

Practice Development Events

For those working in, and with, children's services

Making Research Count's Autumn/Winter 2022-23 Programme

The Future of Child Protection in England: Learning from Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Research

As the tragic cases of Arthur Labinjo Hughes and Star Hobson illustrate, serious and local safeguarding practice reviews continue to shape much of the debate around child protection and child welfare more generally. The findings of serious case reviews and research into the themes that emerge have been an invaluable source of learning for the sector. However, findings can also be misinterpreted. In this webinar we review the messages for policy and practice that emerge from such reviews but also what we can learn from the methodologies that are used to carry out such reviews.

Monday 19 September 2022, 3.00 - 4.30pm

Webinar Series: Young People and Mental Health

Prof Uttom Chowdhury
University of Bedfordshire

Wednesday 21 September 2022
11am - 12.30pm

Covid and Mental Health in Young People

Wednesday 12 October 2022
11am - 12.30pm

Understanding Tics and Tourette Syndrome

Wednesday 9 November 2022
11.00am - 12.30pm
**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
in Children and Young People**

Wednesday 7 December 2022
11am - 12.30pm
**Understanding Children and Young People
With Autistic Spectrum Disorders**

Constructing, and Reconstructing, Childhood in Care

Dr Stephen Mills

Taustock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust

Dr Stephen Mills is a systemic psychotherapist and an associate Lecturer and Doctoral Supervisor for candidates on the Professional Doctorate in Systemic Practice at the Tavistock Centre in London. He has spent several years working in CAMHS teams, most notably with children in the care system. His recently completed doctoral thesis explored Constructions of the Child in Care.

In this webinar, Stephen will draw on his doctoral thesis to consider along with participants how, in everyday language and practice, social workers construct and reconstruct children involved in the care system:

- the way children/childhoods in the care system are constructed;
- the role played in these constructions by professional networks around the child;
- the implications of these constructions for the care that children receive.

Wednesday 28 September 2022, 11am - 12.30pm

What Do We Mean by Poverty Informed Social Work?

The UK is currently experiencing a severe economic and potentially social crisis. The cost of living crisis is putting a severe strain on individual families and communities. It comes in the wake of the pandemic and a decade of austerity that has seen growing poverty inequality and hardship. Social justice has been an important dimension to the social work profession's development. The current crisis has brought discussions about how social workers respond to poverty at a child and family as well as community level. As such there has been growing interest in the idea and practice of poverty aware social work. This seminar will explore the literature and research in this area, and consider its relevance to contemporary practice.

Monday 3 October 2022, 9.30 - 11.00am

Trauma-Informed Practice

Simon Kerss

Anglia Ruskin University

Simon Kerss is a criminologist, and Visiting Research Fellow with the Policing Institute for the Eastern Region (PIER), Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. He specialises in evaluating agency responses to VAWG and other forms of Serious Violence. He is also an Independent Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Author, and Home Office-appointed DHR Reader.

In this webinar, Simon will set out the key concepts of and approaches to trauma-informed practice, and discuss: how trauma is experienced; how we respond to and cope with it; and how professionals can respond effectively to it.

Tuesday 4 October 2022, 11am - 12.30pm



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Critical and Reflective Practice Forum

A 'Book Group' for Children's Social Care Managers and Experienced Practitioners

Meets: Monthly, Online

The MRC Critical and Reflective Practice Group, at King's College London, is a well-established forum that provides an opportunity to:

- Identify and discuss key areas of emerging social work research;
- Explore the implications of major policy documents for practice;
- Debate and discuss key areas in contemporary social work with colleagues from across London.

The MRC Critical and Reflective Practice Forum has run for 19 years, and brings together practitioners and managers from across London and the South East. This unique forum works as a 'book group', looking at articles, research papers and policy documents, which are circulated beforehand to members, and considers their implications for practice. Topics are selected by the group, and cover all aspects of Children and Families practice.

