



Safeguarding – reactive phase/assumptive risk

Managing risk

Aims of session 2

- ❑ To be able to take a strategic view within the service/ organisation re. safeguarding in all aspects this underpinned by an understanding of risk
- ❑ To understand the structure and impact that a robust safeguarding CULTURE brings.
- ❑ To understand what individuals bring in terms of the perception of risk and bias



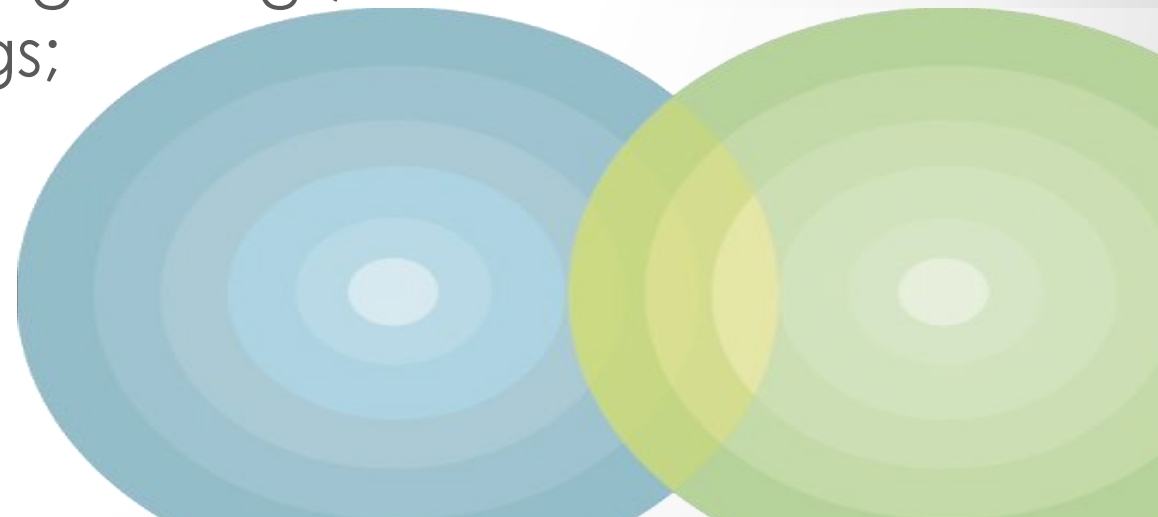
Risks and issues which disqualify a foster carer:

- A person is disqualified from acting as a foster carer for the local authority (unless a relative of the child or already acting as a foster carer) if s/he or any adult member of the household has been cautioned for or convicted of an offence against a child which involves violence or bodily injury (other than common assault or battery), cruelty (to a child under 16), indecency, abduction, the supply of Class A drugs or the importation/possession of indecent photographs of a child under 16 or a sexual offence against a child unless the offence was contrary to sections 6, 12 or 13 of the Sexual Offences Act 1956 and the person concerned was under 20 when the offence was committed. A list of the specific offences is set out in the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.
- Applications to foster will not be considered from anyone who owns a pet that is registered or required to be registered under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (see Dogs and Pets Policy and Guidance).
- If the applicant or a household member has a conviction within the last two years, a serious offence or a history of offending, the application will be taken to a Fostering Panel before proceeding.

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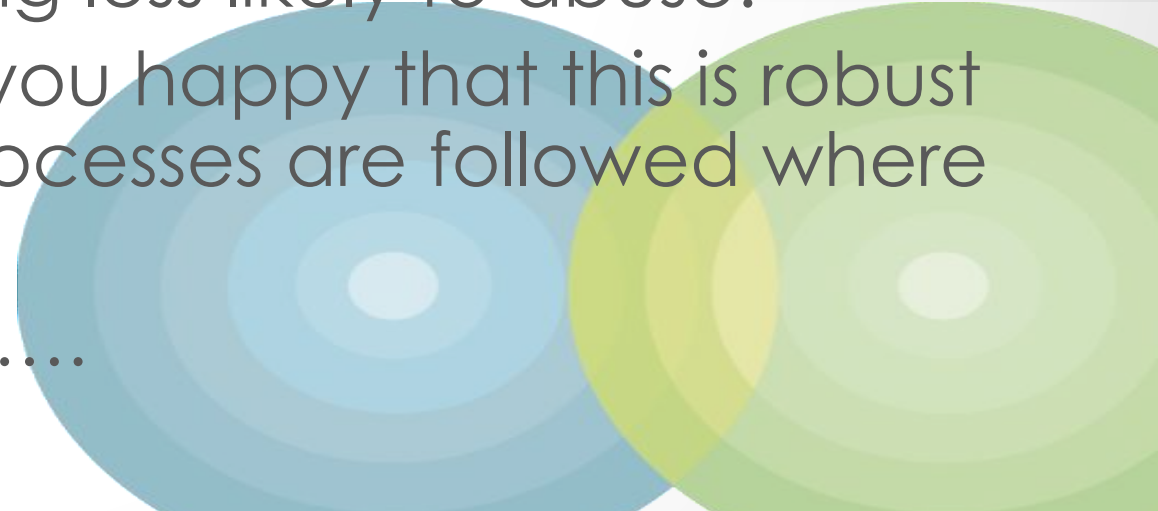
Risks and issues which disqualify a foster carer

