions to achieve the objectives.
- appoint a Keyworker (the Lead Professional), who should be a qualified, experienced social worker.
- identify the specific roles and responsibilities of each Core Group member.
- establish the frequency and purpose of contact with the child and family including the names and contact details – this should constitute as a timetable for the Core Assessment.
- clarify the arrangements for inter-agency communication.
- establish dates and frequency of Core Group meetings to include when and how progress will be monitored and reviewed.
- establish a system for managing disagreements in conflict.

- identify consequences and plans for protecting the child if the objectives are not met and ensure a contingency plan is in place if agreed actions are not completed and/or circumstances change, for example if a caregiver fails to achieve what has been agreed, a court application is not successful or the parent removes the child from a place of safety.
- be clear about which professional is responsible for checking that the required changes have taken place, and what action will be taken, by whom, and when they have not.

Clarity for the Family

5.5.4 The planning process should involve the family as fully as possible. There needs to be discussion about the communication process for significant others within the family who are not members of the Core Group. If the plan does not include the family's preferences for safeguarding the child the reason for this must be fully explained to them and recorded in the Child Protection Plan.

Agreeing the Plan with the Child

5.5.5 The Child Protection Plan should be explained to and agreed with the child in accordance with their age and understanding. An interpreter should be used if the child's level of English means that s/he is not able to participate fully in these decisions unless they are conducted in her/his preferred language. The child should be given a copy of the plan written at a level appropriate to his or her age and understanding, and in his/her preferred language.

Disagreement amongst Professionals over the Plan

5.5.6 If there is serious disagreement amongst the professionals about the Child Protection Plan which cannot be resolved within the Core Group, consultation should take place with the Keyworker's Team Manager and the person or people in the equivalent positions within the relevant agency to resolve the issue. If the issue remains unresolved further discussion should take place between senior managers in the relevant agencies and the matter must be resolved within 15 working days.

Making Changes to a Child Protection Plan

5.5.7 Only a child protection conference has the authority to make fundamental changes to a Child Protection Plan. Determining what is fundamental would be a matter for professional judgement in consultation with the person who Chaired the most recent child protection conference. This policy should not deter Safeguarding & Specialist Services from undertaking necessary intervention to protect the child where necessary in advance of a Review Child Protection Conference. The following procedures apply in cases of difficulty in implementing any part of a Child Protection Plan:

- The Keyworker must be informed immediately.
- When a member of staff of an agency other than Safeguarding & Specialist Services considers that a fundamental change to the Plan has occurred contact must be made as a matter of urgency with the Keyworker.
- If parents consistently and repeatedly refuse a lead agency access to a child, oversight of the child's needs may be carried out by other agencies within the Child Protection Plan **in the short term**. This is a temporary arrangement pending the convening of an urgent Review Child Protection Conference where amendments to the Child Protection Plan may be made.
- There should be urgent consultation with Corporate & Legal Services to discuss the implications of this development.
- If the parents refuse planned access by other professionals, the Keyworker must be informed immediately. The Keyworker will then determine whether there is a need for an urgent Core Group meeting or whether the plan is fundamentally undermined and there is a need for an urgent Review Child Protection Conference.

5.6 Intervention

5.6.1 A number of aspects should be considered in planning intervention in the context of the Child Protection Plan and Core Assessment.

5.6.2 Services must be provided to give the child and family the best chance of achieving the required changes. If a child cannot be cared for safely by his or her caregiver(s) he or she may have to be placed elsewhere whilst work is being undertaken with the child and family.

5.6.3 Irrespective of where the child is living, interventions should specifically address:

- the developmental needs of the child;
- the child's understanding of what has happened to him or her;
- the abusing caregiver/child relationship and parental capacity to respond to the child's needs;
- the relationship between the adult caregivers both as adults and parents;
- family relationships; *and*
- possible changes to the family's social and environmental circumstances.

5.6.4 Intervention may have a number of inter-related components:

- Action to make a child safe;
- Action to help promote a child's health and development i.e. welfare;
- Action to help a parent(s)/caregiver(s) in safeguarding a child and promoting his or her welfare;
- Therapy for an abused child;
- Support or therapy for a perpetrator of abuse.

