
Overview

This course will focus on the impact of the Trilogy of Risk (Toxic Trio); of domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, and parental mental health on children and multi-agency responses to working with families where this is a feature. In an analysis of 139 serious case reviews, between 2009-2011 (Brandon et al 2012), – investigations showed that in over three quarters incidents (86%) where children were seriously harmed or died one or more of a "Trilogy of Risk" – mental illness, substance misuse and domestic abuse – played a significant part.

Not only are children at risk in such situations. Living in such conditions means that children and young people's life-chances are also affected - with an impact on future learning, behaviour and health. A single disorder can negatively affect parents' capacity to meet their children's needs, but the co-existence of these types of problems has a much greater impact on parenting capacity. The short- and long-term consequences for children of growing up in a family where at least one parent is experiencing extreme difficulties will depend on the combination of resilience and protective mechanisms. The challenge for practitioners is to identify both the strengths and difficulties within the family by carrying out a holistic assessment which covers the child's development, the parents' capacity to meet the child's needs, and the impact of wider family and environmental factors. Early identification depends on ensuring children and young people have opportunities to discuss their experiences with a trusted adult. Key to the safeguarding and promoting of a child's welfare is the ability to understand the situation from the child's viewpoint.

How Long is the course?

1 Day

Who is the Course Aimed At?

All staff involved in providing services for children and their families where the 'Trilogy of Risk' is present and impact on parenting capacity and children's development.

Teaching methods include: power-point presentations, DVD, case studies and practising using key tools in small groups.

Each topic in the 'Trilogy of Risk' is available as a separate, one day course. For further details please contact Talking Life.

Objectives

- To discuss and explore the interaction of the 'Trilogy of Risk', its impact upon adults, children and family dynamics.
- To raise awareness of how children living with domestic abuse, parental mental illness and parental alcohol/substance misuse are at significantly increased risk of harm, and the impact that this may have upon a child's life experience.
- To promote a multi-agency approach to working with and providing services for children in these circumstances.
- To provide information on national guidance and local procedures on working with families where the 'Trilogy of Risk' is a feature.
- To look at serious case reviews where the 'Trilogy of Risk' has been a significant feature, and look at lessons for practice.
- To focus on effective interventions that engages the whole family and maintains a child focused service

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the workshop delegates will

- Identify how the risk factors of parental mental illness, substance misuse and domestic abuse co-exist within families and the implications thereof for safeguarding children
- Understand how the cumulative issues impact on children and young people, in relation to immediate risk, their day to day lives and long term implications.
- Describe the impact of parental substance misuse, mental ill health and domestic violence on parenting capacity
- Explore learning from Serious Case Review findings and current research to inform evidence based practice.
- Be familiar with local procedures and national guidance relating to domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and parental mental illness
- Understand the need for joint assessments, and how effective joint working can reduce harm
- Know how to adopt a child focussed approach
- Understand the cycle of change, both as it relates to substance misuse, mental health, domestic violence and parenting
- Have an opportunity to reflect on their practice
- To understand what works well in responding to the 'Trilogy of Risk'