The next meetings of the Forum will be on the following Fridays, 10.00 - 11.00am:

30 September 2022
28 October 2022
25 November 2022

27 January 2023
24 February 2023
31 March 2023

To join the Forum, please contact: mrc@kcl.ac.uk

Engaging Men in the Context of Children's Services

Engaging men is often one of the most challenging issues practitioners face when working with children, young people and their families. Research has consistently shown that, all too often, children's services (and other agencies) either fail to engage with, or understand, the role that fathers and other men play in children's lives. This can lead to men being excluded, and their rights as parents not fully respected. It can also mean that men are under-utilised as a source of support and a resource within a family. Conversely, it can also mean that, when men are the source of possible safeguarding concerns, issues of risk and safety are not sufficiently understood. This webinar seeks to explore our expectations of men and fathering, and to consider how we can engage men, across agencies, more effectively in our work. The webinar will explore:

- Our expectations of the role of fathers and other men in the families we work with, including families with parents who are LGBT;
- Men's perceptions and experiences of agencies and professionals who work with their children;
- The issues that arise when we attempt to engage men in work with families;
- The implications of cross cultural working in the context of engaging men;
- What is meant by the "absent" or "invisible" man, and how we can manage the implications of this in our practice;
- The factors that can promote safety in families when working with men, and how to identify men as a resource.

Monday 3 October 2022, 11.30am - 1.00pm

After the Review of Children's Social Care: The Evolving Role of Social Work in Children's Services

In July, the Government-commissioned review of children's social care, chaired by Josh McAllister, was published. This ambitious review has produced a series of potentially far reaching proposals that could re-shape the children's social care sector and the role of children and families social work. The autumn of 2022 will begin to see how, and the extent to which, the review's findings will be implemented. This webinar will reflect on the proposals of the review, and implications for families, practitioners, and the social work profession as a whole. In particular it will focus on:

- The policy context in which the review is taking place;
- The proposals of the review, and their links to other policy initiatives (particularly child protection in England);
- The opportunities and challenges these proposals may pose, for both practitioners and those who use services.
- The wider knowledge context of what constitutes effective social work.

Wednesday 5 October 2022, 9.30 - 11.00am



Responding to Concerns About Domestic Violence and Abuse

There is already emerging evidence, internationally and domestically, that the Coronavirus crisis led to an increase in domestic violence and abuse. More generally, it is one of the most common reasons why children and families come into contact with children services, and can pose a real challenge in terms of providing an ethical and effective response. In this webinar we will cover:

- The implications for supporting women and other survivors of domestic abuse;
- Recognising and addressing concerns about the welfare of children in such a context;
- Engaging and working with perpetrators;
- The importance and reality of multi-agency work in such circumstances;
- Messages from research and practice informed knowledge about domestic abuse, and how these can be applied to current practice.

Monday 10 October 2022, 9.30 - 11.00am

Practice Development Events

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Relational Practice Webinar Series: **Building Effective Relationships With Families: Promoting Ethical and Humane Practice in Children's Services**

This series of four webinars seeks to explore the process of relationship building in work with children, young people and their families. The quality of the relationship is consistently identified as a key feature of the quality of both the practice and whether positive outcomes are achieved. Nevertheless, relationship building in the context of children's social care can be complex, emotive, and demanding.

These webinars will, drawing on both current and seminal research, look at some of the complexities of relationship building. They will highlight the importance of self-awareness, features of good practice, the pitfalls, and traps we can fall into, and how these can be avoided.

The Role of Empathy in Working With Families

Wednesday 21 September 2022, 3.30 - 5.00pm

Understanding and Promoting the Process of Change

Thursday 20 October 2022, 1.00 - 2.30pm

Working with Families We Find Hard to Help

Wednesday 16 November 2022, 2.00 - 3.30pm

Use of Self: Working with 'Sameness' and 'Difference'

Tuesday 13 December 2022, 2.30 - 4.00pm

To book for webinars in this series, please contact:
mrc@kcl.ac.uk

Auditing for Quality: How Quality Assurance Processes Can Support Good Outcomes for Children and Young People

