



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Module code: BMHP5021

Module title:

**Protecting and Supporting Families
in Health and Care**

WEEK 2

**Factors influencing the experiences of
children, young people, and families**

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



www.uwtsd.ac.uk

Week beginning	Topic	Notes
1 2 nd October	Introduction to Children Rights and Parenting	
2 9 th October	Factors influencing the experiences of children and families	
3 16 th October	Safeguarding, assessment of needs and theories of child development	
4 23 rd October	History of children Protection in the UK	
5 30 th October	Policy and Legislation related to Child Protection	
6 6 th November	Multi and inter disciplinary responses and partnership with children, young people and families	
7 13 th November	Factors which impact on the multi and inter disciplinary responses and partnership working with families' practice	Submission of individual reference list for C1: Wednesday 11 th November (2pm)
8 20 th November	ASSESSMENT WEEK	Group discussions – Assignment Component 1
9 27 th November	Impact of emerging digital technologies on the role of practitioner and service user	Assignment Component 2 Submission: Monday 30 th November (2:00pm)
10 4 th December	Assignment Support	Assignment Component 2 Submission: Monday 30 th November (2:00pm)

Learning objectives

- Identify and analyse the key risk factors to consider in protecting and supporting children and families who may be at risk
- Evaluate the impact of these factors on children's health and well-being.

What do we mean by vulnerability?

Vulnerability

A child can be vulnerable to risks and poor outcomes because:

- of individual characteristics;
- the impact of action or inaction by other people; and
- their physical and social environment.

Examples?

-



Factors of vulnerability

- the child's physical, emotional, health and educational needs
- any harm the child has experienced or may be at risk of experiencing – these can include a specific set of childhood experiences known as 'adverse childhood experiences'
- the absence of supportive relationships in a child's life
- the wider community and social conditions beyond the family including crime, the built environment, community cohesion and resilience
- the capability of the child's carers and wider family environment to meet the child's needs, or indeed to cause harm – mental health problems, alcohol and drug dependence, or contact with the criminal justice system, domestic abuse and poverty

Categories of vulnerability

(Public Health England, 2020)

- Safeguarding concerns or in local authority care
- Health and/or disability
- Economic circumstances
- Family circumstances and characteristics
- Educational engagement
- Involvement in offending and/or anti-social behaviour
- Experience of abuse and exploitation
- Missing and absent children and minority populations

Source: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/913974/Understanding_and_quantifying_vulnerability_in_childhood.pdf

Family and socio-economic factors:

Parental health and substance use: Parental mental health issues (such as depression and PTSD) and substance abuse are consistently linked to a higher risk of child maltreatment.

Socioeconomic hardship: Poverty, housing instability, and food insecurity can increase family stress and lead to negative outcomes for children.

Domestic and community violence: Exposure to intimate partner violence (IPV) within the family and violence in the wider community are significant risk factors for child abuse.

Family instability: Repeated changes in family structure, such as frequent moves in and out of the household, can undermine a child's sense of security and trust.

Parental history: A parent who experienced abuse as a child, or who has a history of abusing children, is at a higher risk of maltreating their own children.

Unwanted pregnancies: Pregnancies that were not wanted can be a factor that increases vulnerability.

Parental expectations: Parents with unrealistic expectations of their child, or who lack parenting knowledge, can create a more vulnerable environment.

Child-specific factors:

Disability: A child's physical or mental disability is a significant factor that can increase their vulnerability.

Minority status: Children from minority backgrounds may face additional vulnerabilities.

Experience of abuse and trauma: Children who have already experienced abuse, trauma, or neglect are more vulnerable to further harm.

Attachment: Poor attachment between a child and their caregiver is a key indicator of vulnerability.

Spotlight themes

- Safeguarding children with mental health needs
- safeguarding pre-school children with parents with mental health needs, and
- extrafamilial harm.

