

THE CHILD PROTECTION & WELFARE STRATEGY

Prevention, Participation and Landing them in Everyday Child
Protection & Welfare Practice



Cormac Quinlan
Director of Transformation and Policy Tusla

Child Protection Systems

- Parents are neglectful and abusive
- State is the watchdog
- Individual/Moralistic
- Legalistic/Investigative/Substantiation
- Protection from harm
- Adversarial
- Children/parents rights are enforced with legal means

- Families need assistance
- Parental support
- Social/Psychological
- Therapeutic needs assessment
- Prevention/social bonding
- Partnership
- Parents rights are mediated by social workers

Child Protection

Family Service

Child Focus

Public Health

- Individual needs of the child in present and future perspective
- Paternalistic/state assumes parental role
- Child's development/outcomes
- Early intervention and regulatory
- Promote wellbeing via social investment
- Substitute/partnership
- Children rights /parental responsibility

- Child abuse is a societal problem – cultural/institutional and structural
- Social investment at all levels
- Primary Prevention – universal and progressive universalism
- Promote social equality and recued the long term costs of social deprivation and child abuse
- All of society has a role in preventing harm to children
- Citizens rights

BOBF – National Policy Framework 2014-2020

- Active & healthy
 - Increase in children engaged in sport
 - Increase in child self harm
 - Increase in parental mental health difficulties
- Achieving full potential in learning & development
 - Increase in achievement English literacy, math and science
 - Increase in probable mental health and school work pressure
- Safe & protected from harm
 - More families receiving family support
 - Reduction in children awaiting a social worker
- Economic security
 - Increase child poverty rates
 - Increased homelessness rates
 - Reduction in youth unemployment
- Connected and respected and contributing to the world
 - Increase in 15yr old spending time talking with parents

Children First : Key Principles

1. The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility
2. The best interests of the child should be paramount
3. The overall aim in all dealings with children and their families is to intervene proportionately to support families to keep children safe from harm
4. Interventions by the State should build on existing strengths and protective factors in the family
5. Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where it is necessary for the State to intervene to keep children safe, the minimum intervention necessary should be used
6. Children should only be separated from parents/guardians when alternative means of protecting them have been exhausted
7. Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives
8. Parents/guardians have a right to respect, and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family
9. A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents/guardians and families. Where there is conflict, the child's welfare must come first
10. Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of children

