

Resilience and Safeguarding

Strength based practice

Sarah Wilkins – Lecturer, School of
Education

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Evolving policy context

- Initiatives to promote the welfare and well being of children and to protect children from harm have been a central element in government policy for many years.
- The enquiry following the death of Victoria Climbié made it clear that there are number of long standing problems that repeat themselves in our practice....

We all probably know these...

problematic themes include:

- Poor co ordination between services
- A failure to share information
- The absence of anyone with a strong sense of accountability
- Front line workers trying to manage with staff vacancies, poor management and inadequate training

These are not new issues

... the green paper, Every Child Matters was introduced and some key ideas were highlighted:

- Supporting parents and carers
- Early intervention and effective protection
- Accountability and integration
- Workforce reform

(I view these themes as about strength based approaches..)

The five outcomes

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

These outcomes set child protection in a wider context of improving the wellbeing of all children. The outcomes have become a universal language across services this might change?

Post May 2011

- Every Child Matters..... *help children achieve more....*
- A shift in policy

Children and Young People Now
Neil Puffett 2010

The Children Act 2004

- Duty to promote co operation between services
- LSCB
- These and other areas designed to promote welfare and well being...
- CAF
- Framework for assessment – all focused on improving assessment, planning, intervention and review.

Post May 2011

- The coalition government continues to support the need for local partnerships as central to meeting the needs of children, but central government role should be reduced... a one size fits all approach doesn't work.... And co operation will be better achieved by freeing local authorities and areas to develop there own style and appraoch.
- Difficult to see how the duty to co operate will be met under this approach....

Munro review of child protection

- The Munro review adopted a systems approach to analyse why problems have arisen in child protection, (prompted by the death of Peter Connolly.)
- The current government have taken on many of the recommendations from the Munro review.
- It is a wide broad review of our work, but raises some interesting areas and could allow for interesting development.....

Munro cont...

- Statutory guidance will be reviewed to achieve a better balance between professional judgement and central prescription
- To make child protection services less procedurally driven.... (is this your experience?)
- More focus on supervision and professional support of social workers
- Formalise shared responsibility with NHS to focus on 'early help'
- Clarify the relationship between the LSCB and Health and Well being boards..... Possibly becoming similar to Children's Trust Boards

Munro cont.....

The focus is about...

- Raising professional standards
- Promote shared responsibility with health services and give more time to *direct* work with children and young people

Davies & Ward 2012 pg16

Could this allow for creativity?

- More time for direct work is one of the reasons I became a Social Worker.... (but we all know what the reality and pressures are.)
- Can we focus on the positive, strength based assessment/approach?

An ecological assessment

- The ecological assessment or intervention identifies parent/child /young person risks that can be reduced or protective factors that can be enhanced.
- The potential gains from risk taking?
- Factors that might decrease risks?
- A focus on a person's strengths rather than their deficits can lead to more positive outcome.

Bronfenbrenner 1979

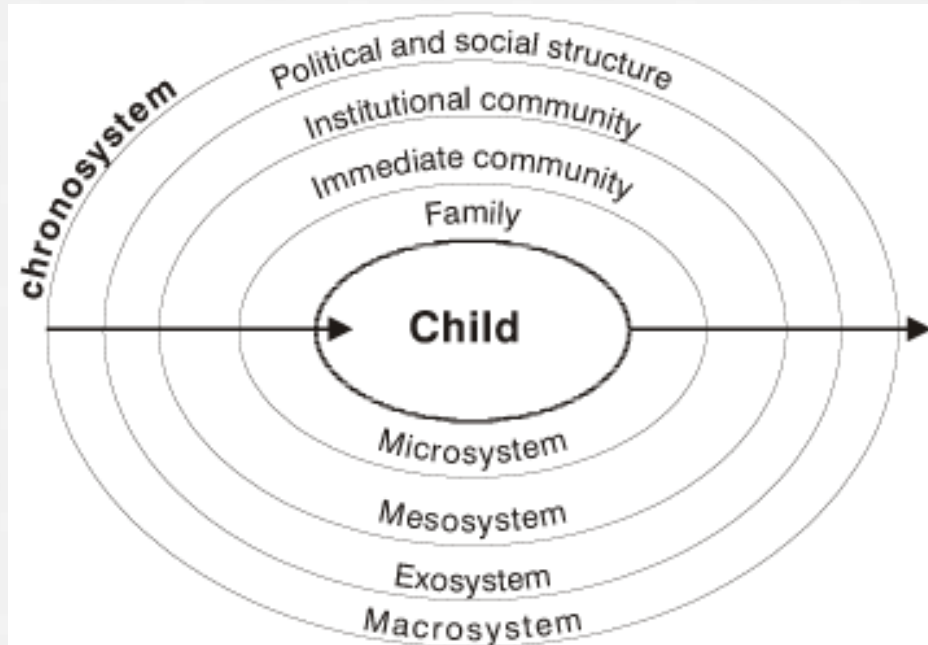
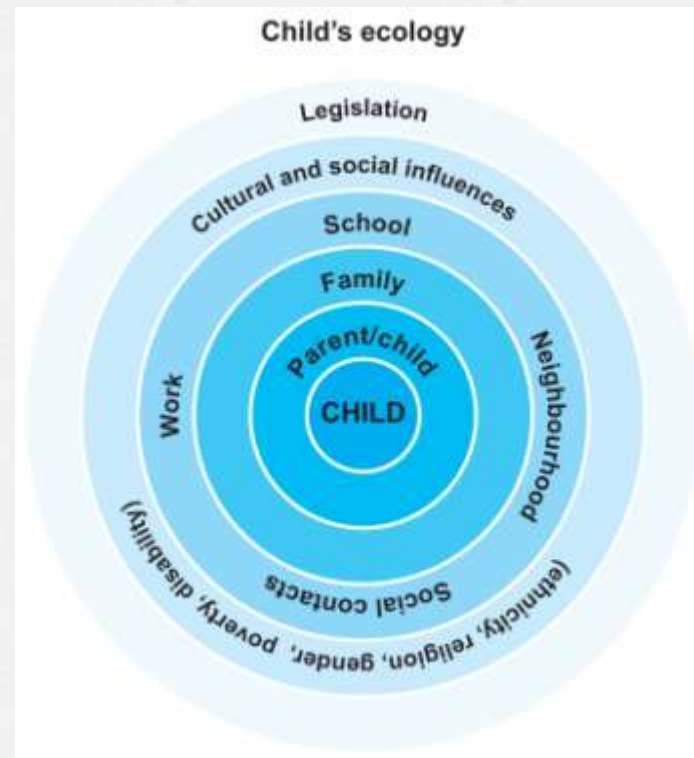