5.6.5 In deciding intervention the following factors should be considered:

- The need to work with parents to develop secure parent-child attachments and development of necessary parenting skills to provide a safe, secure environment for the child/ren.
- Whether the child's developmental needs can be responded to within his or her family context, and timescales that are appropriate for the child, which may not be the same timescale for the parent/carer in developing their abilities to respond to the child's needs.

5.7 Review Child Protection Conference

5.7.1 The Review Child Protection Conference (see [Section 4.2³](#)) will consider the collective Core Group members' reports and detailed Child Protection Plan and will actively consider whether there is a continuing need for a Child Protection Plan at every conference. In addition it will consider identified unmet needs from the Core Assessment and evaluate the impact these may have on the need for a Child Protection Plan.

5.7.2 If the conference considers that the child continues to be at risk of significant harm the detailed Child Protection Plan should be amended as appropriate to take account of any changes to the family composition, Core Group membership, the identified risks of significant harm and associated needs. A child who no longer requires a Child Protection Plan may still require additional support and services and the lack of requirement of a Child Protection Plan should never lead to the automatic withdrawal of help. When a child subject to a Child Protection Plan still has identified unmet needs, a record of the needs with an action plan to address them should be drawn up and integrated within the care planning arrangements for Children in Need using the care planning documentation.

³ <http://durham-lscb.gov.uk/Procedures/Section-4.pdf>
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5.8 Criteria for Discontinuing the Child Protection Plan

5.8.1 The same decision-making procedure must be used to reach judgement for discontinuing the Child Protection Plan as used in the Initial Child Protection Conference.

5.8.2 The decision to discontinue a Child Protection Plan can only be made at a Review Child Protection Conference. This can be decided if:

- a Review Child Protection Conference judges that the child is no longer at risk of significant harm and no longer requires safeguarding by means of a Child Protection Plan;
- the child enters the Looked After system and is subject of a Care Plan (to be developed);
- the child has moved permanently to another Local Authority then the child's Child Protection Plan cannot be discontinued until after the receiving authority has convened a child protection conference;
- the child has reached 18 years of age, has died, or has permanently left the UK, when their Child Protection Plan can be discontinued.

5.8.3 It is permissible for the Chair to discontinue a Child Protection Plan, without the need to convene a child protection conference only when:

- one or other of the latter two criteria are satisfied; *and*
- he/she has consulted with all relevant agencies which were present at the conference which first concluded that a Child Protection Plan was required.

5.8.4 When a child's Child Protection Plan is discontinued, as a result of a conference conclusion, notification should be sent, as a minimum, to all agencies representatives who were invited to attend the Initial Child Protection Conference, which led to registration.

5.8.5 Discontinuing a Child Protection Plan must never lead to the automatic withdrawal of help. The Keyworker must discuss with parents and child/ren what services are wanted and needed, based on the reassessment of the child and family.

5.9 Lead Professional after Discontinuation of a Child Protection Plan

- 5.9.1 All children and young people who require integrated support from more than one practitioner should experience a seamless and effective service. This is delivered most effectively when one practitioner – a Lead Professional – takes a lead role to ensure that frontline services are co-ordinated, coherent and achieving intended outcomes.
- 5.9.2 *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*⁴ (2004) sets out an agenda for integrated front-line services through, amongst other things, the Lead Professional role. The statutory guidance on the Children Act 2004 (**s10**⁵: inter-agency co-operation and **s11**⁶: safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children) sets out clear expectations for the implementation of the role.
- 5.9.3 The point at which the Core Group are considering discontinuation of a Child Protection Plan requires all parties to consider what support is required beyond the Review Child Protection Conference if discontinuation is agreed. This will take place at the last Core Group meeting before the relevant Review Child Protection Conference. The Core Group will attend the Review Child Protection Conference with a plan that clearly identifies the Lead Professional and what support is required, and when it will be reviewed. Where needs are complex, it may be the case that the Lead Professional is the child's social worker.