The Constant Dilemma

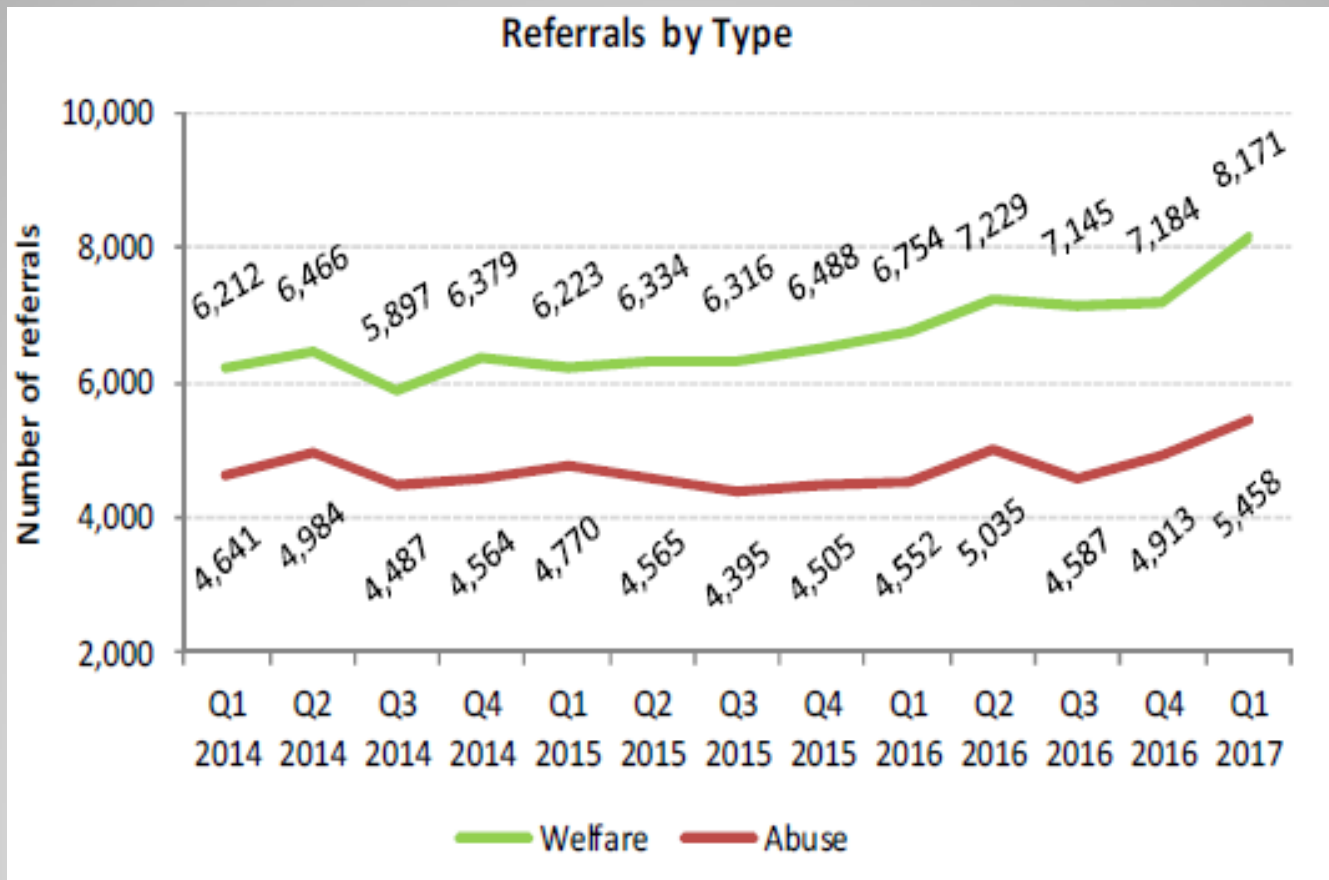


**Child is paramount
Focus on harm
Manage all risk
Strong Intervention
Keep everyone informed**