- Serious offences would include:
- Exceptions to the specified offences within the regulations i.e. teenage offenders;
- All those specified offences where the victims were adults;
- Murder, manslaughter, rape, armed robbery, blackmail/extortion;
- Violent offences including GBH, ABH, wounding, assault;
- Aggravated burglary;
- Drug dealing/supply, possession of illegal drugs;
- Prostitution, living off immoral earnings;
- Racism, fraud/dishonesty;
- Drink driving;
- Serious motoring offences.



Risks and issues to consider:

- Heightened risk of neglect for disabled children
- Assumptions made and decisions based upon them
- Blurring of boundaries- never assume it does not happen-and “leeway” for that young person and the approach to safeguarding
- A person determined to come into to the foster service for their own reasons in accessing children will succeed
- Perception of risk changes with longer established foster carers who may be viewed as being less likely to abuse.
- Management of allegations – are you happy that this is robust and effective and that the right processes are followed where allegations are substantiated?
- Management of Form F processes
- ANYTHING ELSE?



What happens when cultures or systems go wrong?

- Regression therapy (Leicestershire) 1992
- Pindown (Staffordshire)-report June 1990
- Confrontational restraint (Aycliffe)report 1993
- Winterbourne View- 2012
- IICSA final report autumn 2022
- “Out of Harms ‘ Way” – Ann Longfield
- Hesley Phase 1 report October 2022

- Officially sanctioned
- Publicly lauded and acclaimed as a “good thing”
- Not appropriately monitored and inspected
- Managers and leaders ALLOWED a culture of abuse to flourish

Systems and failures like this can happen anywhere- are you sure they could not happen in your carers’ homes or within the broader service?



Risks from other children and young people -

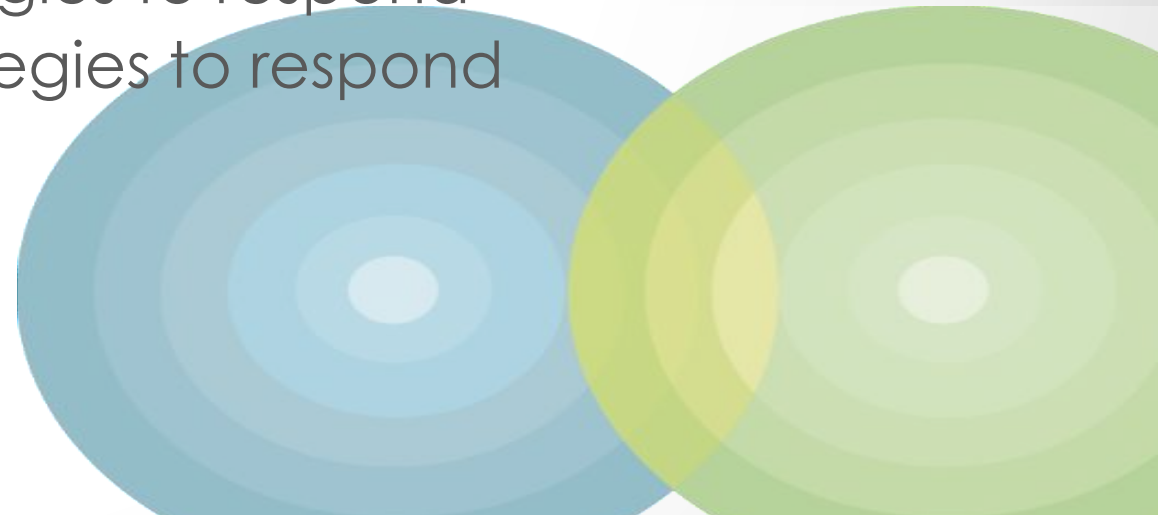
- child sexual exploitation/CCE
- child on child abuse....
- bullying
- violence
- abuse on social media- various forms
- emotional abuse
- relationships
- online safety
- Prevent / Incel / misogyny

Can you be sure that you have safeguarded as reasonably as you can for these issues? What others must you consider ? How do these issues feed into your wider culture?



Building on the first session are these protective factors in place in your service

- strong leadership
- positive staff/ foster carer culture
- close inclusive relationships with young people
- high quality supervision/appraisal of foster carers and the team
- effective monitoring and placement review
- good interagency communication
- use of LADO
- child centred, rights-based approach
- calm, authoritative staff/carers, with strategies to respond
- calm, child centred foster carers with strategies to respond
- external review
- ANYTHING ELSE?