Figure 1 - Ecological theory of development¹⁵

Useful in assessment



Strengths/needs approach

- 'Problems' or risks are reframed as 'needs'.
- A strength might be – 'what someone likes to do' or 'what they have done/achieved in the past'...
- What people or resources are needed to meet that need....

Thoughts....

- Sounds simple on paper ... harder in reality?
- Link to Resilience Framework?
- Involves building a working relationship and approach that can tolerate risk?

Programmes that have been reviewed as effective

Some examples of programmes that have been reviewed as effective:

- Triple P positive parenting program – effective in addressing adults own experiences of poor parenting and consequences of abuse
- CBT – when combined with group based sessions
- Parent – Child Interaction Therapy
- Multidimensional Treatment Foster care, (providing foster carers and children with extensive specialist support + intervention.)
- Peer led social skills training.... and more.. see

Resilience Framework

RESILIENT THERAPY MAGIC BOX SUMMARY					
POTIONS:	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING	COPING	CORE SELF
REMEDIES	Good enough housing	Find somewhere for the child to belong	Make school life work as well as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
	Enough money to live	Help child understand his/her place in the world	Engage mentors for children	Being brave	Teach the child to understand other people's feelings
	Being safe	Tap into good influences	Map out career or life plan	Solving problems	Help the child to know her/himself
	Access and transport	Keep relationships going	Help the child to organise her/himself	Putting on rose-tinted glasses	Help the child take responsibility for her/himself
	Healthy diet	The more healthy relationships the better	Highlight achievements	Fostering their interests	Foster their talents
	Exercise and fresh air	Take what you can from any relationship where there is some hope	Develop life skills	Calming down and self-soothing	There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them
	Play and leisure opportunities	Get together people the child can count on			
		Responsibilities and obligations	Lean on others when necessary		
		Focus on good times and places			
		Make sense of where child has come from			
Predict a good experience of someone or something new					
Make friends and mix with other children					
ACCEPTING		NOBLE TRUTHS: CONSERVING		COMMITMENT	ENLISTING

Work with foster carers around the Resilience Framework

Discussing the framework with groups of foster carers has highlighted some interesting issues:

- It helps foster carers feel like they do know what they are doing – child focused, build on strengths..
- A theoretical framework to use everyday – to build confidence.
- It helps to focus on the positives... the strengths.
- It gives foster carers a language – it can be used in meetings.
- They can talk to children and young people about it... they can stick it on the fridge.

Foster carers need to be supported with developing their own resilience...

These are issues that carers themselves have highlighted to us during the group work:

- Foster carers need to feel safe .
- Foster carers need to have 'real' respectful working relationships to feel resilient and cope with uncertainty with and for children and young people. (keep relationships going.)
- Foster carers feel like they are living in a 'goldfish bowl' – need to make mistakes/ have feelings/everything is written down about us/can be very exposing.. (Children and Young People in care also report feeling like this.)
- Secondary trauma – foster carers experience this sometimes and this seems to be an area that professionals fail to acknowledge with foster carers when times are tough and help them reframe problems rather than blame/criticise the carer.

Foster carers describe their job...

- “Foster caring can be a game of snakes and ladders”
- “You have to be a chameleon with your resilience and constantly adapt to your environment and the people you are working with.”
- Sometimes foster carers described feeling conflicted and only invited to meetings when they were part of the network.

For info: the group continues

I work alongside Pam Nicholls, (Fostering Consultant/RISE with 6 foster carers.)

We undertook two workshops with staff and foster carers – 30 people in total.

The work continues...

References

- *'What works for troubled children?'*, Ann Buchanan & Charlotte Ritchie, Barnardos, 2004.
- *'Safeguarding Children, Across Services, Messages from Research,'* Carolyn Davies & Harriet Ward, JKP, 2012
- *'Mental Health and the Resilient Therapy Toolkit'*, Mind, 2011