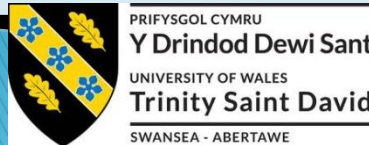


Vulnerable Children



Group work

- ▶ What factors would lead you to think a child is vulnerable?
- ▶ Create a mind map

Introduction

- ▶ In a 1999 publication, the National Resource Centre on Child Maltreatment (USA) said that child vulnerability refers to a child's capacity for self-protection.
- ▶ This definition helps to challenge the tendency (and naïve mistake) leading to associating vulnerability primarily with age, but it leaves us with the need for more detail if we are to understand and assess self-protection. (<http://nrccps.org>)

Forms of Vulnerability

- ▶ ***Age*** – Children from birth to six years old are always vulnerable.
- ▶ ***Physical Disability*** – Regardless of age, children who are physically impaired and therefore unable to remove themselves from danger are vulnerable. Those who, because of their physical limitations, are highly dependent on others to meet their basic needs are vulnerable.

Forms of Vulnerability

- ▶ ***Mental Disability*** – Regardless of age, children who are cognitively limited are vulnerable because of a number of possible limitations: recognizing danger, knowing who can be trusted, meeting their basic needs and seeking protection.
- ▶ ***Provocative*** – A child's emotional, mental health, behavioural problems can be such that they irritate and provoke others to act out toward them or to avoid them totally.
- ▶ ***Powerless*** – Regardless of age, intellect and physical capacity, children who are highly dependent and susceptible to others are vulnerable.

Forms of Vulnerability

- ▶ **Powerless children** typically are so influenced by emotional and psychological attachment that they are subject to the whims of those who have power over them.
- ▶ Within this dynamic, you might notice children being subject to intimidation, fear and emotional manipulation.
- ▶ Finally, remember that powerlessness could also be observed in vulnerable children who are exposed to threatening circumstances, which they are unable to manage.

Forms of Vulnerability

- ▶ ***Defenseless*** – Regardless of age, a child who is unable to defend him/herself against aggression is vulnerable. This can include those children who are oblivious to danger. Children who are frail or lack mobility are more defenseless and therefore vulnerable.
- ▶ ***Non-Assertive*** – Regardless of age, a child who is so passive or withdrawn not to be able to make his or her basic needs known is vulnerable. A child who cannot or will not seek help and protection from others is vulnerable.
- ▶ ***Illness*** – Regardless of age, some children have continuing or acute medical problems and needs that make them vulnerable

Forms of Vulnerability

- ▶ ***Invisible*** – Take some time to think about that.

Children that no one sees (who are hidden) are vulnerable.

Why would caregivers keep a child isolated from others?

A child who is not visible to be noticed and observed should be considered vulnerable regardless of age.

Vulnerable children and families

There is no one way of measuring vulnerability, but the following are suggested;

- ▶ **Worklessness** – no parent in the family is in work.
- ▶ **Housing** – the family lives in poor quality and/or overcrowded housing.
- ▶ **Qualifications** – no parent in the family has any academic or vocational qualifications.

Vulnerable children and families

- ▶ **Mental health** – the mother has mental health problems;
- ▶ **Illness/disability** – at least one parent has a limiting long-standing illness, disability or infirmity;
- ▶ **Low income** – the family has low income (below 60% of the median);
- ▶ **Material deprivation** – the family cannot afford a number of food and clothing items.

Further Reading

- ▶ Child abuse and neglect in the UK today research report by NSPCC.
- ▶ <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/child-abuse-neglect-uk-today-research-report.pdf>

Impact of Early Adversity on Children's Development

- ▶ Early experiences influence the developing brain
- ▶ Chronic stress can be toxic to developing brains.
- ▶ Significant early adversity can lead to lifelong problems.
- ▶ Early Intervention can prevent the consequences of early adversity.
- ▶ Stable caring relationships essential for healthy development.