Managing risk and safeguarding “reasonably”

- **Uncertainty and risk** are features of child protection work...Risk management **cannot** eradicate risk: it can only try to reduce the **probability of harm**....
- Those involved in child protection must be “**risk sensible**”.
- There is no option of being **risk averse** since there is **no** absolutely safe option

The Munro Review of Child Protection: A Child Centred System, May 2011

- “The big problem for society (and thus for professionals) is working out a realistic expectation of professionals ability to predict the future and manage risk of harm to children and young people”
- “Risk assessments are fallible and can err by overestimating or underestimating. A Well thought out assessment may indicate the risk to the family is low, However low probability events happen. “
- “Professionals, particularly social workers, currently face the possibility of censure – damned if they do, damned if they don’t”

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Risks- responses

- What influences our reactions to risk?
- Our own previous experiences- personal and professional
- Our knowledge/ training/ formal understanding of risk
- Bias / unconscious bias
- Competing issues e.g. financial
- Assumptive risk/ assumptions
- Any other factors?
-



Unconscious bias

- **Unconscious biases** are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. Everyone holds **unconscious** beliefs about various social and identity groups, and these **biases** stem from one's tendency to organise social worlds by categorising.
- **Affinity bias** refers to when you unconsciously prefer people who share qualities with you or someone you like. It occurs because your brain sees them as familiar and relatable, and we all want to be around people we can relate to.
- **Attribution bias** refers to how you perceive your actions and those of others. It stems from our brain's flawed ability to assess the reasons for certain behaviours – particularly those that lead to success and failure.

We generally attribute our own accomplishments to our skill and personality, and our failures to external factors – to hindrances that we believe are beyond our control. We are less likely to blame and find fault in ourselves

Examples of unconscious bias- recognise any?

- **Conformity bias** happens when your views are swayed too much by those of other people. It occurs because we all seek acceptance from others – we want to hold opinions and views that our community accepts.
- **Confirmation bias** refers to how people primarily search for bits of evidence that back up their opinions, rather than looking at the whole picture. It leads to selective observation, meaning you overlook other information and instead focus on things that fit your view. You may even reject new information that contradicts your initial evidence.
- **Contrast effect**
 - This type of bias occurs when you assess two or more similar things and compare them with one another, rather than looking at each based on their own merits.
- **Gender bias** is simply a preference for one gender over the other. It often stems from our deep-seated beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes.
- **Halo and horns** effects you focus on either a positive or negative feature to the exclusion of all else.