Audit has become an increasing feature of how casework and services are managed in local authorities. As well as serving as an important quality assurance mechanism for individual children and families, it can also be an invaluable source of learning, providing insight into the wider practice system. All too often, however, audit has been criticised as being reductionist and 'tick box' in its nature. This webinar will explore the potential of audit to be used in more constructive and helpful ways. In particular it will examine:

- Common models of audits used in children's services and what can be learned from other disciplines.
- How we use audit to understand the quality of the work being carried out;
- How we use audit to promote the rights and perspectives of children and their families;
- What we understand by outcomes in children's services, and the potential and limitations of acronyms such as SMART;
- Audit as a tool for learning and enhancing the environment for practice.

Monday 24 October 2022, 9.30 - 11.00am

Understanding the Needs of Children Living with Parental Substance Misuse

**Dr Hannah Todman
Stockport Council**

Hannah Todman is a registered social worker, practice educator and workforce development manager. She is NAAS accredited, with 14 years of frontline practice experience within substance use services. The focus of Hannah's practice has been supporting children and families affected by a loved one's substance use.

Hannah's recently completed PhD, undertaken at Manchester Metropolitan University, focuses on the experiences of children (aged 7-16) who live with parental substance misuse (PSM). She sought to understand what this group of children need, from their perspective, by way of support. The research also included focus groups with frontline professionals from across a children's workforce, to understand the needs of frontline practitioners in their endeavour to support and respond to the needs of children living with PSM.

In this webinar, Hannah will present her findings, in which the voices of children are privileged at the heart of the research. She will discuss the multiple risk factors experienced by children, and the multiple protective factors needed to buffer against the negative impact of PSM. She will set out the key messages for practice when working with children living with PSM, and introduce the principles for a model of practice for children and a training model for frontline staff.

Tuesday 1 November 2022, 11.00am - 12.30pm



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Pre-Birth Assessments: Effectively Addressing the Practice and Ethical Challenges

Pre-birth assessments are an area of practice that can raise profound ethical and professional challenges. Assessing parenting before the birth of a child requires a very clear framework for understanding parenting, and great care has to be taken as to what is considered 'evidence' in the assessment process. This webinar will cover:

- An overview of the research and policy-based literature that is relevant to pre-birth assessments;
- A conceptual framework for undertaking pre-birth assessment with families in these circumstances;
- The meaning of child centred practice in pre-birth assessments;
- An understanding of how we can practice in both a humane and strengths-based manner, that promotes parenting capacity and partnership practice with families in pre-birth assessments;
- Key inter agency issues and how we can work effectively as multi-disciplinary groups of professionals to promote positive outcomes in pre-birth assessments.

Tuesday 8 November 2022, 1.30 - 3.00pm

Understanding the Teenage Brain - Why This Matters For Social Care

Prof John Coleman
University of Bedfordshire

In recent years we have learnt an enormous amount about the changes that occur in the brain during the teenage years. This is due to advances in the technology of scanning. These changes include maturation of the brain, leading to many positive advances in thinking. However, there are also some changes that involve restructuring, which may cause some challenges.

In this session, Professor [John Coleman](#) will outline the main changes, and discuss the implications of these for behaviour and adjustment. He will cover the topics of risk, the management of stress and anxiety, and the impact of trauma and early adverse events on brain development in the teenage years. The session will conclude with a look at the value of this new knowledge for all in the social care system.

Prof John Coleman's (2021) book, [The Teacher and the Teenage Brain](#), is available from Routledge.

Thursday 17 November 2022, 11.00am – 12.30pm



Understanding the Evolving Needs of the Workforce in a Period of Uncertainty and Challenge: A Webinar for Those in Workforce and Staff Development

We are continuing to live and work through unprecedented times. The Coronavirus public health crisis is continuing to exert huge pressures on families, communities and the services that seek to support them. It is a crisis that continues to make big demands upon practitioners and their managers, requiring them to work in a very different practice environment. The shape of day-to-day practice has significantly changed, requiring workers to think differently about how they build relationships, what is entailed in meaningful assessment, and what constitutes a purposeful plan. A common theme has been the recognition that attention needs to be paid to the workforce in relation to its skills, knowledge, values, and the practice culture in which they are working.