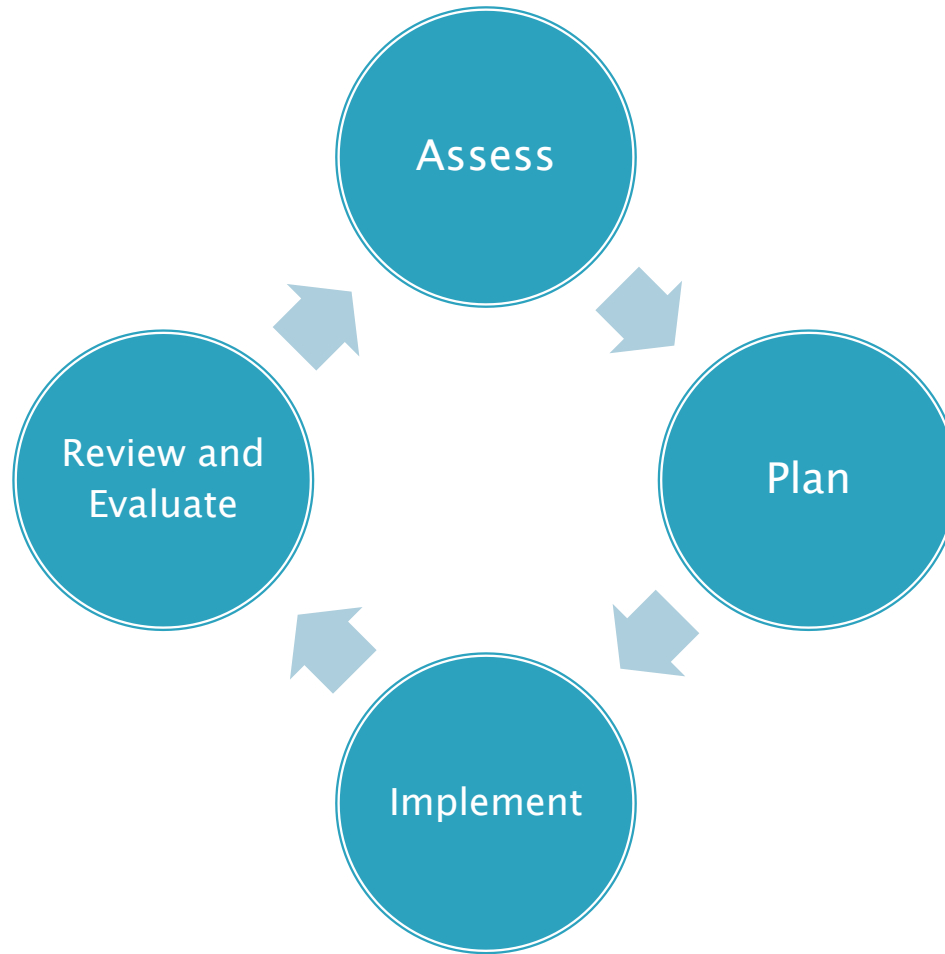
(www.developingchild.harvard.edu)

Housing, Income Inequality and Child Mortality

“In the European context housing, neighbourhood and household economic strains worsened with increased levels of income inequality. Child injury mortality rates are strongly and positively associated with both income inequality and housing strain, suggesting that housing material conditions could play a role in the association between income inequality and child health.”

(Sengoelge, Hasselberg, Ormandy and Laflamme 2013)