Risk analysis

- principles to consider

We need to **distinguish...**

what has brought things about in the **past**

what keeps things going in the **present**

what is likely to happen in the **future**

create a balance in terms of our approach to risk



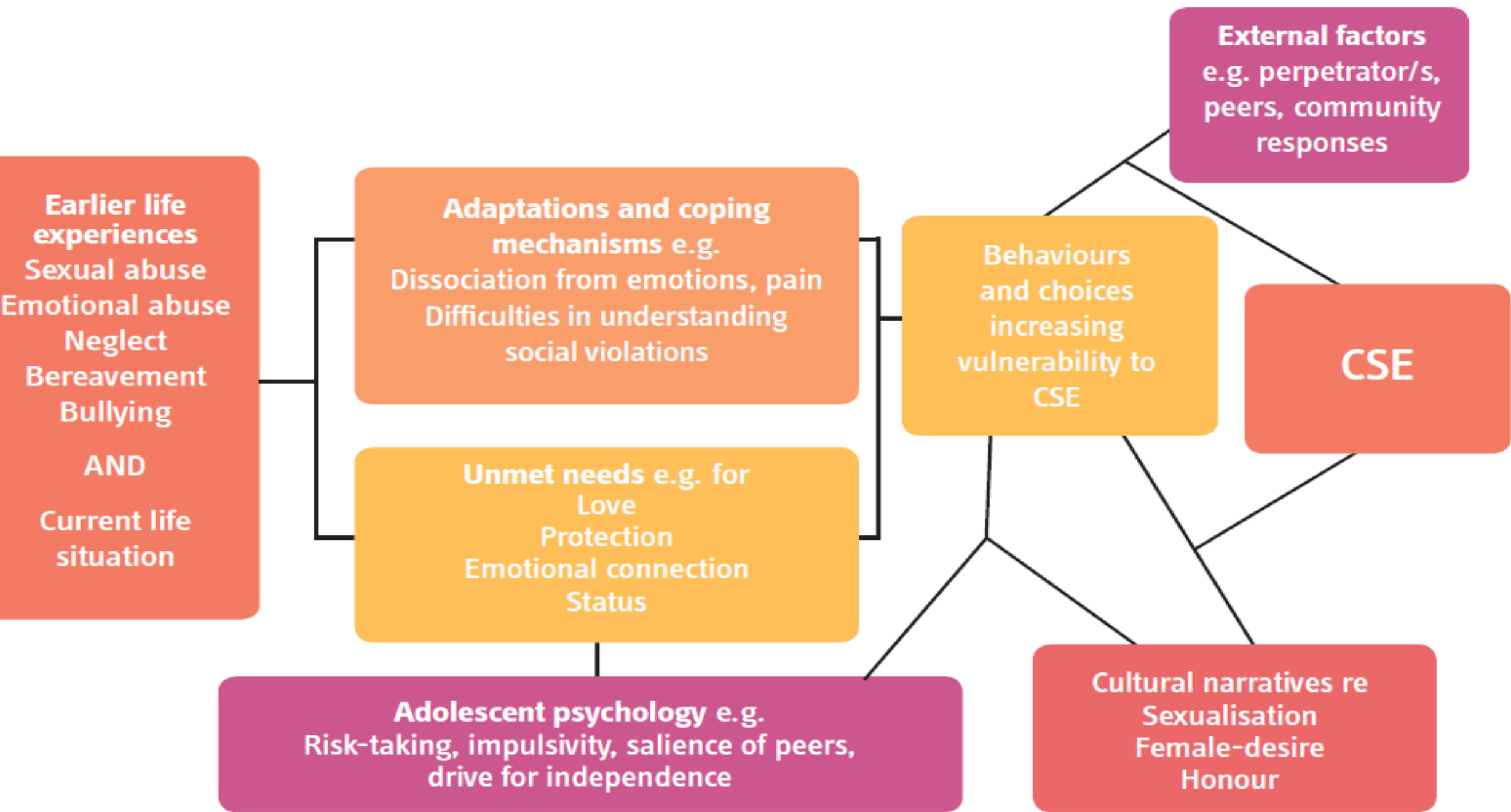
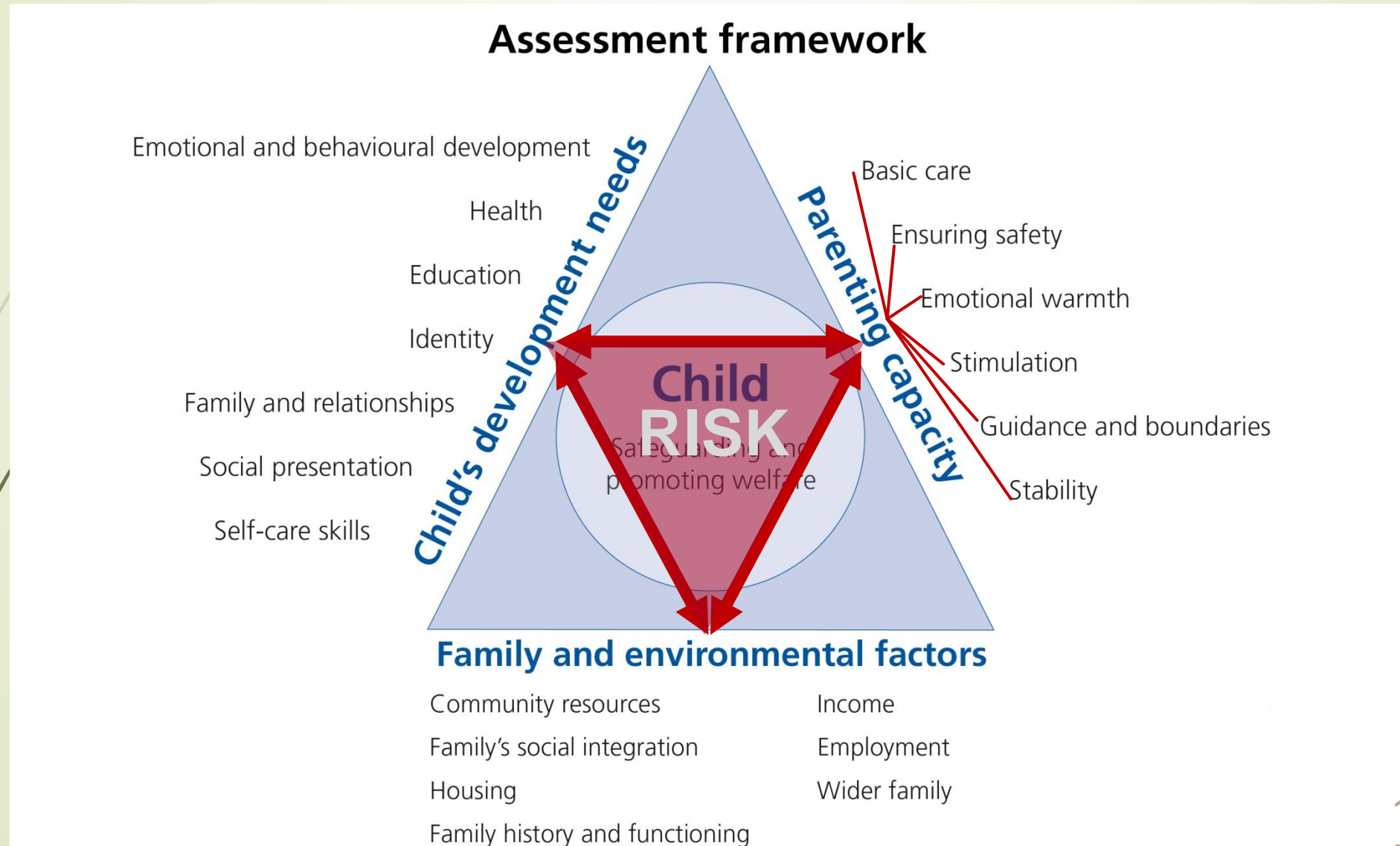
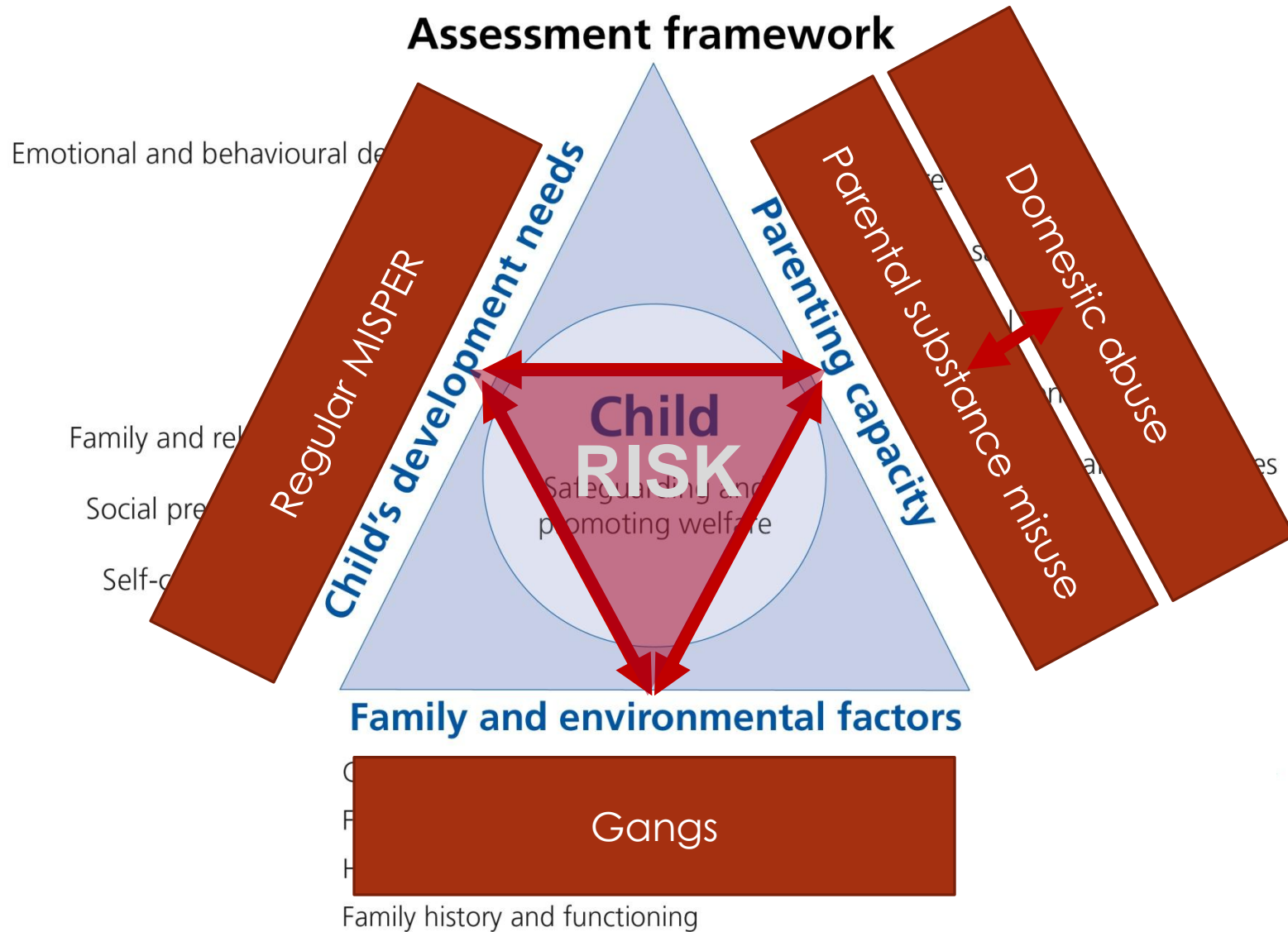