⁴ http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/F9E3F941DC8D4580539EE4C743E9371D.pdf

⁵ <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/40031--c.htm#10>

⁶ <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/40031--c.htm#11>

5.10 Genograms, Ecomaps and Chronologies

- 5.10.1 Successive Serious Case Reviews have highlighted (a) the enormous amount of information held about families in agency records and (b) the extreme difficulties professionals have in capturing and reproducing the information. This task is compounded by families who move and working environments where there is a high turnover of staff.
- 5.10.2 The use of genograms/ecomaps and chronologies provide essential working tools for professionals and the products require the active involvement of children and their families who know best about what has happened in their life. In addition to their aid to professionals for information purposes these tools can provide a relatively non-threatening approach for work with families that can enable the development of a participative relationship.

Genogram

Introduction

- 5.10.3 A genogram or family tree is a graphic representation of a family that provides invaluable information about family history and structure. It provides the building blocks for work on an ecomap to gain an understanding of family support and links that reinforces the assessment of strengths and weaknesses as an aid in care planning.
- 5.10.4 A genogram provides a quick and easy way of reading family lives in a visual format. It provides signposts for further information seeking, highlights family relationships and can provide an insight into the life experiences of the child/ren.

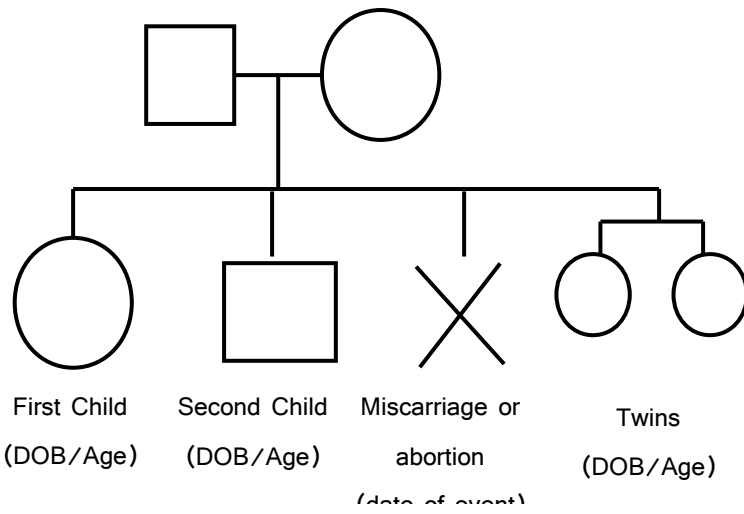
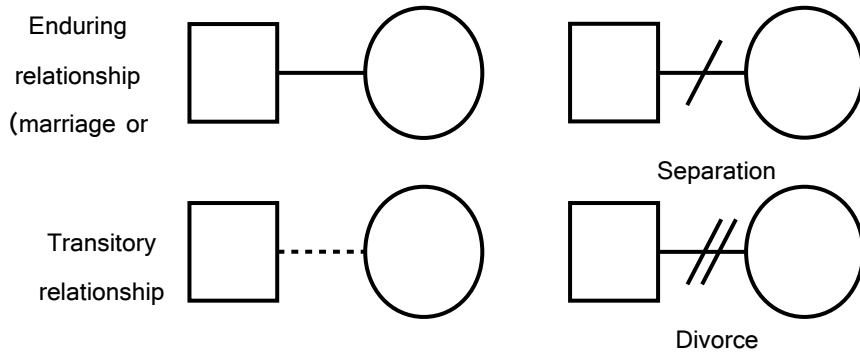
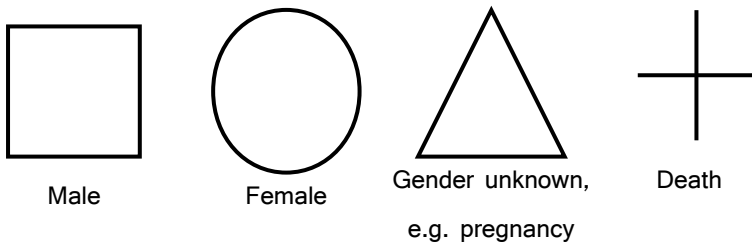
Format

- 5.10.5 The accepted format for compiling a genogram is shown below, a dotted line should be drawn around the people who currently live in the same household. Every genogram should be checked with the family for accuracy and dated – families change over time.

