

## **Risk Assessment and the use of the National Risk Assessment Framework**

In our work with children and families it is inevitable that we will come across a degree of risk, therefore it is expected that an assessment of risk is undertaken whenever we engage with children and families. However the level and scope of risk varies dependent upon the context within which we are working, it is important that we are clear on the source of the risk, the triggers and what we can do to reduce that risk.

The biggest area of risk we work with relates to our child protection work. The national guidance gives a very clear steer in respect of the child protection context –

*“In the context of this guidance, risk is the **likelihood** or **probability** of a particular outcome given the presence of factors in a child or young person's life. Risk is part and parcel of everyday life: a toddler learning to walk is likely to be at risk from some stumbles and scrapes but this does not mean the child should not be encouraged to walk. 'Risks' may be deemed acceptable; they may also be reduced by parents/carers or through the early intervention of universal services. At other times, a number of services may need to respond together as part of a co-ordinated intervention. Only where risks cause, or are likely to cause, significant harm to a child would a response under child protection be required. Where a child has already been exposed to actual harm, assessment will mean looking at the extent to which they are at risk of repeated harm and at the potential effects of continued exposure over time. Consideration should also be given to the risk posed by the potential perpetrator.”* (National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, 2014)

Moray Child Protection Committee agreed in 2014 to adopt the National Risk Assessment Framework (NRAF) for all child protection risk assessment. The Framework consists of a number of tools that will assist teams around the child to assess, analyse and respond to risk proportionately and appropriately.

Our recent inspection, self-evaluations and feedback from training delivered by Moray Learning and Development Group all highlight that there may not be sufficient clarity regarding the appropriate use of the NRAF tools. In order to address that the following has been agreed:

### **Where there is no current agency involvement:**

1. Possible child protection concerns are identified.
2. Initial information gathering and assessment commences – at this point agencies will be using single agency processes.
3. IRD is held. Early use of NRAF tools will help to inform the decision making based on the information already available.
4. Early analysis of risk indicates the need for an Initial Child Protection Case Conference (ICPCC).
5. The ICPCC agrees on the need for the child's name to be placed on the Child Protection Register and for a child protection plan to be in place.
6. The CP plan will include the need for further assessment and analysis of risk.

7. This will be carried out using appropriate tools from the NRAF on a multi-agency basis.
8. This may require an initial risk assessment meeting and it is expected ALL agencies will attend and contribute.
9. Review and update of the risk assessment will be carried out through the core groups.

**Where there is ongoing agency involvement and the accumulation of concerns are indicating the need for child protection.**

1. Assessment of ongoing concerns indicates the need for possible child protection measures and an ICPCC is convened.
2. Early use of NRAF tools will help to inform the decision making based on the information already available.
3. The ICPCC agrees on the need for the child's name to be placed on the Child Protection Register and for a child protection plan to be in place.
4. The CP plan will include the need for further assessment and analysis of risk.
5. This will be carried out using appropriate tools from the NRAF on a multi-agency basis.
6. This may require an initial risk assessment meeting and it is expected ALL agencies will attend and contribute.
7. Review and update of the risk assessment will be carried out through the core groups.

As stated above attendance and contribution to any meetings in relation to the ongoing assessment and analysis of risk is expected by all agencies, should there be any issues in relation to this this should be escalated to your line manager.

Managers are expected to support and promote full involvement in these processes.