Assessing the Needs of Families

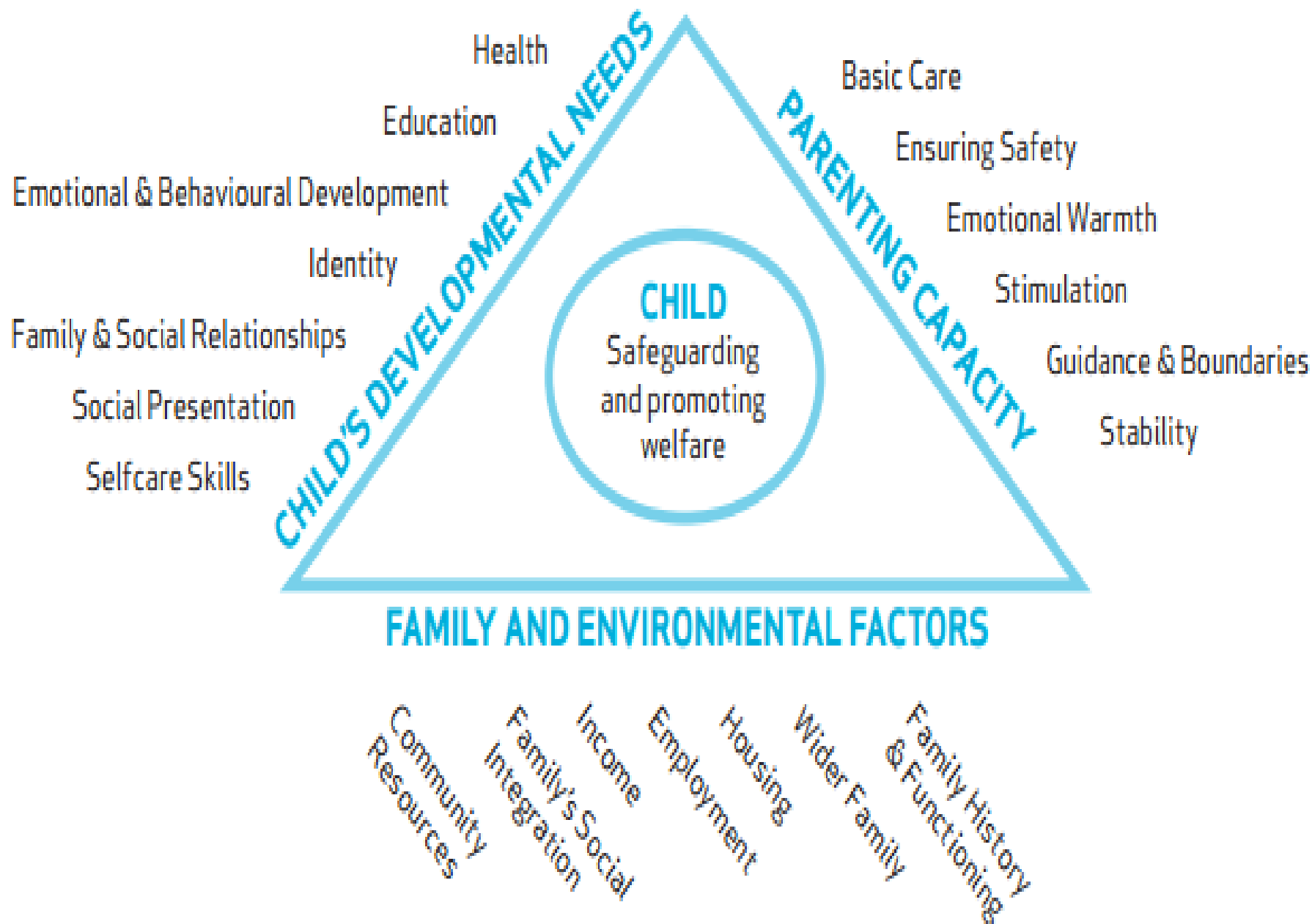


Common Assessment Framework

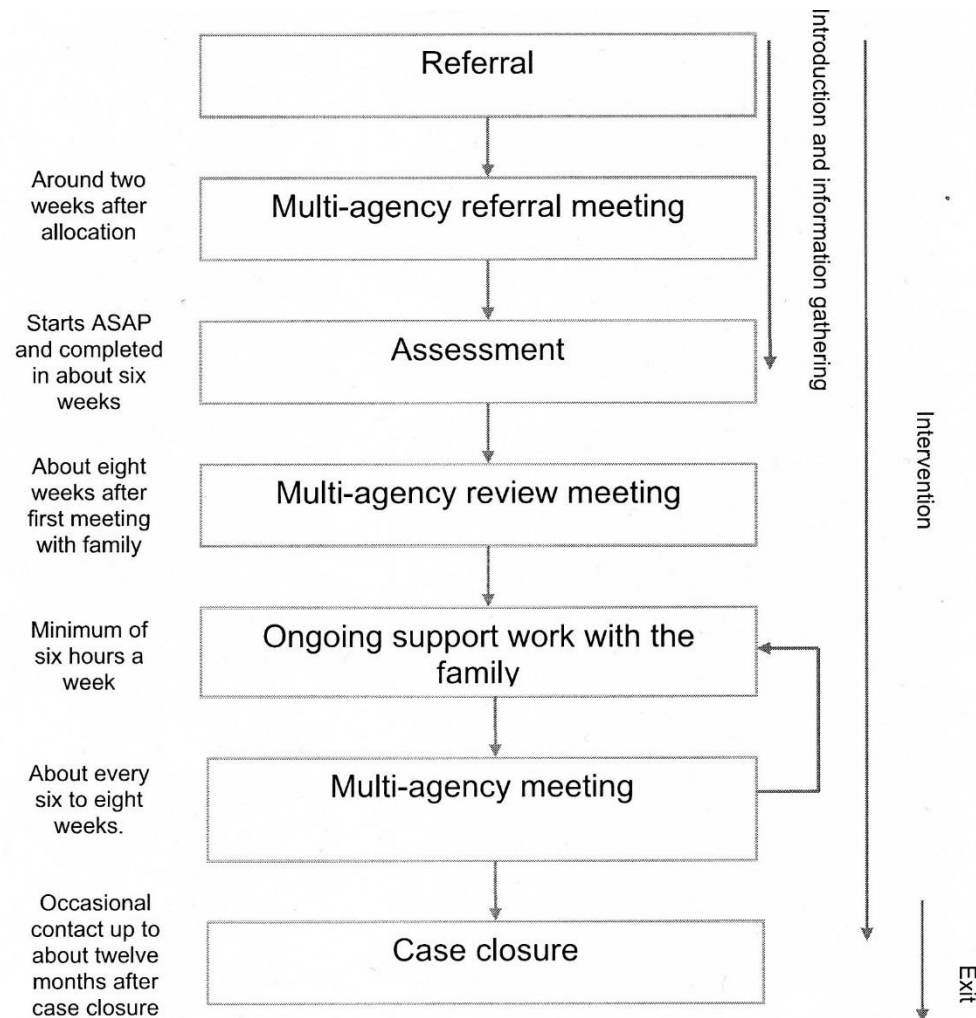
- ▶ ‘Every Child Matters’ Green Paper (2003) proposed the introduction of a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as a central element of the strategy for helping children, young people and their families.
- ▶ The framework supports the gathering of data and information about children and families, and then they are used to analyse, make judgements, plan, intervene and review:
 - ▶ Child’s Development
 - ▶ Parenting Capacity
 - ▶ Family and Environment

Common Assessment Framework

- ▶ CAF helps to identify in the early stages the child's additional needs and promote coordinated service provision to meet them.
- ▶ Plays a key part in delivering front line services that are integrated and focused around the needs of children and young people.
- ▶ Aims is to support early intervention and improve joint working and communication between practitioners.
- ▶ Described as a common language for assessment purposes, which gives a consistent view for delivering the most appropriate response.