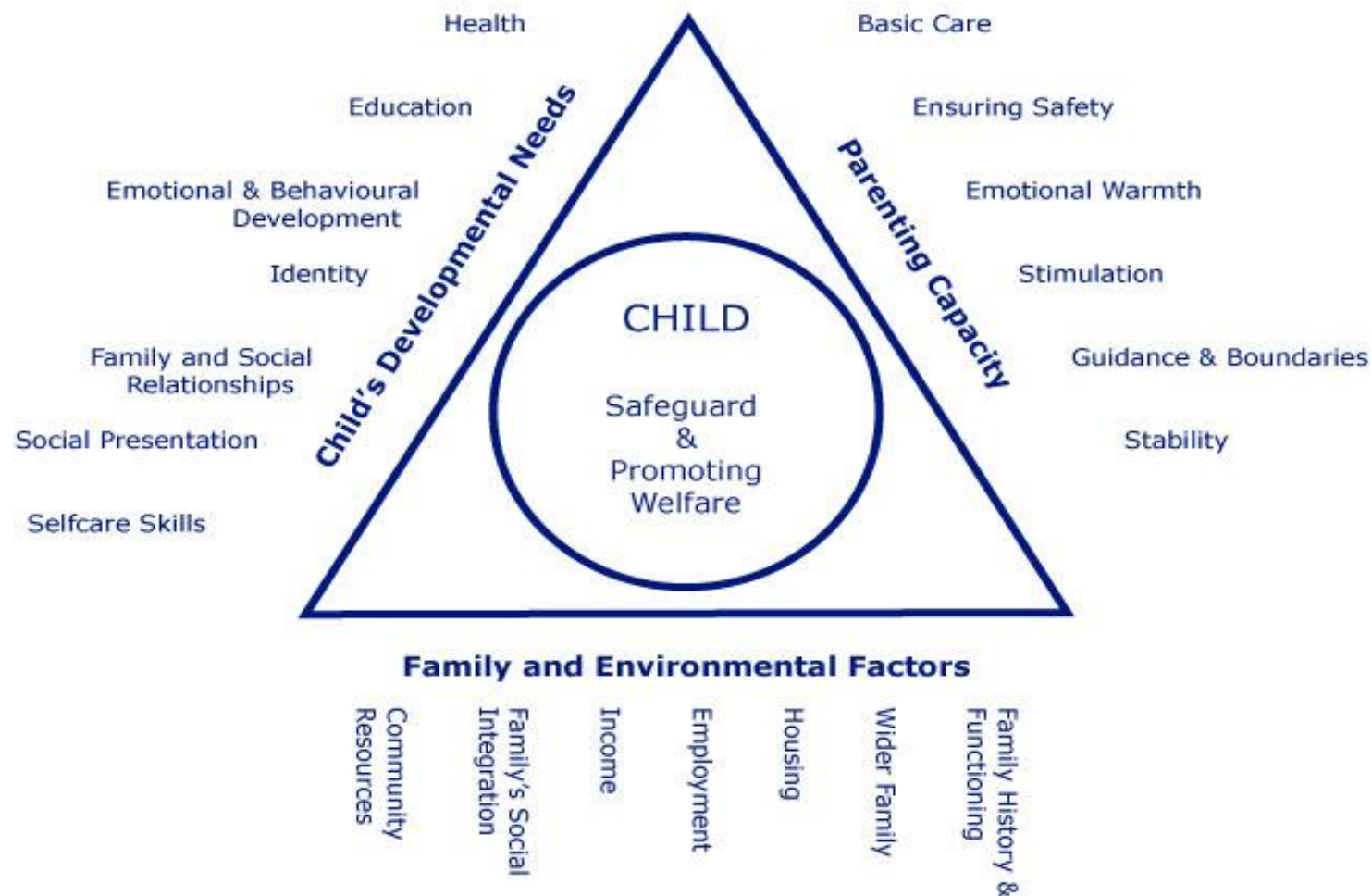
THE CHILD
SAFEGUARDING
PRACTICE REVIEW PANEL

Annual Report 2023 to 2024

Patterns in practice, key messages
and 2024 to 2025 work programme

December 2024

Assessment Framework



What is Abuse?

- Research the term abuse.
- What types of abuse are you familiar with?
- Can you identify and describe different forms of abuse?
- Feel free to share examples or situations that come to mind.



Abuse

- Abuse refers to the intentional and harmful mistreatment of one person by another.
- It involves the infliction of physical, emotional, sexual, or psychological harm to exert control, dominance, or power over the victim.
- Abuse can occur in various contexts, including personal relationships, family settings, workplaces, institutions, or within broader societal structures.

