



Child Protection Conferences & Core Group Briefing Slides



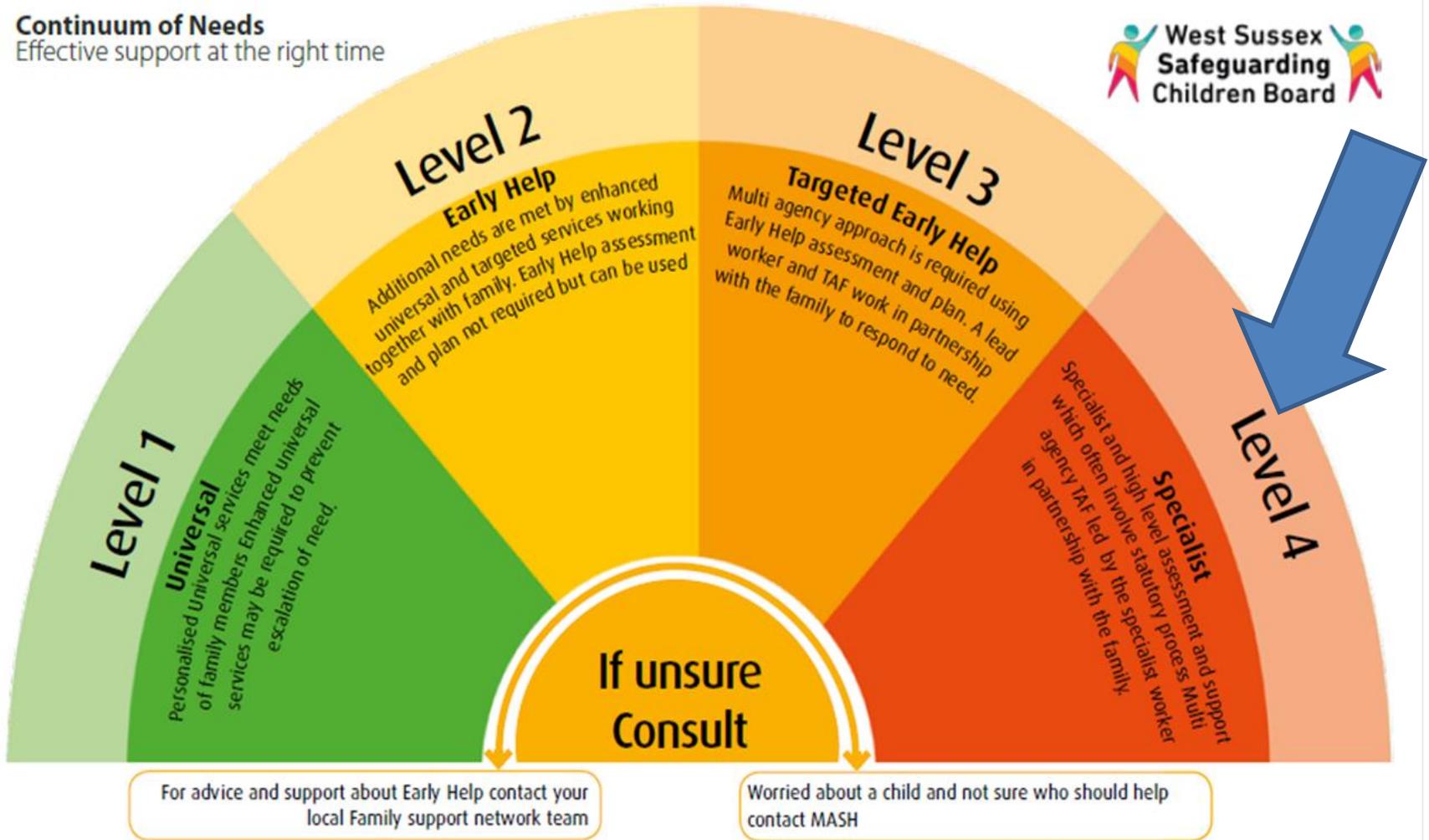
These briefing slides will provide you with a basic outline of expectations on professionals when attending initial/review child protection conferences and core groups.

(Please note these slides do not replace the 1 day training programme but aim to provide you with an overview of this process. To request a place on the full day training visit the Learning & Development Gateway and search Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups)