Compiling a Genogram

- 5.10.6 A genogram covering three or more generations can be compiled using these symbols. Additional information can be sought from other family members and professionals who may have more information on their records, e.g. transient relationships.
- 5.10.7 Basic information should be compiled during a s47 enquiry and the genogram prepared for the Initial Child Protection Conference. The genogram should be revisited before every Review Child Protection Conference to incorporate any changes and again they should be dated.

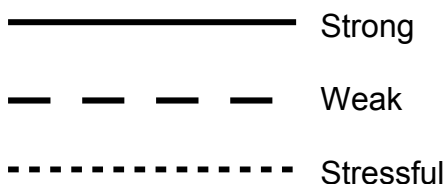
Genogram Symbols



Ecomap

Introduction

- 5.10.8 An ecomap demonstrates in a diagrammatic format a network of people around a child/young person and should include family, friends and professionals. The child is placed at the centre of the ecomap and every person and organisation that forms a part of the child's network should be named and placed within the circle.
- 5.10.9 It is vital that links are drawn between the child and people/organisations to highlight connections – use different types of lines to indicate the nature of the link or relationship.



- 5.10.10 An ecomap provides a quick and easy way of illustrating family support and links – it assembles already gathered information that can be related to assessment and care planning.

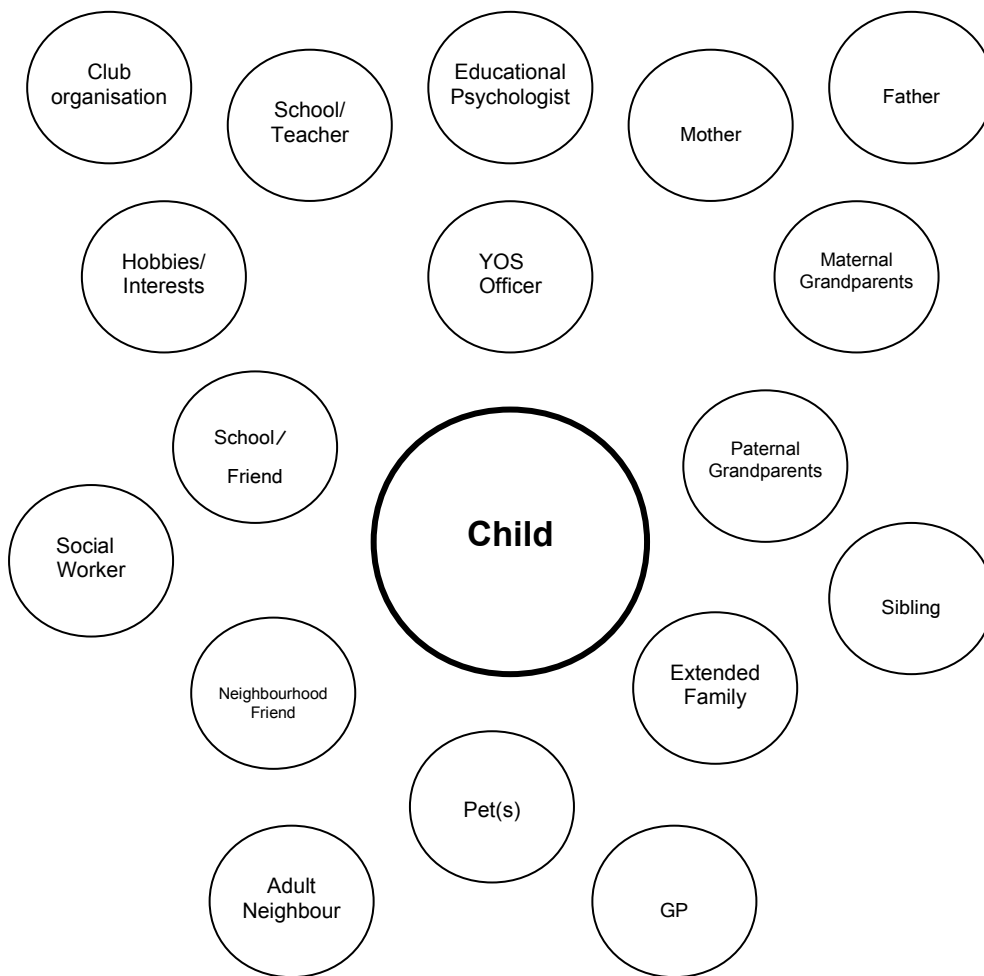
Format

- 5.10.11 The accepted format for compiling an ecomap is shown below. Every ecomap should be checked with the family for accuracy and should be dated – like family compositions relationships change over time.

Compiling an Ecomap

- 5.10.12 An ecomap should be prepared for every child in a family as part of a Core Assessment and should be shared as part of the assessment before every Review Child Protection Conference.

Ecomap Diagram



Chronologies

Introduction

5.10.13 Well-constructed chronologies can help to develop an accurate and complete assessment of a family and should ensure that intervention matches the needs of the child/ren. The following is an extract from a judgement by Lord Justice Bracewell that summarises the value of a chronology:

“The present case is an example of a pattern of abusive parenting ranging through the children in turn with history repeating itself over a 20 year period.

I pose the question; why in this case has there been such a waste of precious and scarce resources used over the years to no avail and without the recognition that there is a striking similarity in respect of the history of each child?

Every Social Work file should have as the top document a running chronology of significant events which is kept up to date as events unfold. It was only when Mrs G went through the jumbled mass of documentation that the pattern of abuse was so apparent as to demand immediate although belated action.