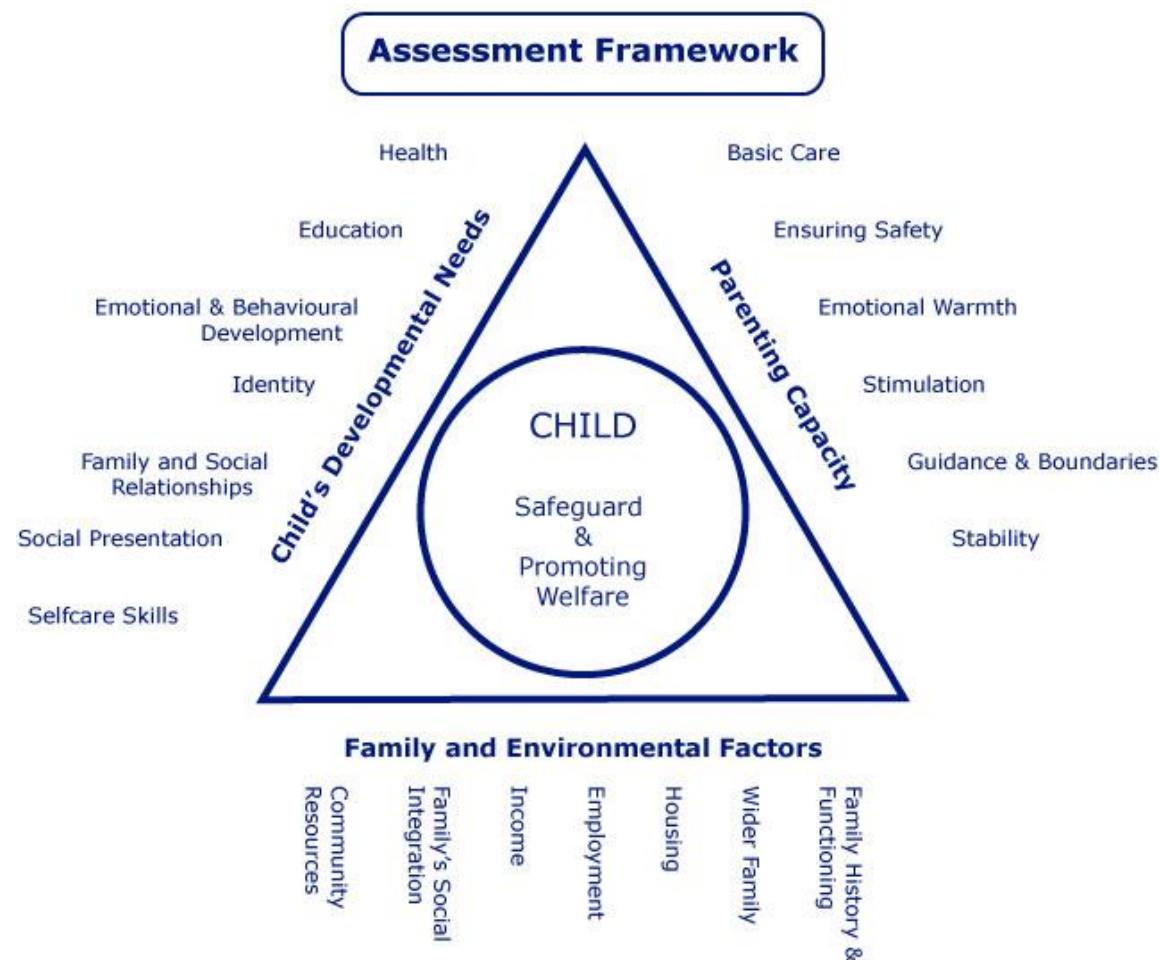
What is neglect?

- Research the term neglect.
- What types of neglect are you familiar with?
- Can you identify and describe different examples?



Howarth (2007) identified **five** types of neglect, and this breakdown is helpful for practitioners to begin considering where the child's needs may be being neglected:

- Physical
- Medical
- Educational
- Lack of supervision / guidance
- Emotional



Definition of Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. May occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Child neglect statistics

