



The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report – A child-centred system

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Objectives

- To share the key issues from the Munro Report and Government response
- To facilitate an inter-agency discussion of the issues/implications for the workforce
- To promote networking between staff from different agencies
- To create an opportunity for front-line practitioners to influence the work of the LSCB

The Munro Review of Child Protection:

Final Report

A child-centred system

Professor Eileen Munro



A word cloud on a teal background featuring various terms related to child protection. The most prominent word is 'Trustworthy'. Other significant words include 'Reliable', 'Supportive', 'Accessible', 'Relationships', 'Kind', 'Approachable', 'Helpful', 'Open', 'Protection', 'Dedicated', 'Listening', 'Involving', 'Honest', 'Empathetic', 'Respectful', 'Hearing', 'Rights', 'Enthusiastic', 'Consistent', and 'Experienced'.

A child-centred system

The Government's response
to the Munro review
of child protection

July 2011

Department for
Education

Content

- The Last of Three Reports
- 173 Pages
- Eight Chapters
- 6 Appendices
- 15 Recommendations

Guiding principles

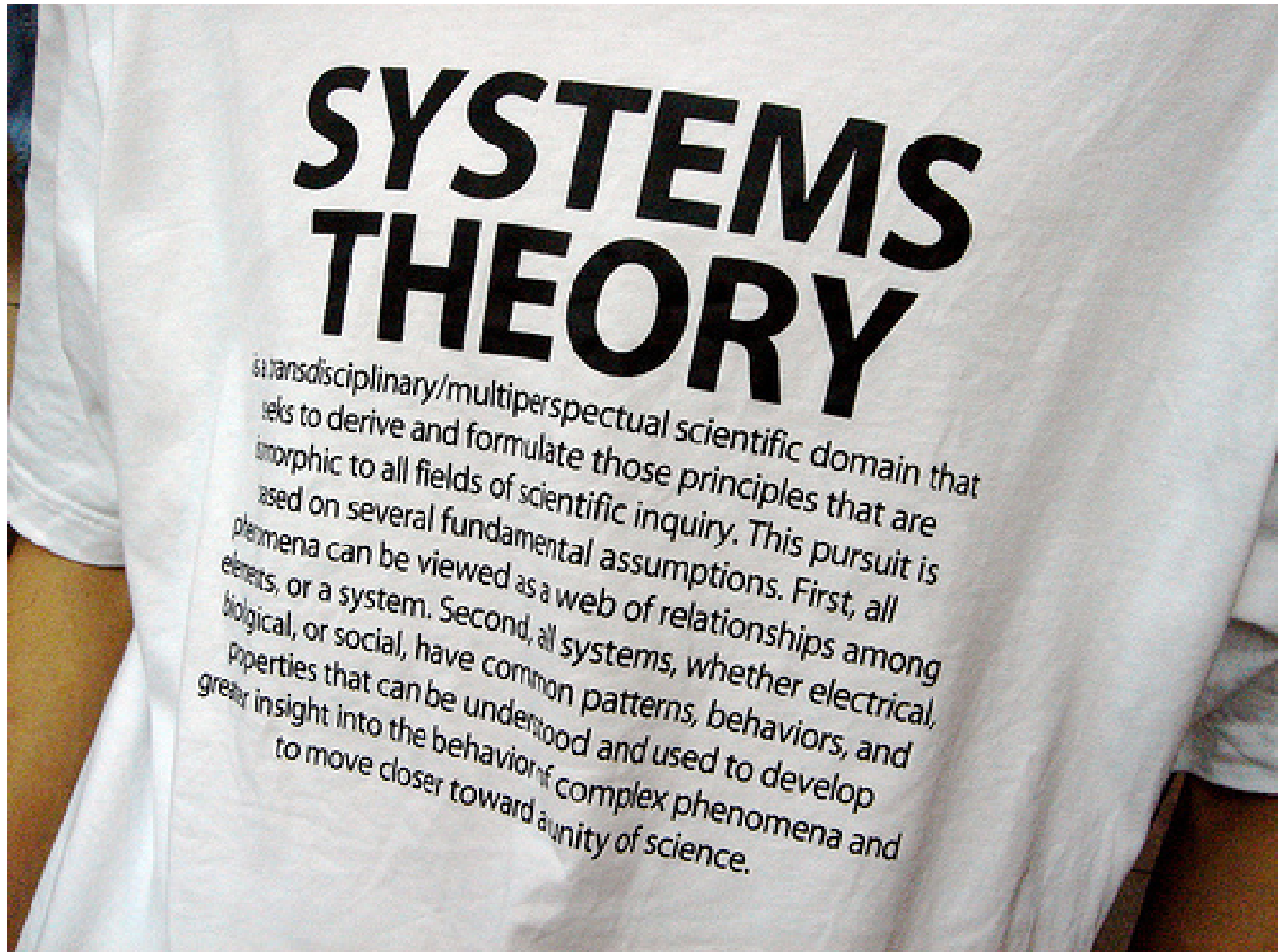
The Review

- What helps professionals make the best judgement they can to protect a vulnerable child?

