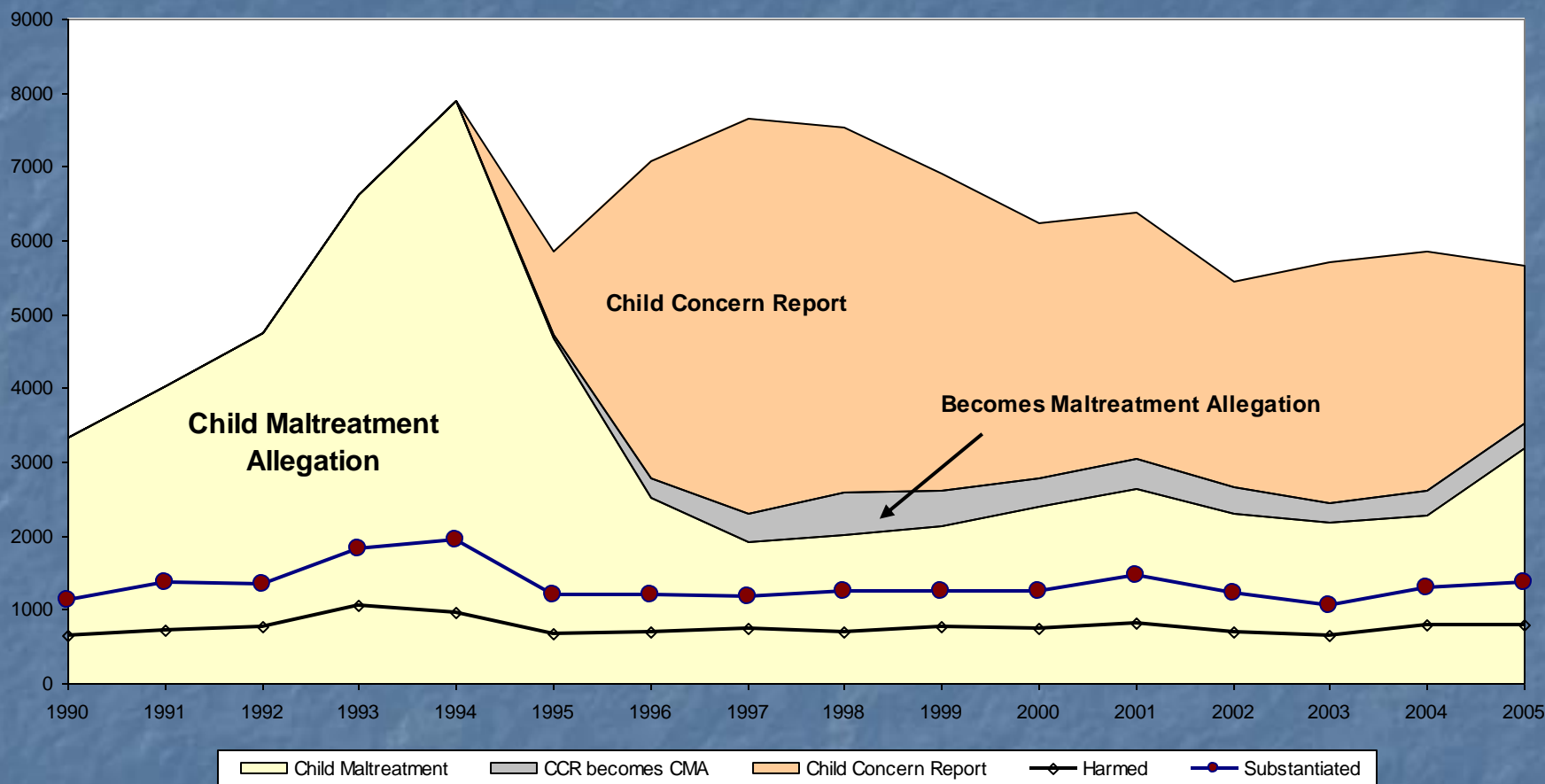


State Child Welfare Services, Western Australia 1990-2005

Initial Responses to information, Substantiation and Harm



Some frontline services, such as the police, schools and health, may refer children to social services without a preliminary assessment of the child's needs. As a result, social services may be overwhelmed with inappropriate cases, and children and families may undergo initial assessments unnecessarily.

Frontline professionals such as pastoral staff in schools, who may already have trusting relationships with the child or parent, may be in a better position to discuss initial concerns with a child or parent, and work with them over time, than a social worker with whom the family has had no previous contact.

In several areas, services have developed effective ways of combatting these challenges through a common assessment framework, as in North Lincolnshire.