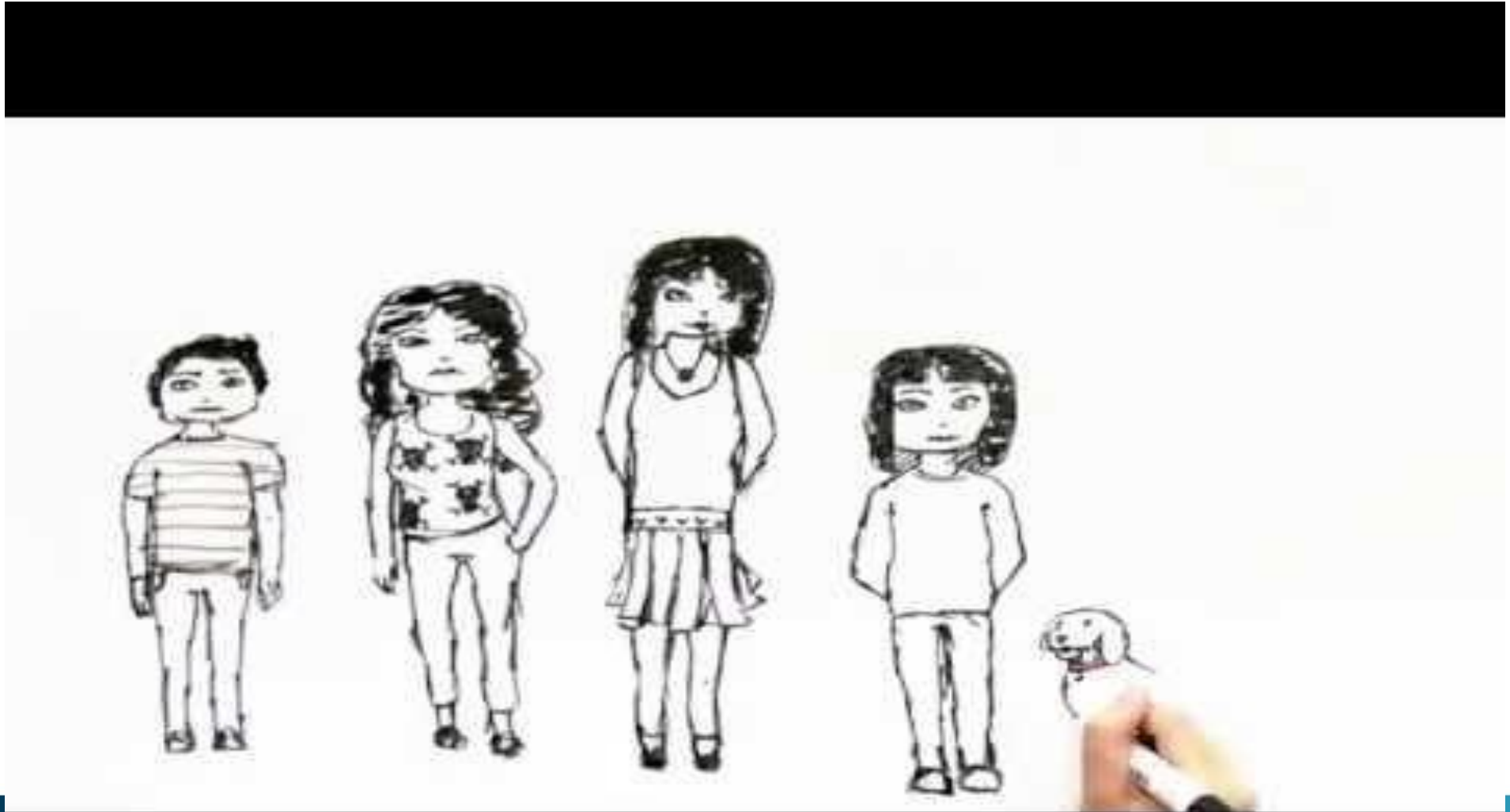
- There were over 11,000 contacts to the NSPCC's helpline in 2022/23 about neglect
- In 2022/23 the NSPCC's helpline responded to a total of 59,282 contacts from people who were concerned about a child's welfare. 11,492 contacts related to concerns about neglect, making it the most discussed concern and the most commonly mentioned form of abuse.
- Approximately one in four children experience child abuse or neglect in their lifetime. Of maltreated children, 18 percent are abused physically, 78 percent are neglected, and 9 percent are abused sexually.

NSPCC Briefing: [Neglect: statistics briefing](#)

Parental Histories and the Cycle of Abuse

- A parent's childhood history plays a large part in how he or she may behave as a parent.
- Individuals with poor parental role models or those who did not have their own needs met may find it very difficult to meet the needs of their children.

Neglect



Young carers

Many children talk about having caring responsibilities. They describe carrying out tasks including:

- Making dinner, running baths, doing household chores such as cleaning, taking care of their siblings, making sure parents take their medication, attending medical appointments with their parents, comforting their parents when they are stressed or crying.
- When young people are taking care of a parent, it can mean they have little time for a life of their own. Some tell us they are unable to maintain a social life or invite friends into their home, which can make them feel isolated. Others tell us their parents have obsessive behaviours, for example not letting them talk to anybody else.