The Governments reform of child protection

- Early intervention
- Trusting professionals and removing bureaucracy so they can spend more of their time on the front line
- Greater transparency and accountability

A system's approach



Strengths

- The child protection system in England has good multi- agency working to protect and help children
- There is growing research and knowledge about effective ways of helping families
- There is confidence to innovate in the system

The givens

- The child protection system is complex
- The Commission on the Rights of the Child – protect and prevent
- Abuse and neglect do not present in unambiguous ways
- Predictions about abusive behaviour are necessarily fallible
- The number of professionals involved makes co-ordination, communication and clarity of role an absolute ‘drive on left’ rule

Drivers of the system in recent years

Four key driving forces:

- the importance of the safety and welfare of children and young people and the understandable strong public reaction when a child is killed or seriously harmed;
- a belief held by many that uncertainty in child protection work can be eradicated;
- a tendency in inquiries to focus on professional error without examining the causes of errors (**what** happened rather than **why**); and
- the undue importance given to performance indicators and targets which provide only part of the picture of practice, and which have skewed attention towards process over the quality and effectiveness of help given.

Themes for reform

- A system that values professional expertise
- Sharing responsibility for the provision of early help
- Developing social work expertise
- Clarifying accountabilities and creating a learning system

System that values professional expertise

- Government should revise Working Together (2010) – it's too long – remove distinction between initial and core assessments and associated timescale
- Inspection framework examine effectiveness of all agencies
- Inspection Framework include the child's journey and the effectiveness of help provided to children/young people and families (and child's experiences of help to be used to shape provision of services)
- Shift to performance information to benchmark performance/facilitate improvement/promote accountability

Sharing responsibility for the provision of early help

- Government to work with Royal colleges to research impact of health re-organisation on effective partnership arrangements
- Statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide early help services
- Local Authorities and partners to carry out on going process to review and redesign the way in which child and family social work is delivered.

Developing Social Work Expertise

- Social Work Reform Board Professional Capabilities Framework incorporate capabilities necessary for child and family social work
- Employers and Higher Education Institutions to (better) prepare social workers for child protection work
- Local Authorities should designate a Principal Child and Family Social Worker
- A Chief Social Worker “in government”

Clarifying accountabilities and creating a learning system

- LSCB Annual Report to CEO and Leader of Local Authority (and others)
- LSCB's to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of help provided to children and families and effectiveness of multi-agency training to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- Protection of DCS and Lead Member – no additional roles unless exceptional circumstances arise
- LSCB to use 'systems methodology' to do SCR's and develop notational resources to enable this (in the meantime, Ofsted evaluation of SCR should end)

Valuing professional expertise

Rigid prescription that has resulted because of pursuit to eradicate uncertainty with more rules

Rules have compromised capacity for professional judgment

Skill deficit noticed in SCRs but more rules the response

Management practice focussed on process because inspection and performance targets dominate

Direct work reduced as compliance with process is driver

Assessments

- are child centred;
- are rooted in child development
- are ecological in their approach;
- ensure equality of opportunity;
- involve working with children and families;
- build on strengths as well as identify difficulties;
- are inter-agency in their approach to assessment and the provision of services
- are a continuing process, not a single event;
- are carried out in parallel with other action and providing services;
- are grounded in evidence based knowledge.

You are working with human beings

You can deliver a pizza but you cannot deliver a child welfare service. You need the 'customer' to be an active agent in the production of the required outcomes. Child welfare services simply fail if the intended recipients are unwilling or unable to engage in a constructive way; outcomes are co-produced by citizens.

Adapted from Chapman J. (2004) *System failure: why governments must learn to think differently*, London, Demos

Understanding how we reason

- We have two processes for reasoning – intuitive and analytic
- Emotions play an essential, valuable, but sometimes troublesome part
- Intuition and analysis are on a continuum; we use both to varying degrees in different tasks
- Intuition has persistent biases that need to be consciously checked for by our analytic capacity.

The task determines the type of reasoning needed

- The balance of intuitive and analytic reasoning needed depends on the task you are doing.
- Some need a mainly intuitive approach; some need a mainly analytic approach.
- Neither is 'best' in an absolute sense

De-biasing

- The common element in all strategies is to consider alternative perspectives:
 - Thinking why your view might be wrong
 - Being willing to hear information that conflicts with your view
 - Devil's advocate deliberately taking opposing view

Respectful uncertainty

- Intellectually accurate but
- Very uncomfortable
- Workers need prompting and support to question their assessment –hard to do on own, however senior.

Supervision

- Where you help the worker articulate the reasons for their intuitive judgments,
- Help them consider their emotional responses
- Check for biases in their reasoning

Developing wisdom

➤ Requires:

- Experience
- Reflection
- Feedback
- Formal training

➤ Career path

Workers create safety

“If you give people more bureaucratic freedom, they really do rather intelligent things”

Professor Eileen Munro, Community Care magazine, 7th July 2011.

What to aim for?

- A system that learns whether children are being helped and respects their need for help
- A system hearing and using feedback – children, young people , families and practitioners
- A system with professional freedom and strong accountable management and leadership
- A system that expects errors and so tries to catch them quickly
- A system that is dominated by direct work with families - the human element of the work

What can we expect?

- Revised Working Together guidance, July 2012 and interim amendments by December 2011
- Removed prescription of timescales, distinction between initial and core assessment, parameters for good assessment set out.
- Revised inspection framework
- Shift to performance information
- Early help offer and quality assurance of early help offer (further work re: additional statutory duty)

What can we expect?

- Principle child and family social worker, April 2012
- Chief Social Worker, late 2012
- LSCB Annual Report to LA CEO and Leader of the Council
- Local test of 'assurance' where DCS has additional duties
- Shift to systems model of SCRs/review of role of Ofsted in evaluating SCRs