Figure 1 *An illustration of the presenting and underlying causes for CSE*

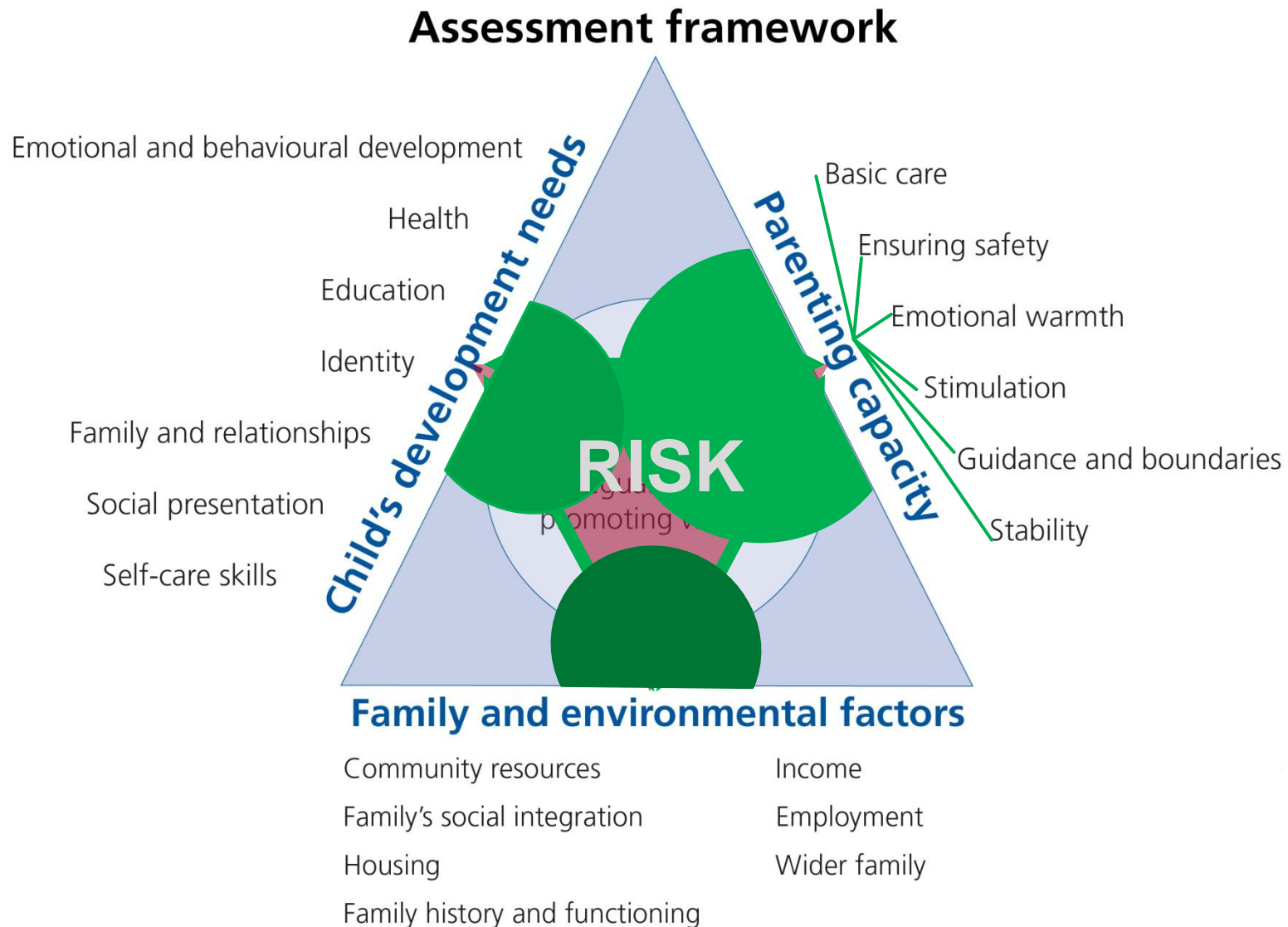
Drawing risk from need- what does the child need:



Specific risks



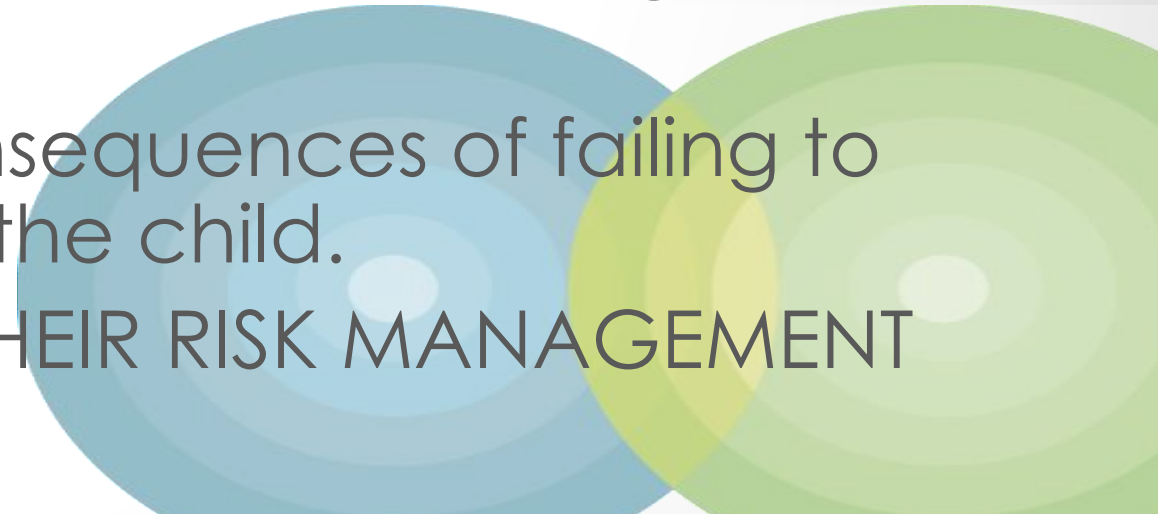
Strengths in place ?