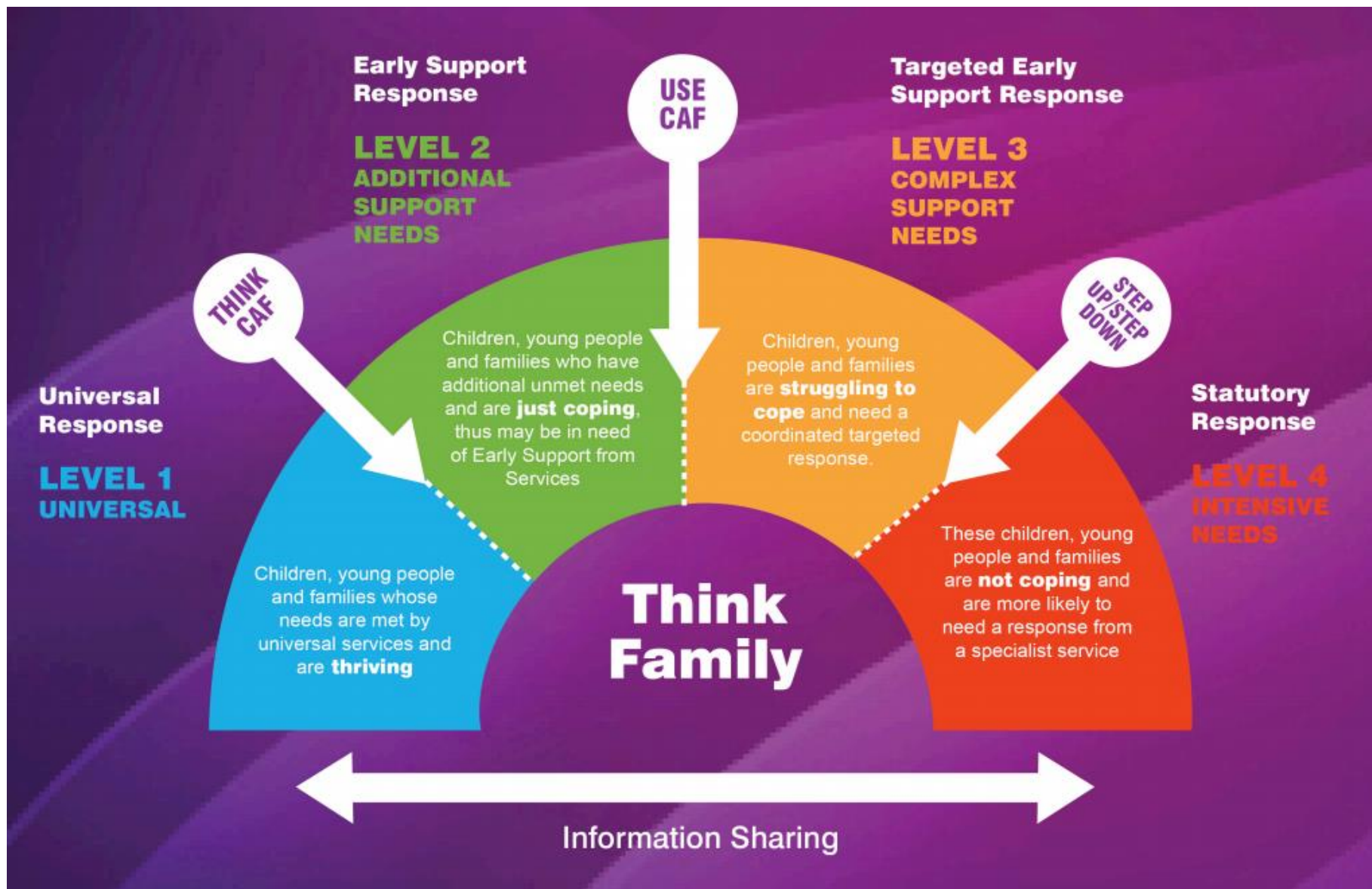


Seven Stages of the Family Intervention Approach



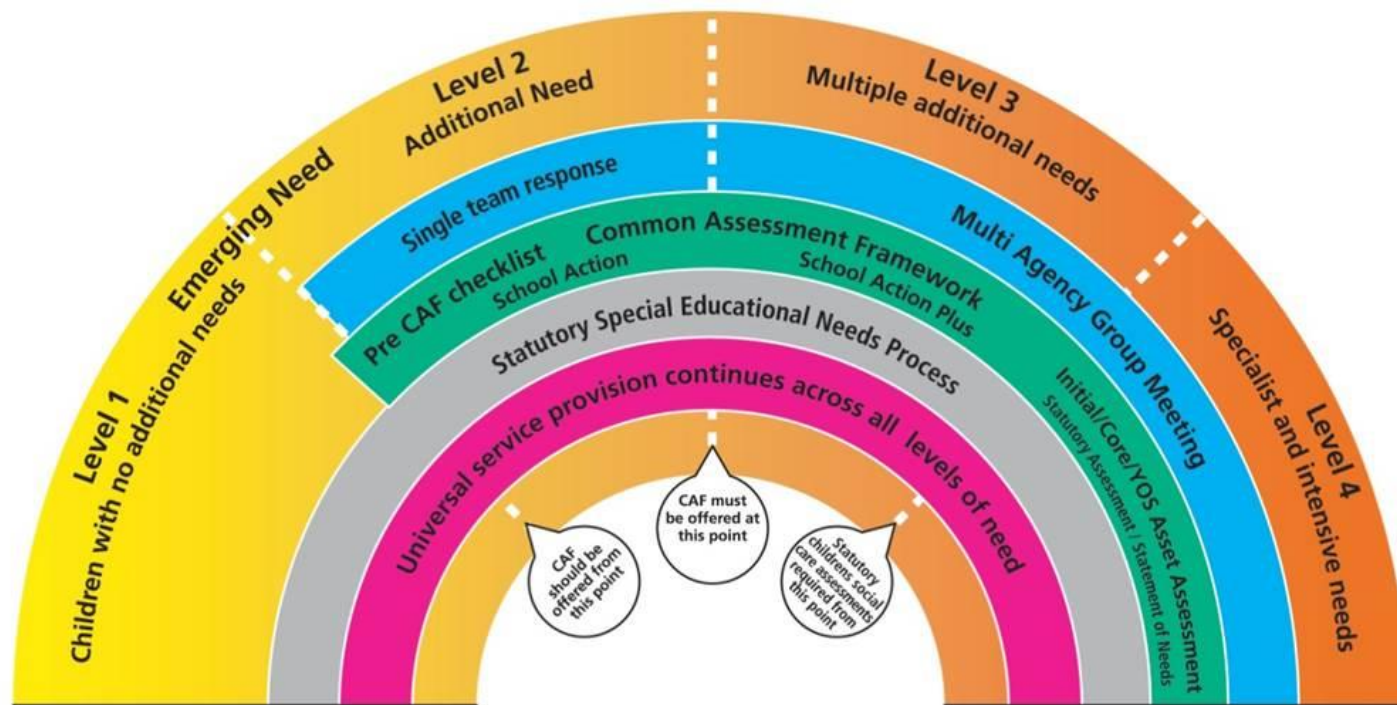
Levels of Intervention

- ▶ Level 1 – **Universal** Response
- ▶ Level 2 – **Early Support** Response
- ▶ Level 3 – **Targeted** Early Support Response
- ▶ Level 4 – **Statutory** Response



<http://lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/?siteid=5943&pageid=43535&e=e>

The Herefordshire Levels of Need Pathway



Ensuring children and young people are safeguarded by:

Understanding needs

Co-ordinating responses

Placing Common Assessment at the heart

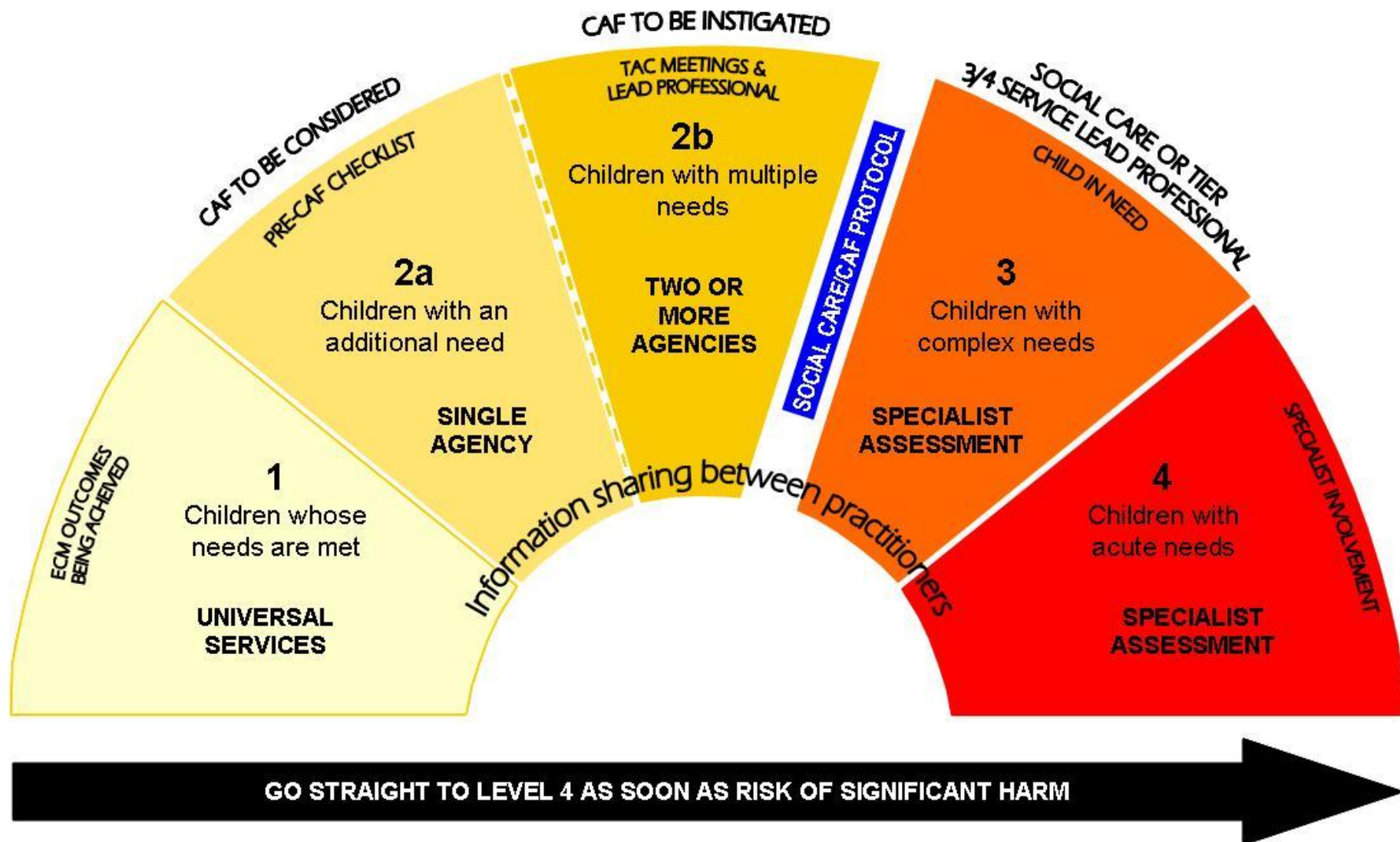
Assessment of risk whenever needed

'Drawing-in' advice and guidance

Effective information sharing

Whole family and multi-agency approaches

http://hscb.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Levels_of_Need_Windscreen.jpg



<http://wisenet.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/dsweb/GetRendition/Document-12163/html/index58645.png>

T4CYP Windscreen Model

- ▶ T4CYP is using the Windscreen Model to inform its thinking, which shows how a wide range of services provide a continuum of support for children and families.
- ▶ These services are provided by a wide range of statutory and third sector organisations and so working in partnership to get the balance right between these is central to successfully delivering T4CYP (Good Practice Wales, 2019)



Outcomes Framework Wales

- ▶ Summer 2014 – National Outcomes Framework for Wales under development to include high outcome level statements and measures for use across adult and child services in Wales.
- ▶ Technical working group facilitated by Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) and Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru.
- ▶ Local Authorities Invited to participate in Pilot in 2015

Timeline

September to December 2014

- ▶ Outcomes and Measures Developed

January to September 2015

- ▶ 7 Local Authority Pilot Sites Undertake Field work
Monmouthshire, Powys, Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr,
Conwy, Swansea, Anglesey

September to December 2015

- ▶ Field work reviewed, with final report to the
Welsh Government Technical
Working Group December 2015

(<http://www.ssiacymru.org.uk/8606>)

Recent Changes

- ▶ Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) Cymru has now moved to Social Care Wales (Formerly Care Council for Wales (CCW))

Supporting Families

- ▶ A key task for support workers is identifying the resources (or strengths) that families have to enable them to achieve their goals.
- ▶ In order to succeed families need to be able to use their skills, abilities and external sources of support.
- ▶ This can help families to be self-reliant and competent and helps them identify new ways of using resources.
- ▶ Key workers can help families to identify and access additional resources that are beyond their capacity.