The Virtuous Cycle

Increased and improved levels of direct service provision by Health, Education and other "Mainstream" agencies



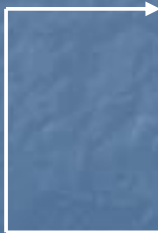
- 1. Reduced levels of referral to social work**
- 2. Reduced levels of child protection investigation**
- 3. Fewer assessments, improved quality**



Increased & targeted intensive flexible family support services
Increased levels of diversion from substitute care



Reduced numbers of children looked after. More resources released & made available for intensive family support



The Virtuous Cycle

- **Increased and improved levels of direct service provision by Health, Education and other “Mainstream” agencies**

The Virtuous Cycle

- 1. Reduced levels of referral to social work**
- 2. Reduced levels of child protection investigation**
- 3. Increased levels of need assessment**

The Virtuous Cycle

- **More resources released and made available for intensive family support**

The Virtuous Cycle

- **Service Allocation meeting**
- **Increased levels of diversion from substitute care**

Fig. 1 Leeds Volume Patterns: Aug 11 - Nov 12 (Volume)

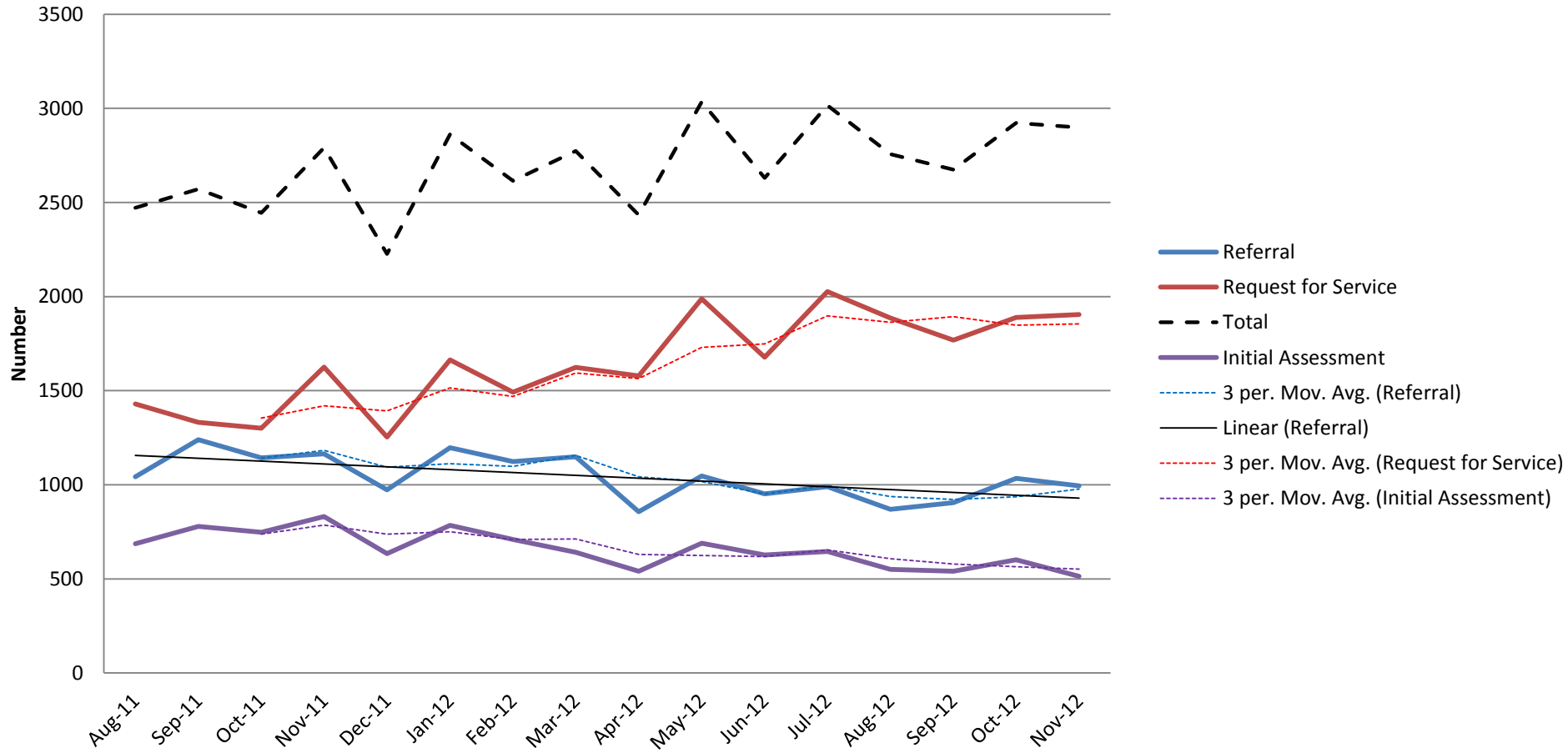
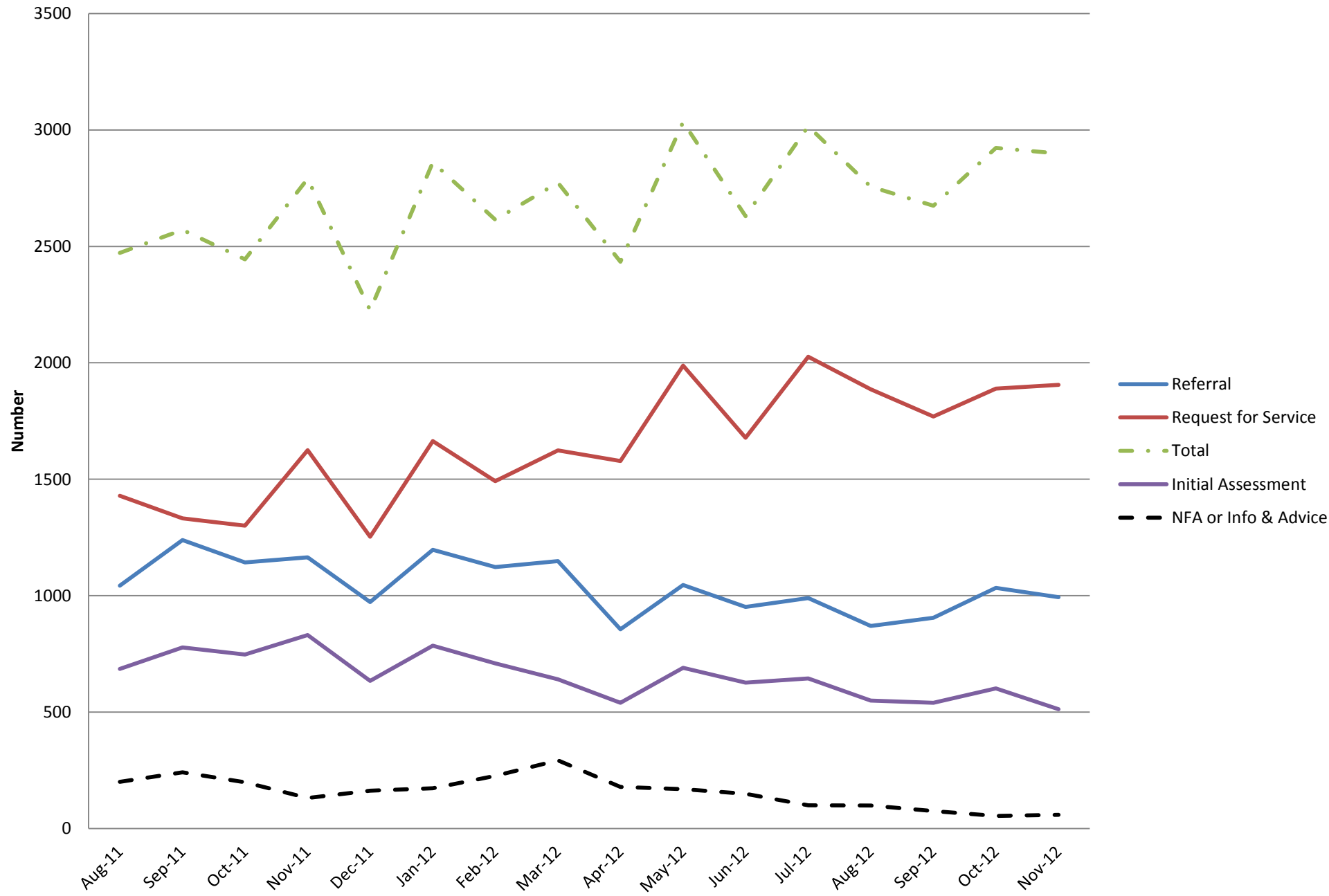


Fig. 2 Leeds Volume Patterns & IA NFA/I&A: Aug 11 - Nov 12 (Volume)



■ **Early Results**

■

■ *Referrals accepted and progressed.*

■ Week ending 28.9.07 83 referrals accepted

■ Week ending 5.10.07 85 referrals accepted

■ Week ending 12.10.07 74 referrals accepted

■ Week ending 19.10.07 7 1 referrals accepted

■ Week ending 2.11.07 61 referrals accepted

■ Week ending 9.11.07 58 referrals accepted

■

■ 30.1% reduction in referrals accepted.