**Support the family
Focus on strengths
Partnership
Don't over intervene
Family's confidentiality**

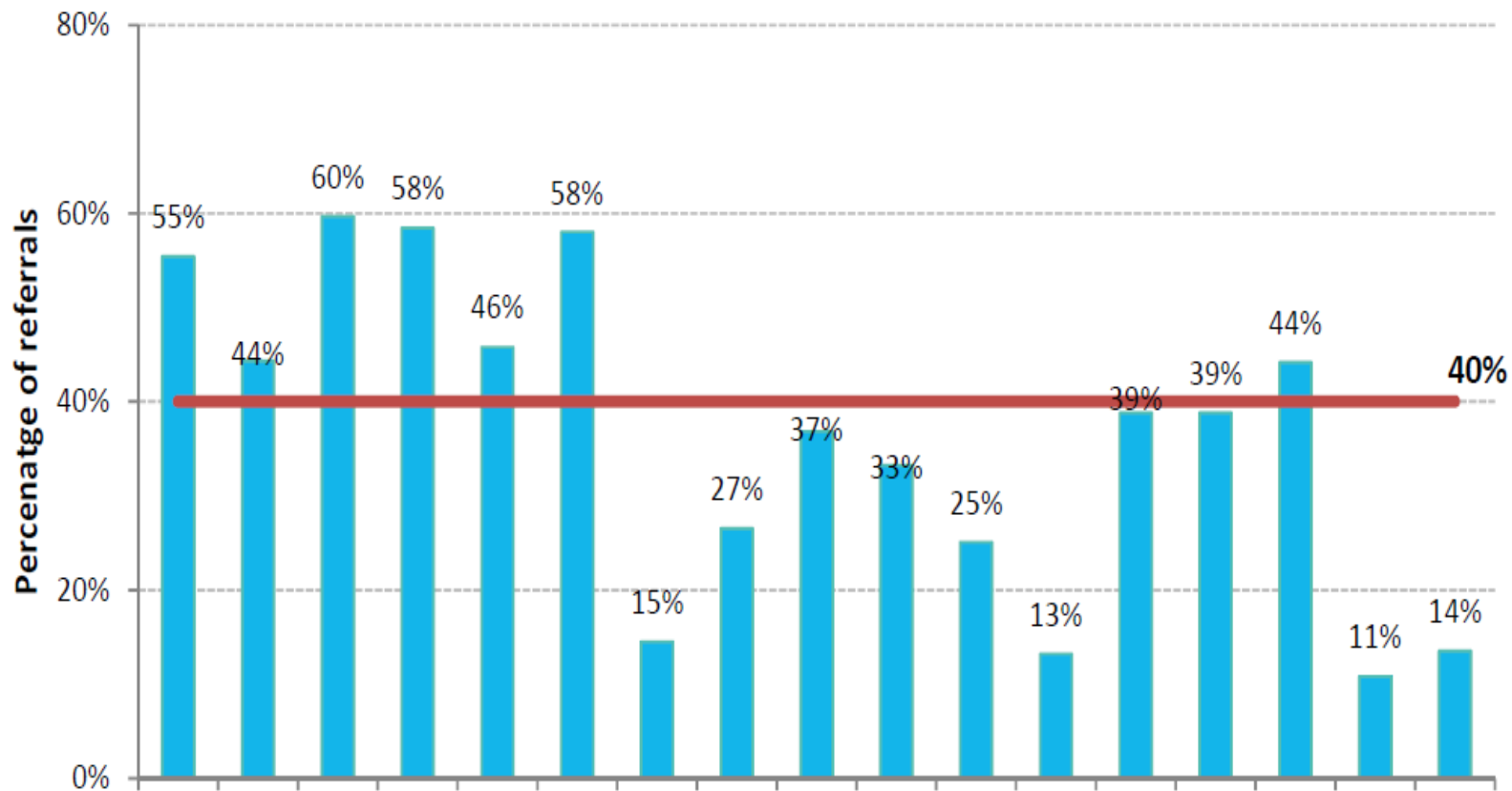
FEAR ,BLAME, UNCERTAINTY !!!

