A drawing of a cartoon character

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Working with hard to engage families.

Live and Learn Sports

Safeguarding Children

Partnership 2020

2. Why it matters

7. What to do =

* Read the GM procedure:

Dealing with Persistent Non- Engagement with Services by Uncooperative Families

* Use supervision to support reflective practice & be prepared to challenge and be challenged

1. Background

3. Information

Research has identified a number of ways in which families may present significant challenge to practitioners. They include…

* Ambivalence:Families are not sure of change or are stuck at a certain point.
* Denial/ Avoidance: Not willing to acknowledge abuse or purposely avoiding.
* Unresponsiveness: No improvements.
* Violence:

An case review, as a key theme of non engagement;

“Families tended to be ambivalent or hostile towards helping agencies, and staff were often fearful of violent and hostile men. Although parents tended to avoid agencies, agencies also avoided or rebuffed parents by offering a succession of workers, closing the case, losing files or key information, by re-assessing , referring on,or through initiating and then dropping court proceedings”.

Sometimes families are referred to an agency without their full appreciation of the need for a service.Most professionals will come into contact with families whose co-operation is hard, including people who are reluctant, resistant or sometimes angry or hostile to their approaches. Families that are even more so difficult to engage as sometimes referred to as ‘hard to reach’ or ‘highly resistant’. Engaging these families is extremely important. Resistance is some degree is a product of the nature and quality of interaction between families and professionals.

RSCB

Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board –

7-minute Briefing

6. Questions

* Is the focus on the child?
* Do assessments consider the whole context of the child's life or have individual incidents been treated in isolation?
* Have assessments been updated, with new information being raised?
* Is there evidence of the ‘rule of optimism?
* Should the case be referred to children social care?

5. Information

4. Information

**Reasons for non engagement:**

* Don’t want their privacy invaded.
* Have something to hide.
* Refuse to believe they have a problem.
* Cultural differences.
* Lack of understanding.
* Fear of children being taken away.
* Distrust of authority figures.

Working with resistance:

* Communicate honestly. Be available.
* Be clear about not expecting intimidatory behaviour.
* Involve families in planning/ goals.
* Focus on the child’s welfare.
* Be very persistent, research shows this helps.