West Sussex Continuum of Need

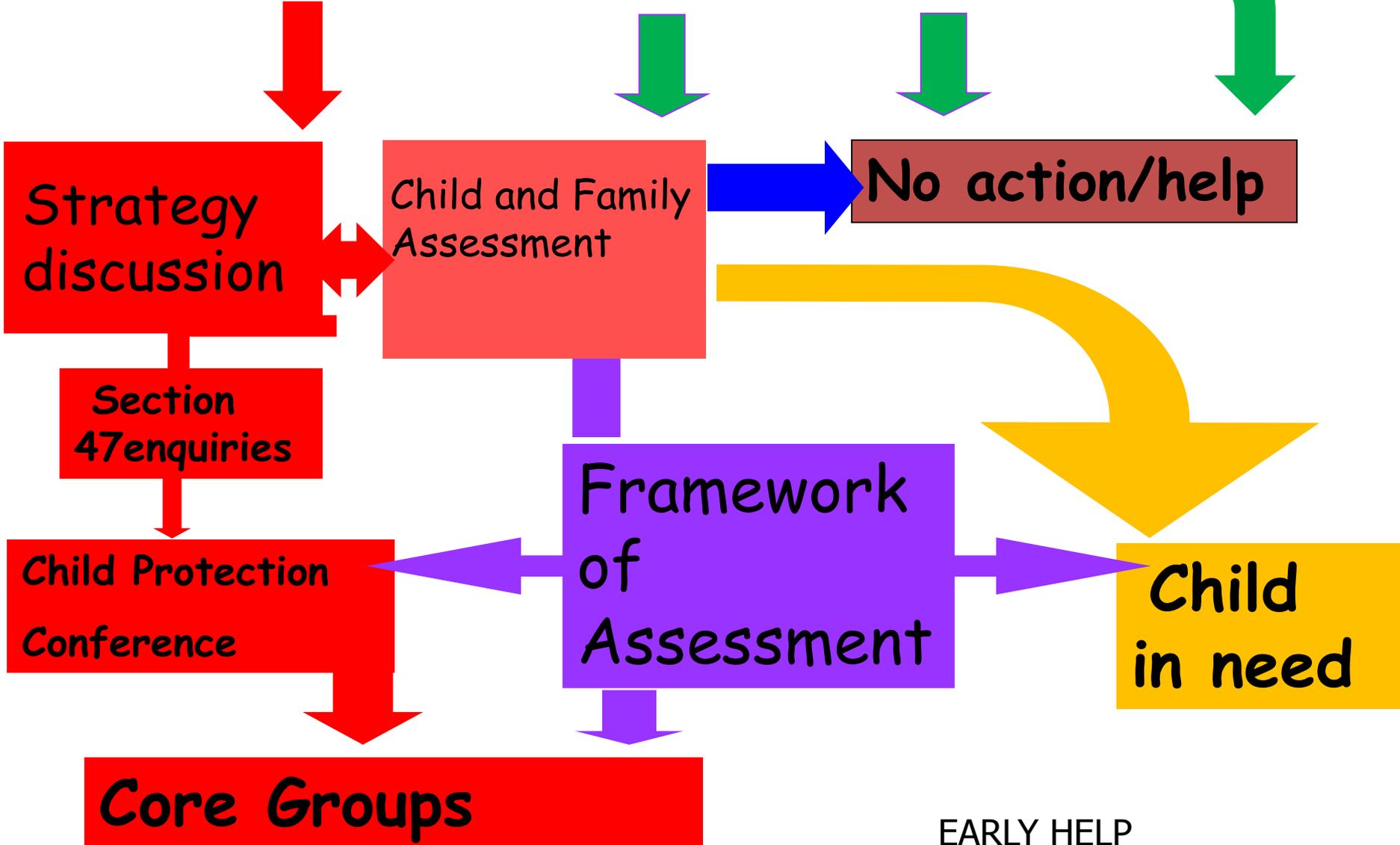
Child protection sits here...

Continuum of Needs
Effective support at the right time



Child Protection: **Initial referral.** The child protection process is in the red boxes

Response within 24 hours



The difference between child in need and child protection

Child in Need

They are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority under this Part;

b) his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services;

c) or he is disabled"

Child Protection

It is determined "significant" by "comparing a child's health and development with what might be reasonably expected of a similar child". Although there is no absolute criteria for determining whether or not harm is "significant" professionals work with family members to assess the child, and a decision is made based on their professional judgement using the gathered evidence.

Initial Child Protection Conference using signs of safety

All conferences within West Sussex use the Signs of Safety approach throughout. The following clips demonstrate how Conferences are carried out and what information is included within the meeting.

(These video clips will give you a flavour of the language used/focus on impact on child as opposed to describing adult behaviours. Please note that not all conferences will look exactly like this, West Sussex do not undertake SoS conferences in their purest form.)

Introductions at conference / Family tree

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

Information sharing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aegtmHVnHS4>

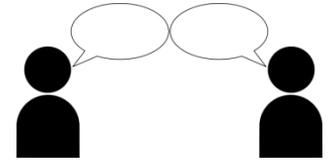
Action Planning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yd6upiytBrE>

Decision Making

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sFch2uh_10

To ensure parents feel at ease during the conference process the following things are in place:



- Parents meet with the Chair prior to the conference.
- Introductions of all professionals at the start
- Parents are asked if reports are factually correct
- There is an anti discriminatory code of conduct that all must adhere to.
- Professionals are sat evenly so that parents are not sat on one side of the table and professionals on the other.
- Parents are given the opportunity to respond to professionals and give their opinions on what they would like to happen.

The Professional Slot

Occasionally it may be necessary to have a professional slot within a Conference.