It is clear from talking to our partner agencies that colleagues remain committed to training and developing the workforce throughout the crisis. The Making Research Count online programmes have seen record attendances, and it has been evident that there has been a tremendous appetite among practitioners for debate, discussion, and reflection. Indeed, more widely training and development is believed to have been crucial in terms of maintaining high professional standards, morale, and staff wellbeing during the crisis. This webinar follows up a series of sessions that were held during the pandemic and focuses on the role of training, learning and workforce development during the crisis. This session will explore the components of a strategy that can create a positive environment for practice in this context of protracted uncertainty and crisis. The session will focus on:

- The ongoing challenges arising from the current context for adult and children's social care for services and day to day practice;
- Emerging research that is being carried out during the crisis and its messages for practice;
- The meaning of evidence informed practice in this environment, including the way research is utilised in practice development;
- The role of supervision in promoting critical reflection in the context of increased remote working;
- The meaning of professional and organisational resilience during the current crisis;
- The relationship between strengths-based approaches to practice and staff development;
- Meeting the needs of a diverse workforce under pressure.

Tuesday 13 December 2022, 10.00am - 12.00pm



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Practice Development Events

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Child Protection Conferences: The Evolving Role of the Child Protection Chair

**A Quarterly Forum
for Child Protection Advisors and Chairs**

Child Protection Chairs play a unique role in the practice systems within their respective boroughs, though current policy initiatives may lead to significant changes. They provide independent oversight of the children protection process, promoting professional accountability and challenge. In so doing, they are pivotal to assuring quality standards, and undertake other associated tasks such as audit. In acting as 'critical friends' they are also a source of support and expertise for practitioners and managers. They work directly with families through the conferencing process, and play a key role in relation to inter-agency working.

The overall aim of this group is to provide a forum for child protection chairs to come together and critically reflect on local practice. In the process of doing so, they will identify specific areas in need of further development, and the sessions will in turn respond to these. It is anticipated that the group will specifically address the following:

- To reflect on how national policies are impacting on the role;
- How best to promote the role so that it is accepted, respected and effective across the practice system in each borough;
- To further develop the effectiveness of the child protection processes in each local authority (for example, how the CPC can ensure that the recommended child protection plan becomes a working tool);
- How best to improve communication, so that CPCs become more established, helpful, and a constructive resource and safety net;
- To build better working relationships, and make relationships with managers and practitioners more effective;
- Provide greater consistency in how CPCs chair conferences;
- Provide greater consistency in thresholds, and improve decision making at all levels;
- Lead by example: model good practice – enhance our capacity to be and remain critically reflective;
- Support the process of change and improvement through reflective practice, not blame;
- Identify and develop practice in specific areas that are challenging, such as contextual harm and emotional abuse.

Next meetings:

Monday 3 October 2022, 2.00 - 3.30pm

Thursday 2 February 2023, 2.00 - 3.30pm

To book places for these events,
please click on the hyperlinked titles

Should I Stay or Should I Go? Recruitment, Retention and Progression of Child and Family Social Workers

**Prof Hugh McLaughlin
Manchester Metropolitan University**

Hugh McLaughlin is Professor Emeritus of Social Work at Manchester Metropolitan University, and a registered social worker. In this webinar, he will present the year 2 and year 3 findings of an ongoing 5-year mixed methods research study in England collecting robust evidence on recruitment, retention and progression of children and family social workers. He will focus on the unique aspect of the study that follows up 40 social workers: 10 who said they would leave and left; 10 who said they would leave and stayed; 10 who said they would stay and stayed; and 10 who said they would stay and left.

The webinar will provide an opportunity to consider key messages from the study, insights from the interviews, and the implications for social workers, their employers and government.

Wednesday 14 December 2022, 11.00am - 12.30pm

Why People Die By Suicide and What We Can Do To Prevent It

**Prof Rory O'Connor
University of Glasgow**

Further information about this event will be available on our website soon.