Source: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1432/nspcc-families-facing-adversity-helplines-report.pdf>

Video: What is a Young Carer?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YaF8cHCkIXo>

Parental substance misuse

- 'Parental substance misuse' is the long-term misuse of drugs and/or alcohol by a parent or carer.

This includes parents and carers who:

- consume harmful amounts of alcohol (for example if their drinking is leading to alcohol-related health problems or accidents)
- are dependent on alcohol
- use drugs excessively
- are dependent on drugs.
- It also includes parents who are not able to supervise their children appropriately because of their substance use.



Source: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1432/nspcc-families-facing-adversity-helplines-report.pdf>

Drug misuse

Drug misuse is a dependence on, or regular excessive consumption of, psychoactive substances.

It can lead to:

- social problems
- mental and psychological illness
- physical illness
- legal problems.



Source: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1432/nspcc-families-facing-adversity-helplines-report.pdf#>

Alcohol misuse

Alcohol misuse includes:

- excessive and harmful drinking
- alcohol dependence.

Harmful drinking is a pattern of alcohol use. It can cause alcohol-related problems including:

- depression
- physical illnesses
- accidents.

Source: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1432/nspcc-families-facing-adversity-helplines-report.pdf>



Video: Don't Bring the Pub Home (Public Health Suffolk)



Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mitX6oyy_E4

Emotional and physical abuse and neglect

Some children contact Childline because they have been left alone by parents who are misusing substances. Others tell us that, although their parents are at home, they aren't being properly cared for because their parents are drinking or using drugs.

Other young people tell counsellors that their parents say horrible things to them when they are under the influence of alcohol/drugs. They explain that their parents argue with them when they're drunk and get angry with them.

Source: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1432/nspcc-families-facing-adversity-helplines-report.pdf>

Emotional and physical abuse and neglect

- Other young people discuss being physically abused when their parents are intoxicated. They mention being pushed, slapped, punched, kicked, and having objects thrown at them by their parents when they are drunk.
- Young people also discuss witnessing domestic abuse when their parents have been using drugs or drinking alcohol. Many describe how one parent becomes aggressive and violent towards the other parent.

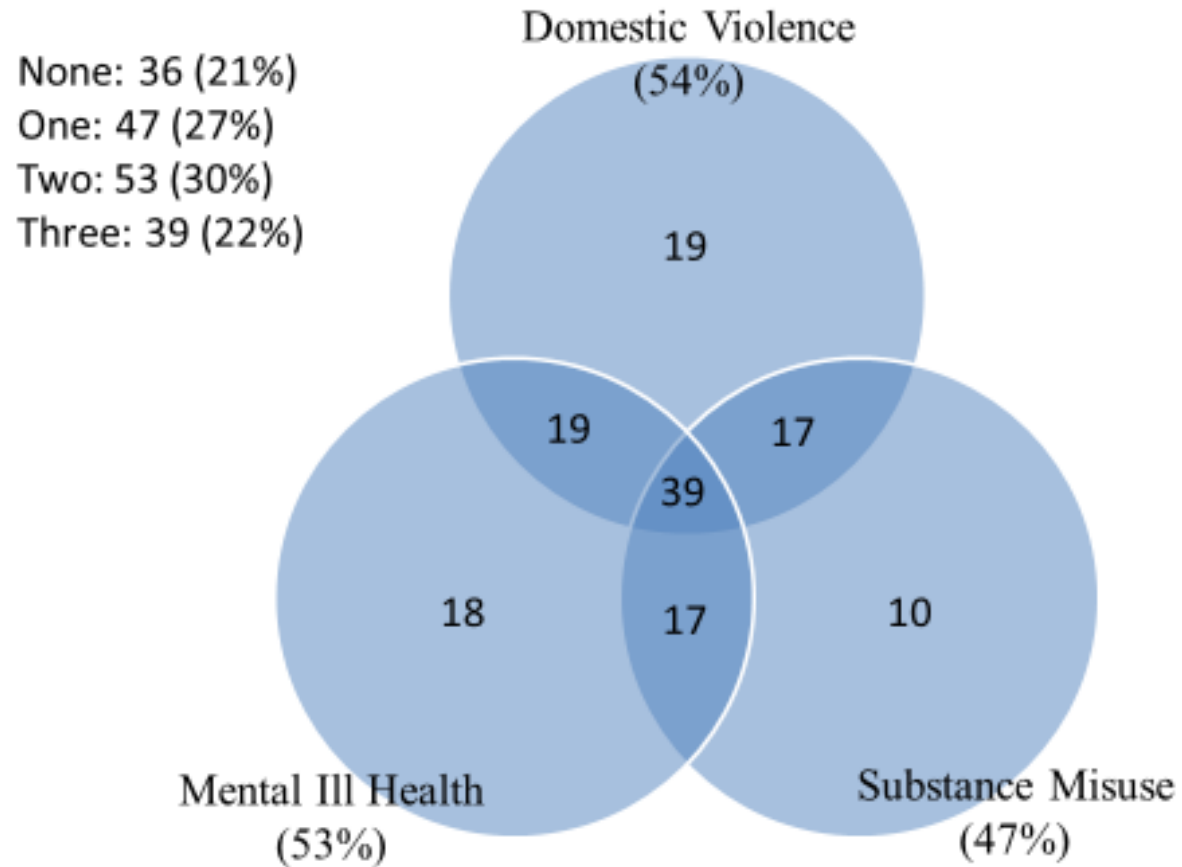
Source: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1432/nspcc-families-facing-adversity-helplines-report.pdf>