Some Key Data – QTR 1 2017



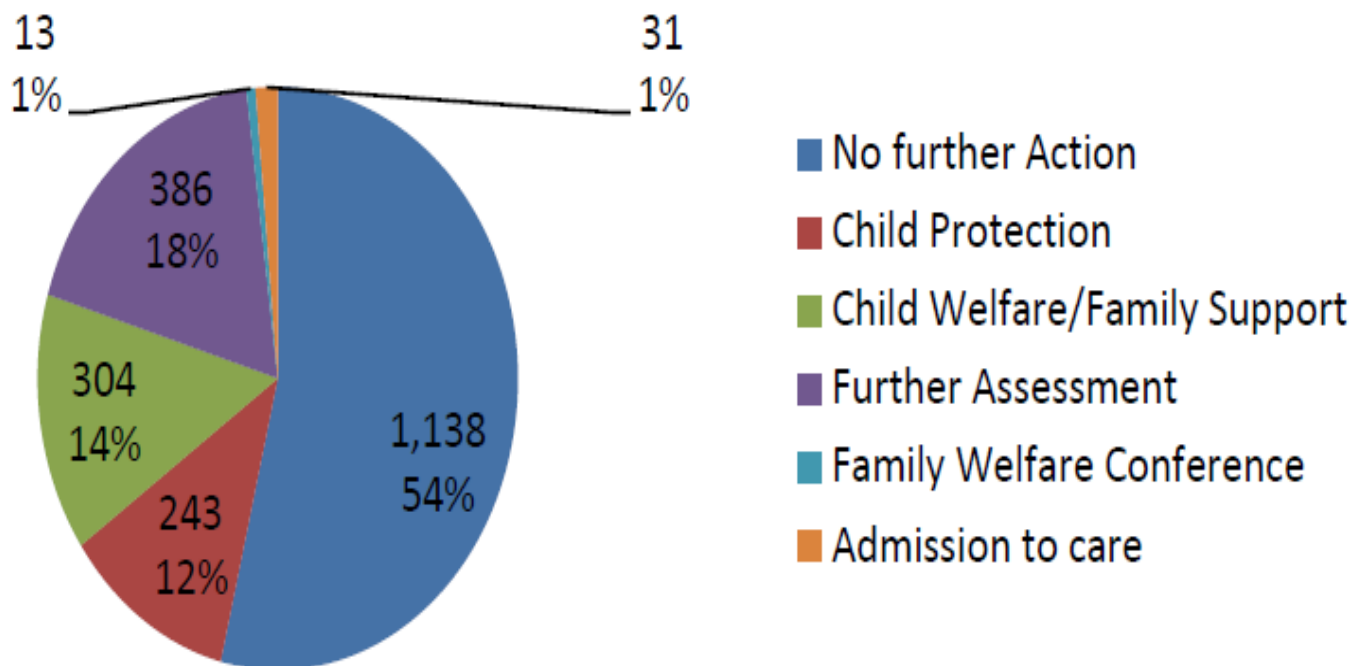
Thresholds & Decision Making

Figure 6: Percentage of referrals requiring an IA following a preliminary enquiry



Assessment vs Intervention

Figure 7: Breakdown of actions recorded following initial assessment



The Current and Future State

Issues grouped around 5 key themes, with a people overlay

1 Governance & Structure

2 Policy & Practice

3 Process & Standardisation

4 Interagency Cooperation & Collaboration

5 Information, Data & Performance

People

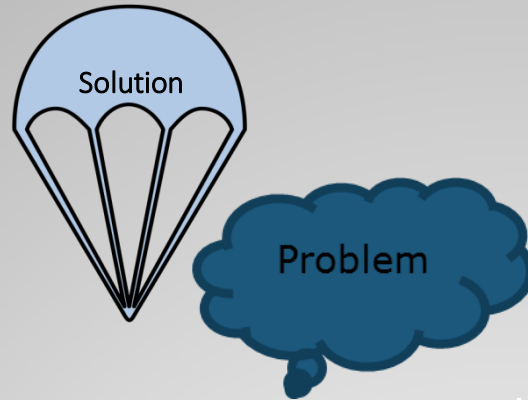


So What's Needed?

To transform Irish Child Protection and Welfare Services, we must have a clear, fit for purpose practice approach at the centre of everything

- Reflects our renewed vision for Tulsa
 - Shared goals, responsibility and ownership. Facilitating solutions and choice.
 - Clear focus on harm and sophisticated risk management. Involving networks of support and building community capacity.
 - Improve the skill and knowledge of the workforce.
 - Effective stakeholder engagement
- Reflects the context
 - Be child centred and rights based
 - Be underlying theoretical and evidence informed framework
 - Core principles and disciplines that reflects the principles of Children's First and legislation
 - An evaluation component that can evidence good outcomes - BOBF

People are our Business Practice is our Product



**Stronger
Community**



**Stronger Agency with
our Partners**

Tusla's CP&W VISION - To provide an appropriate, proportionate, timely response to children "at risk / in need", sharing responsibility and control with families and communities through co-created solutions and inter-agency collaboration





Strategic Objective #2

Clear Response Pathways along the CP&W Continuum

Hardiker Level 1
Needs are met

Hardiker Level 2
Children with Low to Medium Level Needs

Hardiker Level 3
Children with Multiple Needs

Hardiker Level 4
Children with Complex/ Acute Needs

continuum of help / support required by the child

NEED

NEED- HARM

HARM

HARM

Thresholds

THRESHOLD
Reasonable Grounds for Concern Report

THRESHOLD
Mandated Report Serious Harm

THRESHOLD
Alternative Care

Universal Services

Early Intervention

Focus on Needs & Strengths, Family Led, Voluntary

Family Support Networks

Child Welfare Intervention

Multi-Agency Response led by Tusla or funded partner and co-produced with child, family and network

Concerns about harm but willingness and capacity to change is evident

Child Protection Intervention

Multi-Agency Response Concerns about serious harm and parents appear not willing/ motivated. Tusla led and co-produced with family network.