Social work personnel change over the years. Families may cross Local Authority boundaries, files become bulky. But if, as a matter of routine, the Local Authority maintain and regularly update an ongoing chronology highlighting key points in the continuation records, then it will be relatively straightforward to identify serious and deep rooted problems rather than the circumstances triggering the instant referral.”

5.10.14 In cases of child abuse and particularly in cases that are complex and/or chronic as in neglect, it is only by putting together all the factual information known about each child and his/her carers over time that is possible to perceive:

- health and developmental patterns in the child that may demonstrate neglect/poor parenting capacity;
- behavioural patterns in the parents/carers that may demonstrate abuse/poor parenting capacity/resistance to change.

Format

5.10.15 Significant events for a child should include the following, although extensive the list is not exhaustive:

- Significant changes – births/deaths/changes in household particularly new partners;
- Physical or mental health issues;
- Drug/alcohol abuse;
- Overdose/self-harm;
- Domestic abuse;
- Criminal proceedings;
- Accident & Emergency attendance;
- Persistent failure to keep appointments;

- Any child protection/cause for concern/children in need issues.

5.10.16 The value of a chronology lies in it being:

- **accessible:** giving at a glance factual information about the child, his/her family and professional involvement.
- **factual:** verifiable information about what has happened.
- **comprehensive:** all facts should be included, not just those that a professional considers important.
- **consistent:** all professionals should be able to offer information in the same format in order to enable it to be integrated into a composite chronology.
- **accurate:** facts should be checked and information sources clearly noted in the chronology.
- **inter-agency:** factual information from all relevant agencies should contribute to a composite chronology including input from Adult & Community Services.
- **child-focussed:** the chronology should include all events and factors that could impact on the child and should include data on the child's experience and the child's views.

Compiling a Chronology

5.10.17 The process for compiling a composite chronology will come into effect when a child/ren's names are placed on the Child Protection List. All agencies represented on the Core Group must accept responsibility for accessing significant events from their agency records and ensure that this information is recorded using the agreed format.

5.10.18 Family members must be made aware by the Keyworker of the nature and purpose of this method of recording.

5.10.19 Core Group members must ensure that their agency's chronology is compiled and passed to the Keyworker at least two weeks before the Review Child Protection Conference. The Keyworker must be able to access IT support to ensure a composite chronology is compiled before a Review Child Protection Conference.

Format for Composite Chronology

Date	Source	Event	Outcome	Child seen/views sought