Parental mental health problems

- Approximately one in four people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year and over 2 million children are estimated to be living with a parent who has a common mental health disorder.
- By using the term 'parental mental health problems' we mean a parent or carer has or is thought to have a diagnosable mental health condition, such as:
 - depression
 - anxiety disorders
 - schizophrenia
 - bipolar disorder
 - personality disorders.

Source: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1432/nspcc-families-facing-adversity-helplines-report.pdf>

Cumulative risk of harm



What is domestic abuse?

Home Office definition of domestic abuse is..

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

psychological
physical
sexual
financial
emotional

The gendered nature of domestic abuse & coercive control

While both women and men can experience coercive control, however women are:

- more likely to be victims of domestic abuse (ONS, 2020B),
- more likely to be subjected to coercive and controlling behaviours (Myhill, 2015; ONS, 2020C).
- experience higher rates of repeated victimisation (Walby & Towers, 2018),
- much more likely to be seriously harmed (Walby & Allen, 2004) or killed (ONS, 2020A),
- typically experience higher levels of fear (Dobash & Dobash, 2004)
- 97% of perpetrators convicted for controlling and coercive behaviour in England and Wales in the year ending December 2020 were male (Women's Aid, 2021).

Abused By My Girlfriend



Sally Challen said she suffered years of humiliating abuse before killing 61-year-old Richard Challen.