Garda investigation

Alternative Care

Tusla as the Corporate Parent

Alternative Care (>=17yrs)

AfterCare (18-21yrs)

Tusla Response Pathways

Practice Approaches

Meitheal

Signs of Safety

Signs of Safety

Signs of Success



Strategic Objective #1

A National Approach to Practice – The Signs of Safety

The Goal

Principles and Disciplines

Practice Methods

Assessment Framework/Mapping
Three Houses
Words and Pictures
Participative conferencing
Network building
Safety planning
Trajectory/timeline

Learning Methods

Group supervision
Appreciative inquiry
Collaborative case audit
Staff survey
Parent feedback
Child feedback
Organisational/leadership feedback
Learning cases
Learning journal
Dashboards

The Goal

The Signs of Safety is designed to enable us to do all our child protection work with a rigorous focus on child safety and have all our practice, policy, procedures and organisation set up so that we can do everything humanly possible to put the parents, children and everyone naturally connected to the children at the centre of the assessment, decision-making and give them every opportunity to come up with and try their ideas before we offer/impose ours.

Thinking about the vulnerable child/teenager and the family situation:

What are we worried about?

HARM

DANGER STATEMENTS

Complicating Factors

What's working well?

Existing Strengths

EXISTING SAFETY

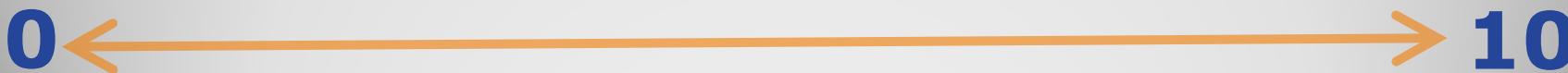
What needs to happen?

SAFETY GOALS

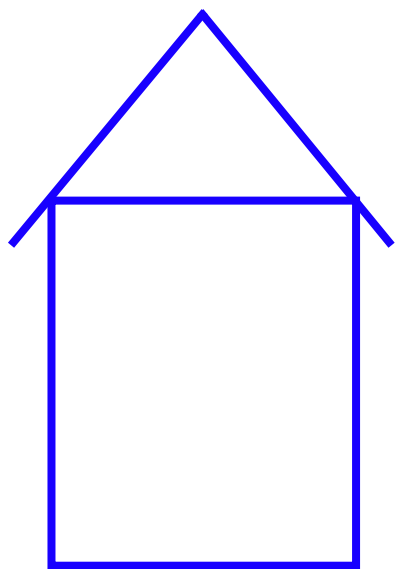
Next Steps

A Participatory Risk Assessment Framework

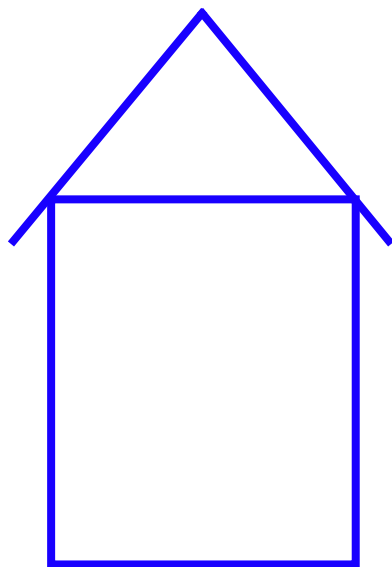
On a scale of 0–10 where 10 means the child/teen is safe enough and we can close the case and zero means things are so bad for the young person we must remove them into care where are we?