Principles :

- Risk and need are two sides of the same coin
- Risk and the right to take risk are normal part of life and can be positive
- Assessing and managing risk are part of the same system
- Risk has to be understood broadly in relation to all aspects of children's well-being
- Risk includes looking at current risks and the long-term impact of those risks
- Risk involves looking at the consequences of failing to meet needs and the impact on the child.

DO FOSTER CARERS USE THIS IN THEIR RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH ?



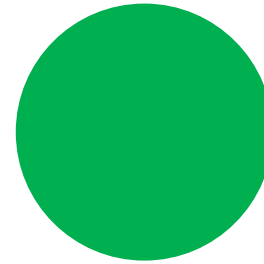
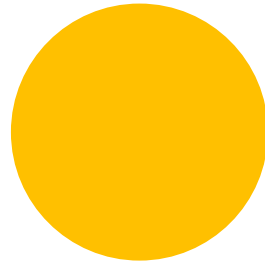
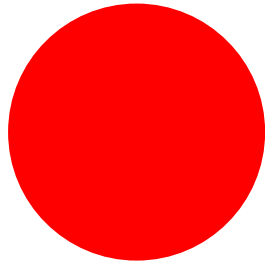
Risk and being reasonable :

- all reasonable steps have been taken;
- reliable assessment methods have been used;
- information has been collected and thoroughly evaluated;
- decisions are recorded, communicated and followed through;
- policies and procedures have been followed;
- managers adopt an investigative approach and are proactive
-