Wednesday 18 January 2023, 11am - 12.30pm

Working with Adolescent Violence and Abuse Toward Parents

Adolescent violence toward their parents is an issue that is increasingly coming to the attention of child welfare professionals, including children's services. This has particularly been the case during the Covid 19 crisis. It is an area which does not fit within traditional models of child safeguarding and, as such, is a challenging area of practice. This webinar explores these challenges and, based on messages from research, how we can respond most effectively. In this seminar we will explore:

- Definitions, and prevalence, of various forms of adolescent violence toward parents/carers;
- The policy and practice guidance that has been developed in this area;
- The key findings from research in this area of practice;
- The practice challenges that emerge for professionals, and how these can be addressed most effectively.

Thursday 2 February 2023, 9.30 - 11.00am

Practice Development Events

For those working in, and with, children's services

Webinar Series: Complex Child and Adolescent Safeguarding: Understanding and Responding to Issues and Dilemmas

This series of four webinars explores some of the more complex areas of safeguarding practice with children and young people. Although there is a legitimate debate about the helpfulness of categories, it will nevertheless look at the particular challenges raised around neglect, emotional abuse and intrafamilial sexual abuse. These include how these forms of harm are defined, understood, evidenced and addressed. The first webinar will set the context, and will look at the range of safeguarding models currently being used including those that are both strengths and community based.

**Understanding the Relationship
Between Risk and Harm:
A Strengths-Based Approach to Child Protection**
Thursday 12 January 2023, 3.00 - 4.30pm

Assessing and Responding to Neglect
Thursday 2 February 2023, 3.00 - 4.30pm

Intrafamilial Sexual Abuse
Thursday 16 February 2023, 11.30am - 1.00pm

Emotional Abuse
Thursday 23 March 2023, 1.30 - 3.00pm

The Impact of Trauma on Children and Young People

A feature of many of the children and young people we work with, as well as very often their parents, is that they have experienced trauma in the lives. This webinar will explore the impact that trauma can have on their lives.

The webinar will cover:

- The impact of trauma on all aspects of child and adolescent development;
- Theoretical and research-based frameworks for understanding the nature of trauma;
- The combined impact that trauma and discrimination can play in the lives of children and young people;
- The meaning of trauma informed practice;
- Practical interventions that can help children recover from the impact of trauma.

Thursday 2 February 2023, 11.30am - 1.00pm

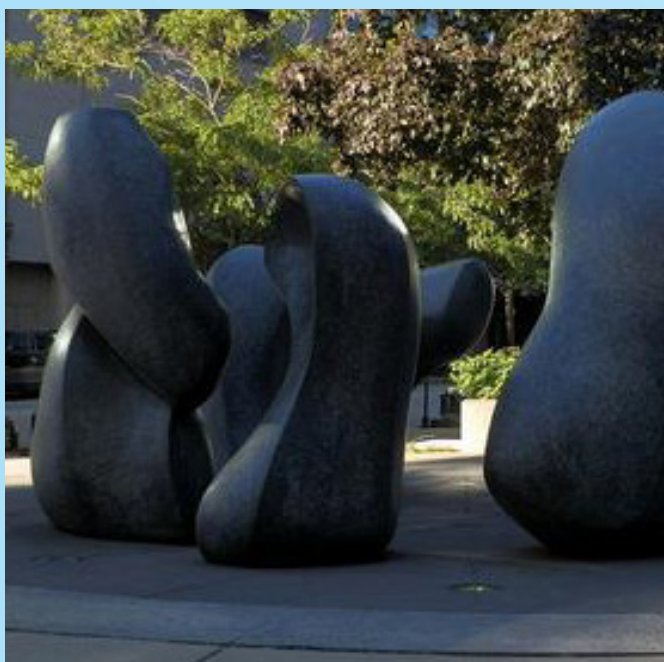
Building Professional and Organisational Resilience: A Systemic Approach