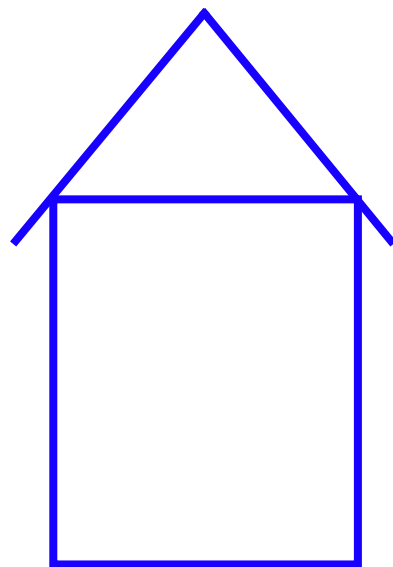
The Three Houses



House of Worries



House of Good Things



House of Dreams

Even though Ma and Da say the bad touch stuff never happened they can see that other people have worries and they agree that it is important to work together to make a plan that will show nothing like that could happen in the future. To help with this Ma and Da are going to bring as many family and friends as they can to the meetings. These people will be the family's safety network and will know all about the worries for the kids. They will all work with the with the social workers to make the plan (that the kids can understand and follow too) to show that no matter what happens or where the kids are living they will always feel safe, loved and happy.

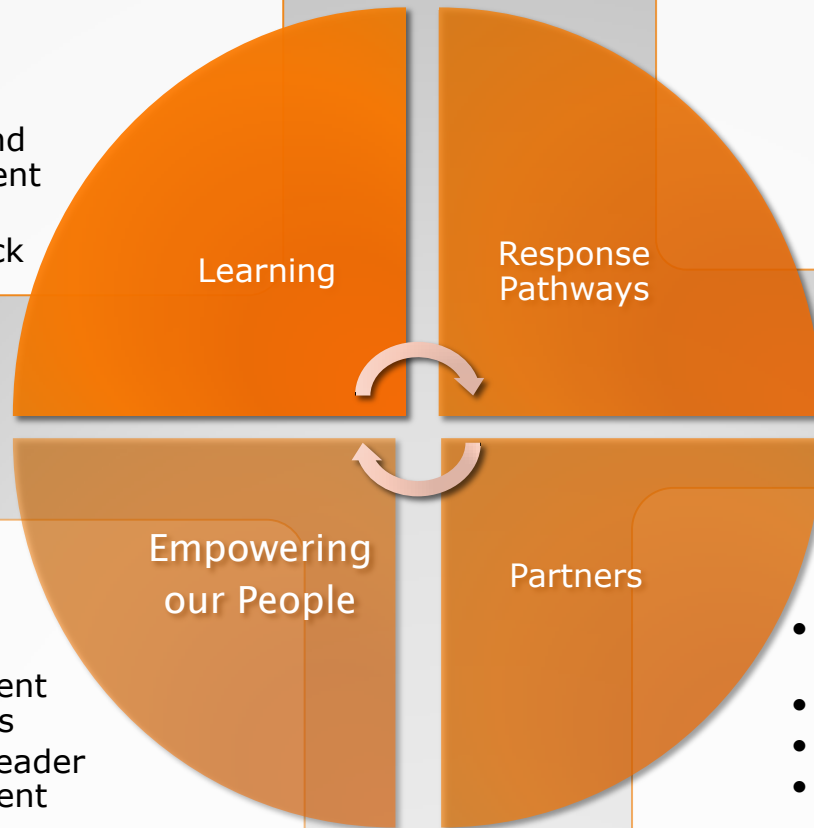




Key Activity 2017

- Training
 - 2 Day
 - 5 Day
- Training and Development Officers
- PL Call Back

- Duty/Intake process
- RPS
- Unallocated cases
- IA
- CP/CPC



- Senior Management Workshops
- Practice Leader development

- Court/Legal Teams
- HIQA
- DCYA
- Partner agencies

Influencing the Wider Context

- Legal Context - Review of the Child Care Act 1991
- Policy Context – Children First & BOBF
- Agency Context - Corporate Plan
- Practice Context – Reclaiming our Practice