the process

MASH enquiry



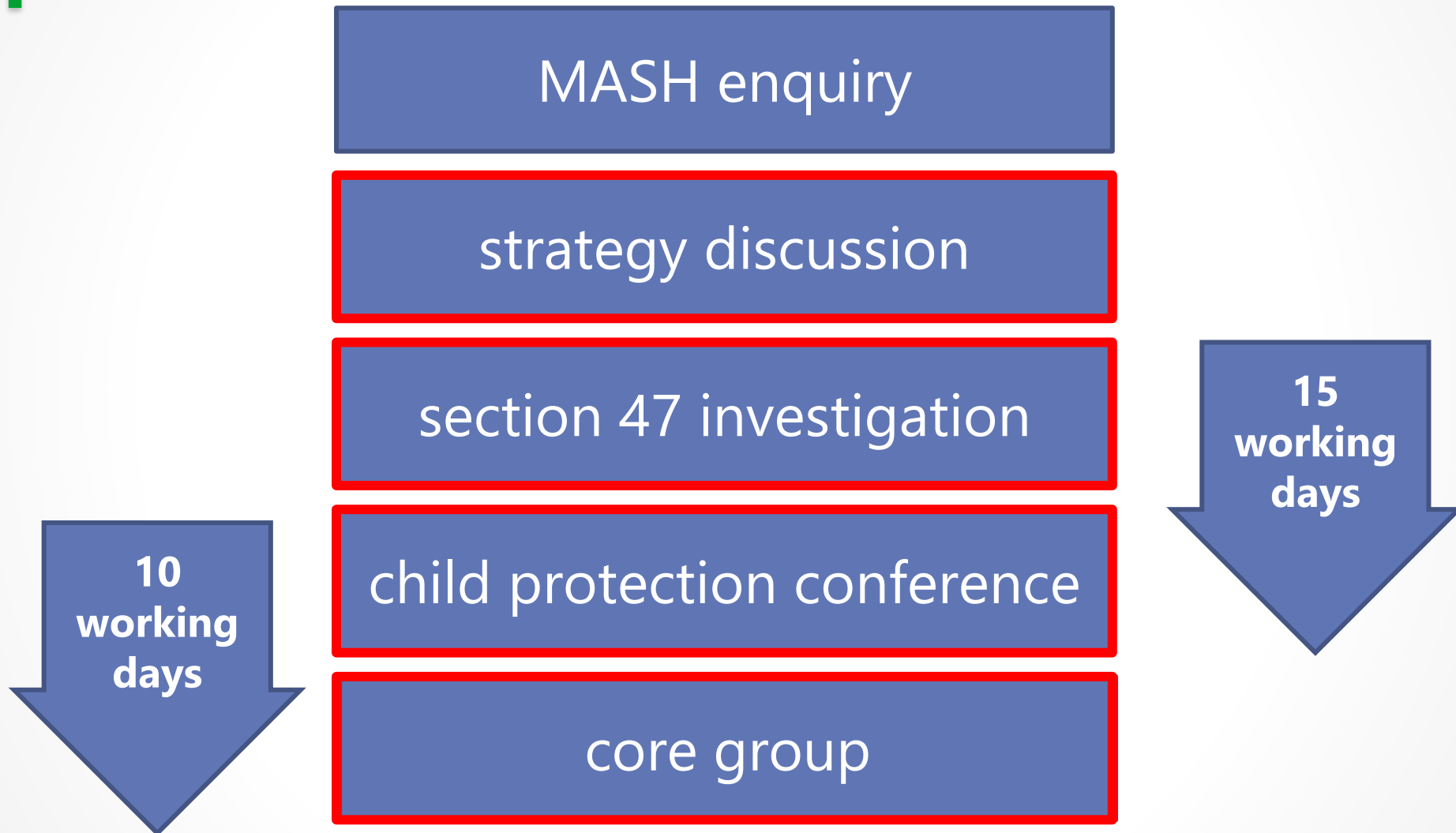
immediate

24 hours

3 working days for
information

5 working days for
decision

the process



Plans

- Risk management / support plans must be clear
- Regularly reviewed and changes indicated and communicated
- Sit within the carers' safety plan
- Aligned to a range of other risk assessments and documents such as behaviour support plans
- Aligned to impact risk assessments
- Plans should be dynamic and responsive.



Impact risk assessment

- Initial identification of risk in tender/care plan docs
- What do we know? What don't we know?
- Pre-placement assessment
 - Social work reports
 - Voice of young person, family, significant others
 - Previous carers – what makes you so different?
 - Interagency contribution



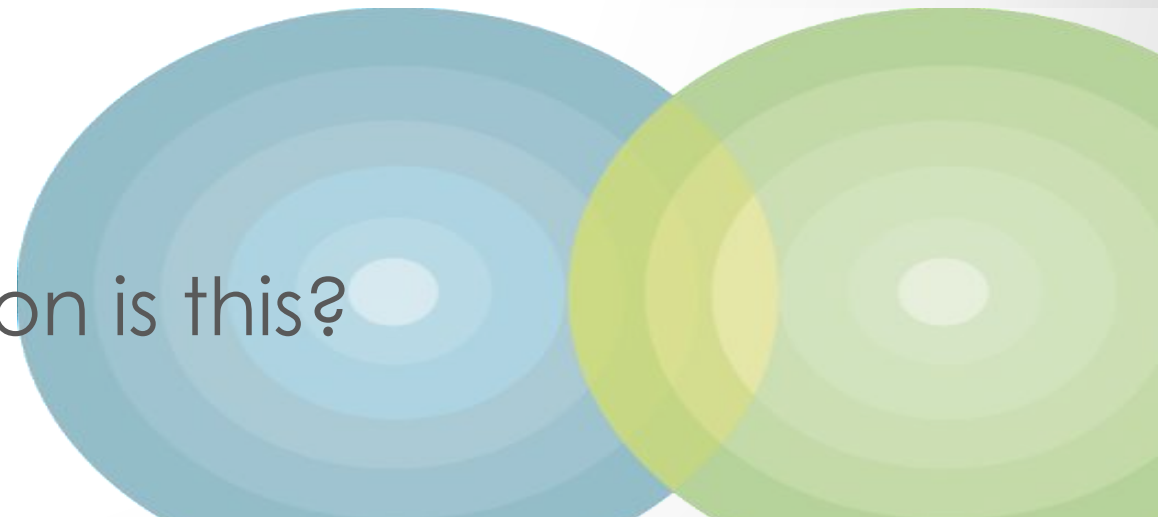
Impact risk assessment

- Initial identification of risk in tender/care plan docs
- What do we know? What don't we know?
- Pre-placement assessment
- Level of risk, nature of risk
- Impact in your home
 - Other young people
 - Locality
 - Staff
 - Physical environment



Impact risk assessment

- Initial identification of risk in tender/care plan docs
- What do we know? What don't we know?
- Pre-placement assessment
- Level of risk, nature of risk
- Impact in your home
- Skills of the team
 - Training
 - Experience
 - Access to services
 - Supervision, support, clinical
- Is this a match?? Whose decision is this?
-



Risk management and impact risk assessment

- What factors must be taken into account ?
- How is ongoing impact managed and reviewed ?
- Where does the management of risk sit within your culture? Where does it sit within the foster carers' culture?



Records- what should they look like?

- be **specific** – who said what, when
- use **actual words** of children and parents
- add **analysis** – *why* you are worried about what you have seen or heard
- **link** to the threshold tool, chronologies
- set out the **actions** you think are required
- what do we **know**?
- what do we **think**?
- what should we **do**?
- Child's full name and date of birth
- Date and time of the concern
- Signed , dated with date and time of the record, job role of the person creating the record



So go away to review:

- The culture- you are the strategic “keeper” of the culture of your service across all areas and underpinned by safeguarding- be honest

.....

Is it all in place?

Tickbox?

Out of date?

Needs some work?

Evidenced?

DO YOU NEED TO DRAW UP A PLAN TO COMPLETE THE CULTURE ARC OF SAFEGUARDING IN YOUR SERVICE OR WITH SPECIFIC FOSTER CARERS?

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WHAT NEXT ?

- TOMORROW WE WILL TAKE THIS INFORMATION FORWARD TO INFORM THE SAFEGUARDING LEARNING CULTURE ?
- ANY THOUGHTS OR QUESTIONS?