The last 2½ years have placed significant and, in many respects, unprecedented pressures on practitioners, their teams and agencies who are attempting to support families. This webinar explores the challenges that can arise, and the degree to which ideas around professional resilience can be helpful in supporting the well-being of the workforce. It will argue that, whilst workers can take steps that promote self care, it is important to see resilience from an organisational and systemic perspective. The webinar will cover:

- The range of challenges facing practitioners in this period, including potential isolation, risk management, and negotiating personal and professional boundaries when working at home;
- Concepts of professional resilience and staff well-being, and how they apply to current circumstances;
- The relationship between stress, anxiety and resilience, and ethical and effective practice with children and their families;
- The role and responsibilities of agencies in building organisational and team level resilience;
- Steps and self-care strategies that individuals can take to promote their own resilience and well-being.

Thursday 16 February 2023, 9.30 - 11.00am

To book places for these events,
please click on the hyperlinked titles



Practice Development Events

For those working in, and with, children's services

Webinar Series:

Managing and Leading Your Team in a Period of Hybrid Working: A Course for Managers in Children's and Adult Services

The last 2½ years have seen working practice in social work change significantly. At the height of the pandemic, most of the workforce was working largely remotely. This placed particular demands on managers attempting to lead teams, ensure high quality services for those who use them alongside the well being of staff. It is clear that we will not be "going back to normal". While staff are carrying out more face to face meetings, and visiting their offices less, we are seeing new models of hybrid working emerge. This webinar will explore the implications for management and supervision. It will look at the growing body of research on remote working and think about its implications for social work across the different aspect of supervision. Each session is a stand alone seminar but, together, they constitute a course that will seek to cover many aspects of learning, and managing teams.

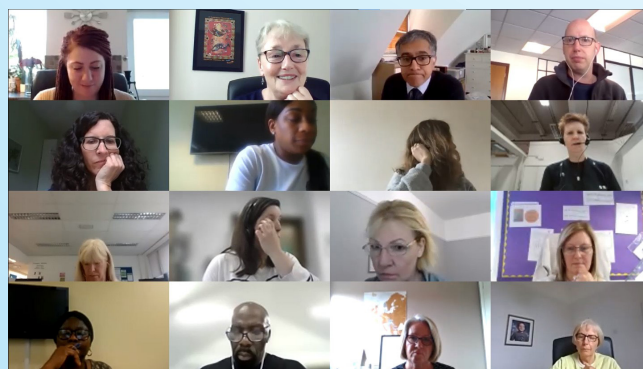
- 1. What is Good Practice in Supervision When it is Being Carried Out in a Hybrid Environment?**
Tuesday 8 November 2022, 3.00 - 4.30pm
- 2. Developing Supervisees' Capacity for Reflection, Analytical Thinking and Decision-Making Skills**
Friday 25 November 2022, 12.00 - 1.30pm
- 3. Managing and Promoting Good Practice: A Strength-Based Approach to Managing Performance**
Tuesday 13 December 2022, 12.30 - 2.00pm
- 4. Building Staff Wellbeing and Professional Resilience**
Thursday 12 January 2023, 1.30 - 3.00pm
- 5. Promoting Use of Self, Relationship-Based Practice and the Ethical Use of Authority in the Supervisory Relationship**
Thursday 2 February 2023, 1.30 - 3.00pm

Outcomes for Mother-Child Relationships After Coercive Control

Dr Emma Katz
Liverpool Hope University

Further information about this event will be available on our website soon.

Wednesday 1 February 2023, 11am - 12.30pm



This programme of events is organised by **Making Research Count**



Making Research Count
based in the
Institute of
Applied Social Research
University of Bedfordshire



Making Research Count
based in the
Health and Social Care Workforce
Research Unit
King's College London

We always welcome feedback on our programme, and any suggestions from our partner agencies - including practitioners who might want a forum in which to present innovative and good practice.

Our events can be accessed via a subscription to Making Research Count. Alternatively, individual places can be purchased at £60 (+VAT) each. To book places, please click on the hyperlinked webinar titles.

To enquire about subscribing to Making Research Count, please contact:

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