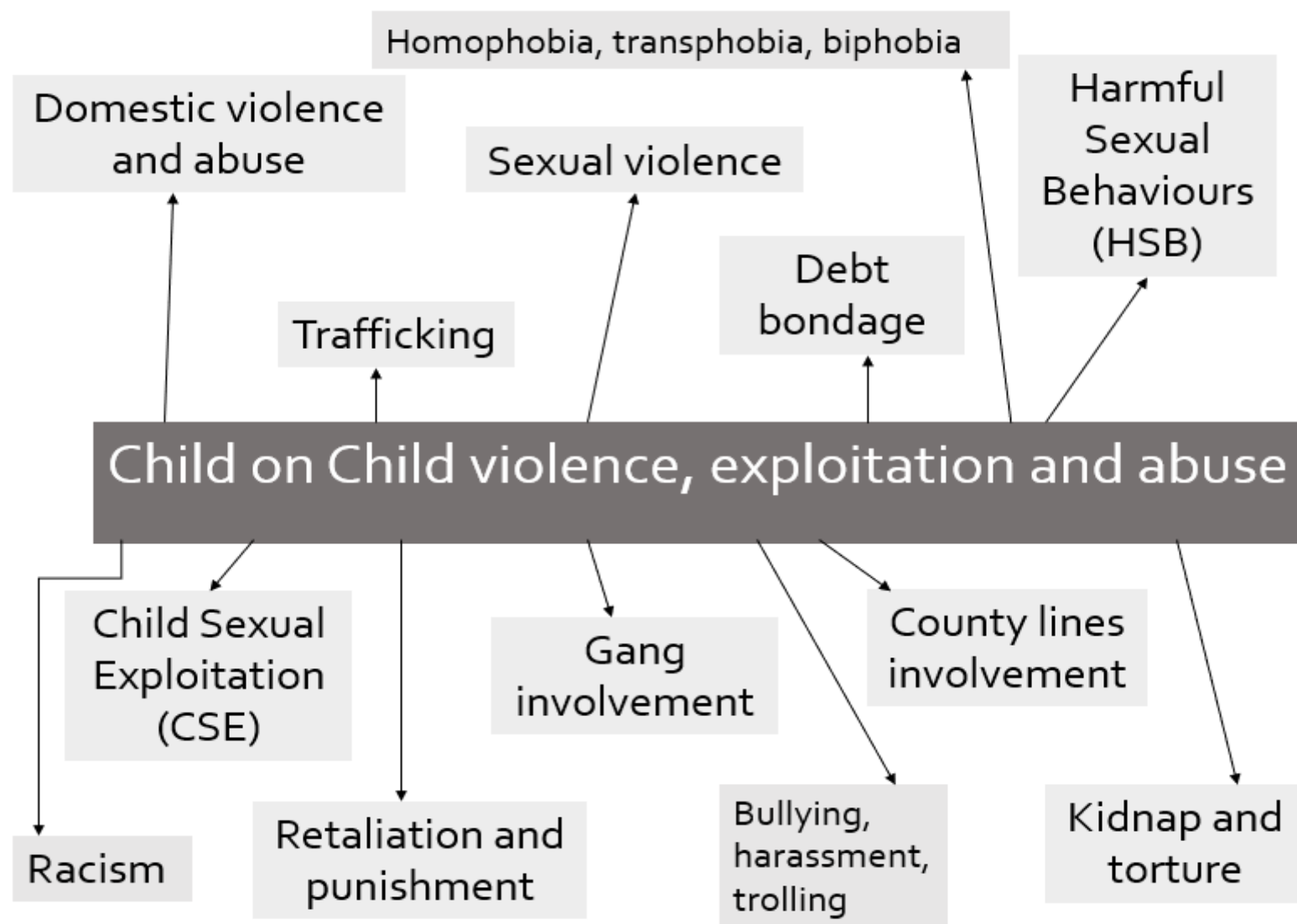
"You just felt an undercurrent of abuse happening but you couldn't see the abuse or the moments of it. It was a drip, drip, drip... and that's what my mother suffered behind closed doors," David, son.

[Learn more](#)



Child on Child violence and abuse

What are we worried about?



BBC i Player: Three Girls, Rochdale

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8VJaK2inPA>



Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- Sexual exploitation of children and young people **under 18** involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person (or third person/s) **receive 'something'** (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.
- Child Sexual Exploitation can occur through the use of technology **without the child's immediate recognition**; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

Nationally agreed definition of child sexual exploitation.

Vulnerabilities and indicators

- Those with attachment issues
- School non-attendance
- Mental health disorders including depression
- Those known to existing victims e.g. siblings, friends
- Those with a poor understanding of sexual relationships
- History of abuse e.g. familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage/honour-based violence
- Young offenders
- Being a young carer
- Lacking friends from the same age group
- Involvement in gangs

What is 'grooming'?

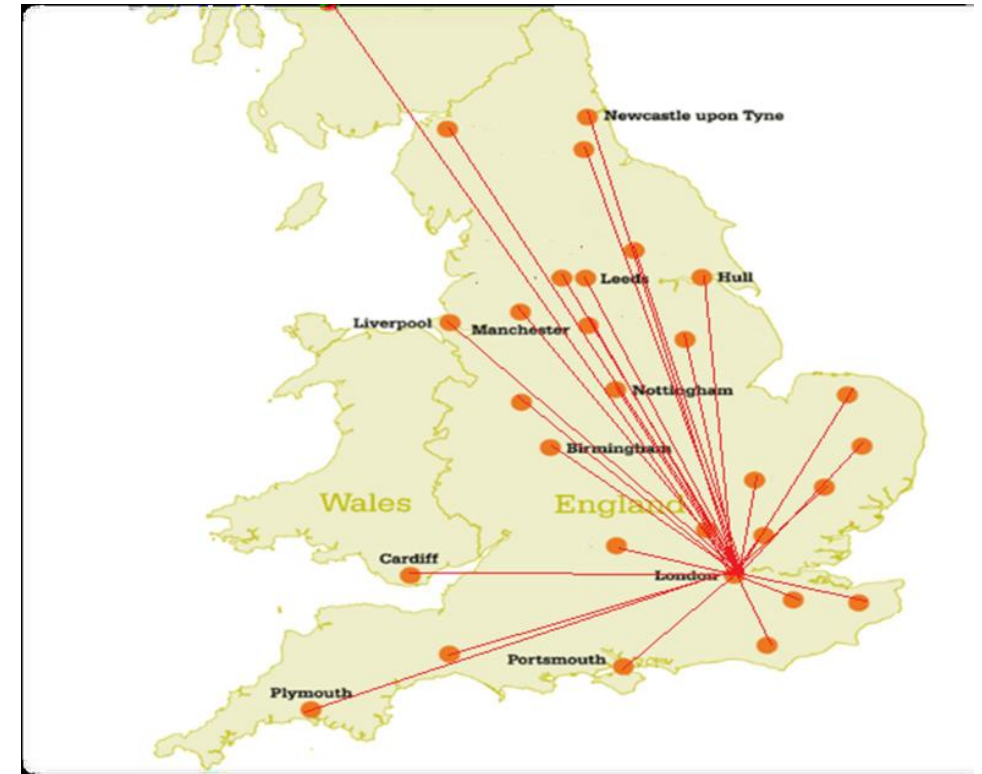
What is 'grooming'?