- Chairs try to avoid using professional slots in conference; it can create further anxiety for family members who cannot be present.
- However, there may be a need to convene one if a professional has third party information to share, or if a matter is still being investigated. For example if there is a police investigation currently underway and sharing information with the family could jeopardise any evidence.
- If it looks as though a professional slot is going to be required, that the requesting agency informs the Chair beforehand.
- The decision for whether the slot should be held remains with the Chair

The purpose of the Initial Child Protection Conference

- To analyse information obtained from interagency assessment to ensure the child's safety and promote health and development.
- To consider evidence presented about the child's family situation in order to make a judgement about the danger of harm should things remain the same.. relevant to safety planning (Using Signs of Safety approach)
- Decide the future goals and next steps required to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and whether the child needs to become the subject of a CP Plan.
- The Chair facilitates this process.
- Different factors are considered and what the impact of these are on the child.
- This process heavily involves the family and is done with them and not to them.
- To agree an outline child protection plan/child in need plan

As a professional, there are a number of points to consider before attending Conference.....

- Preparation before the Conference - report writing. Click [here](#) for the template.
- Contribution of the professionals – share relevant information!
- The experience of the parent/carer
- Respecting differences – Other professionals and family members
- Refrain from using acronyms in your report in conference.



Preparation **before** the Conference

- Check your agency's records for any relevant information about the family as all children in the family will be discussed.
- There is an expectation that pertinent information held by other agencies should be collated as a report and tabled at the conference
- Report sharing beforehand does not apply to the Police
- Health Visitors and School Nurses openly and consistently sharing information in WS
- You must make sure that you have shared your information with family members **before** the conference
 - There should be NO surprises for the family or the Chair at conference!

The Professional's Contribution

- Be prepared to share all information that is relevant, and be aware that this will be formally recorded
- Be aware of implications of sharing any third party information
- Contact the Chair ahead of conference if in any doubt
- Be prepared to make a proactive contribution to the Conference process
- You will be asked your opinion during the conference!
- Must share any extra information or if Domestic abuse is happening. May need to keep parents separate.
- If you would like to bring a colleague to observe the Conference you **MUST** ask the Chair **BEFORE** the day of the conference to enable the Chair to ask the family if they object to this.
Any professional arriving at Conference with a colleague who has not asked to sit in on the Conference will be refused entry.
expecting professionals to contribute to safety planning



The Role of the Chair

- Runs the conference on behalf of the LSCB and is independent
- Will facilitate involvement of parents and young people where appropriate
- Ensures focus of conference remains on the welfare of the child
- Ensuring **quoracy**– There should be 2 other agencies in addition to a social worker the Chair but....
- The Chair can make a decision on whether to go ahead based on the age of the child (eg; there may only be a HV involved with a 3 month old), on whether there is sufficient information available to make an informed decision and on whether not going ahead may increase risk to a child.
- Informs professionals of their responsibilities in terms of decision making
- Ensures that issues of race, religion, language, class, gender, sexuality and disability are taken fully into account

Dissent

What is it & what does it mean?

- The Chair is responsible for the conference decision but will aim for consensus amongst conference members
- Once the Chair has confirmed the decision of the conference, professionals who disagree with this may formally record their dissent.



During the Conference the Chair will discuss resource planning vs safety planning. These are different and can be described in the following ways -

Resource Plans

- Agreed at CP conferences
- Led by Safety Goals
- Specialist services
- Visiting and monitoring arrangements
- Additional assessments
- Contingencies
- Reviewed every 3–6 months

Safety Plans

- Agreed by keyworker and family at conference
- Led by Danger Statement(s)
- Detail of how daily life will be different
- Build on exceptions and ideas developed with family
- Reviewed every week or two
- Reviewed during CP visits, Core Groups and Review conferences

Core Groups

- Following an initial child protection conference, the first core group meeting must be held within 10 working days
- There must be at least two core group meetings held between conferences
- Good practice would be for core groups to meet within 6wks of their initial meeting, and at a minimum frequency of once every 2 months following the first review conference.

The role of the Core Group is:

- ✓ To agree detailed plan
- ✓ To agree roles and responsibilities
- ✓ To develop and implement the plan
- ✓ To monitor progress and amend plan
- ✓ Identify changes
- ✓ Meet regularly between conferences
- ✓ Record core group decisions and share information to group for action as working document



Review Child Protection Conferences

- First review must be held within 3 months of the initial CP conference
- Any subsequent reviews must be held within 6 months of the first review CP Conference
- The child protection plan is reviewed.

The role of the Review Conference is to:

- ✓ To assess if progress is being made towards reducing the level of identified/potential harm
- ✓ To re-negotiate the child protection plan if it is not progressing
- ✓ To determine whether the child still requires a child protection plan

For more information on Child Protection conferences and Core Groups contact:

Lucy Short

WSSCB Learning & Development Officer

Lucy.short@westsussex.gov.uk

Child Protection Adviser

Jenny Brennan

jenny.brennan@westsussex.gov.uk