Family Resources

- ▶ Skills
- ▶ Strengths
- ▶ Qualities
- ▶ Beliefs
- ▶ Family
- ▶ Community Social Networks
- ▶ Universal or Specialised Statutory or Voluntary Services

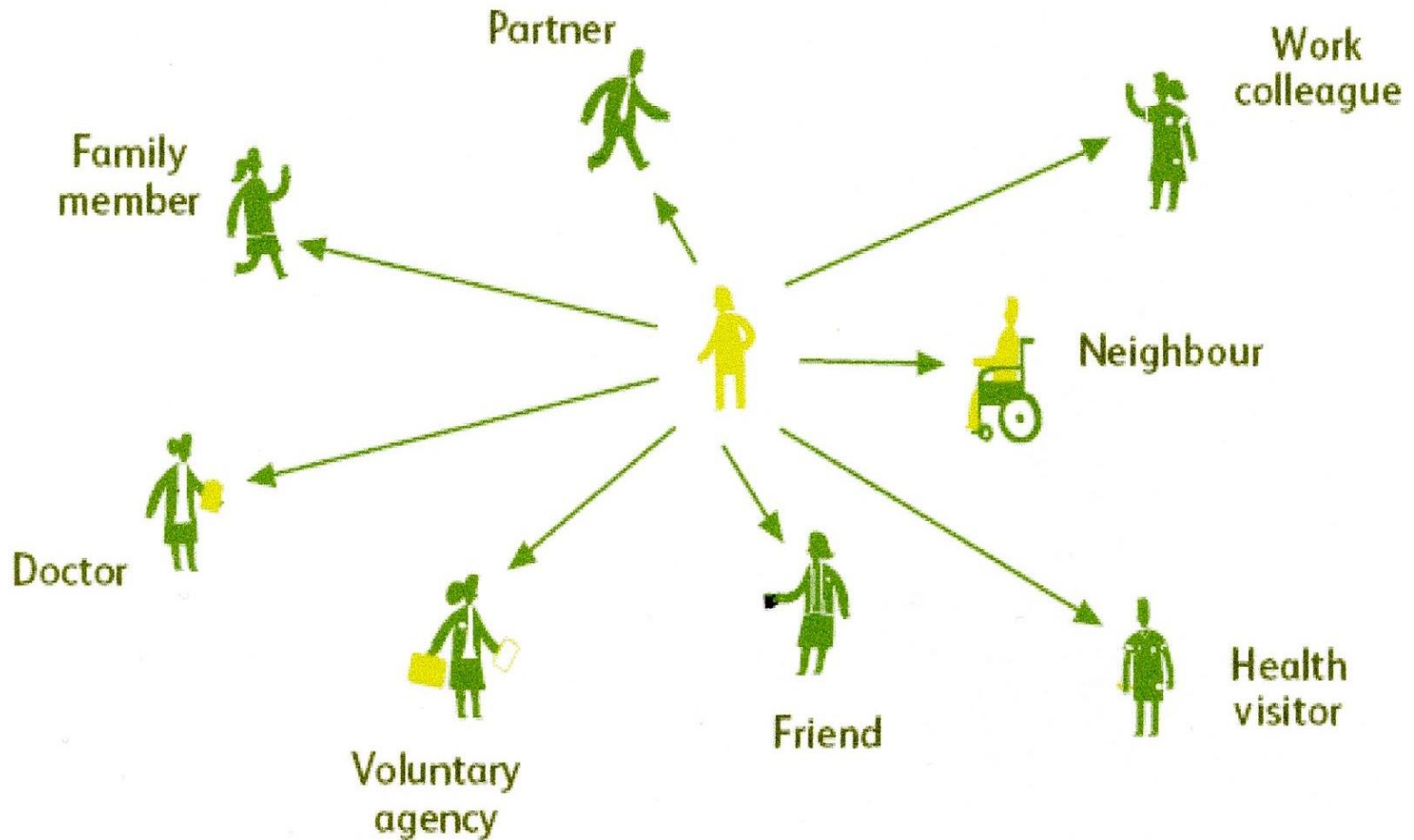
Internal

External

Key workers often have to work hard to find out what a family's resources are.

Sometimes a family's needs can be met from their existing network of support, without them having to depend on external support

Networks of Support



Multi-agency Working

- ▶ In groups discuss the agencies who may be involved in the following cases:
- ▶ A child is at risk of physical harm at home
- ▶ A child who has autism
- ▶ A child with cerebral palsy

Be prepared to feedback

Further Reading

- ▶ Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) (2011) *Providing Intense Support for Families with Multiple and Complex Needs: Manager Guidance*. London: CWDC [Online] Available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193509/Managers_Guide_Refreshed.pdf
- ▶ (Accessed 5th February 2020)