- A process by which an offender/perpetrator *prepares* a child and/or the environment for subsequent abuse.
- This will include getting the child's compliance and maintaining the child's secrecy to avoid disclosure

County Lines

A person, or group from an urban area crosses to rural/county areas to set up a base, deal (usually) heroin and crack cocaine

Violence used to establish and secure drug line, and to remove competition. Lines underpinned by exploitation of vulnerable people.



Once established, younger gang members, associates (12-17) run county lines. Can earn £500+ per week (If not in debt to the gang)

Trawsgoed Addysg; Trawsgoed Ffyneddau
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Grooming and County Lines



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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lLaguFXHr4>

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Why are disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse?

Why disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse

- Increased likelihood of being socially isolated with fewer outside contacts than non-disabled children
- Their dependency on parents and carers for practical assistance in daily living including intimate personal care increases their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour
- They have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse
- They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening

Why disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse (cont.)

- They often do not have access to someone they can trust to disclose that they have been abused
- They are especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation
- Looked after disabled children are not only vulnerable to the same factors that exist for all children living away from home but are particularly susceptible to possible abuse because of their additional dependency on residential and hospital staff for day-to-day physical needs

The cost-of-living crisis

The cost of living crisis is particularly acute for families with children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

On average, a family with a disabled child has to pay £581 per month extra to have the same standard of living as a family with a non-SEND child

Research shows that children with SEND are far more likely to come from low-income households

These families often face additional costs associated with caring for their children, including additional medical expenses, specialised diets and equipment, and therapies

Other issues include a higher likelihood of parental unemployment as a result of greater caregiving responsibilities, disadvantages in educational attainment, and social exclusion.

The Childhood Trust 2023

<https://www.childhoodtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/The-Childhood-Trust-SEND-REPORT-June-2023.pdf>

Group task



- In your group choose ONE (1) of the case studies in your C1 Assessment

[Child A / Adult A](#) Birmingham

[Child A](#) Bradford

[Child F](#) Blackburn

[Child HN](#) Herfordshire

[Theo](#) Derby



- You should undertake your research into the case study you have chosen within your group (provide specific reasons why the child, young person and/ or family were in a position of vulnerability: what factors meant that there were specific issues in this case which might not be seen in the average family?)
- You should analyse the case study and critically evaluate the intervention/s that have been made with the family (explain the process of intervention by relevant health and social care agencies).

Reference List:

- NSPCC (2019) *Children living in families facing adversity*. Available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1432/nspcc-families-facing-adversity-helplines-report.pdf> (Accessed: 9 February 2024).
- NSPCC (2018) *Safeguarding children and child protection*. Available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection> (Accessed: 9 February 2024).
- Public Health England (2020) *No child left behind*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/913974/Understanding_and_quantifying_vulnerability_in_childhood.pdf (Accessed: 9 February 2024).
- Gov.uk (2024) *Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: annual report 2023 to 2024*, GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safeguarding-practice-review-panel-annual-report-2023-to-2024>.
- Public Health England (2020). *No Child Left behind Understanding and Quantifying Vulnerability*. [online] Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f4f72c68fa8f523f4c3c0ed/Understanding_and_quantifying_vulnerability_in_childhood.pdf.