■

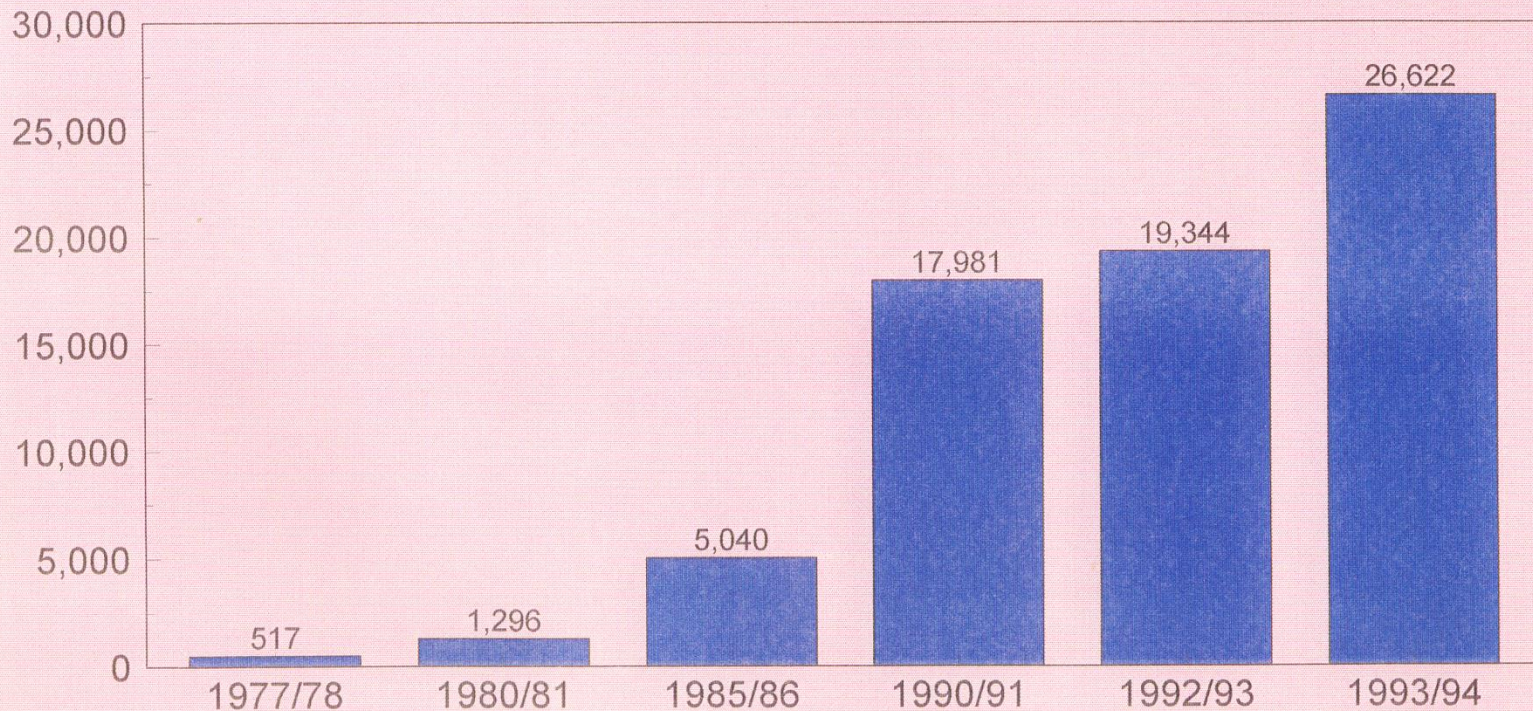
■

■ Children in residential and foster care in February 2007 692

■ Children in residential and foster care in January 2008 615

■ 10.1% reduction

NOTIFICATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT



The common assessment framework

Diversion from the 'Front Door'

- *"Some frontline services, such as the police, schools and health, may refer children to social services without a preliminary assessment of the child's needs . As a result, social services may be overwhelmed with **inappropriate cases, and children and families may undergo initial assessments unnecessarily.** Frontline professionals such as pastoral staff in schools, who may already have trusting relationships with the child or parent, **may be in a better position to discuss initial concerns with a child or parent, and work with over time, than a social worker with whom the family has had no previous contact.**" (DfES, 2003 p.57)*



TRONDHEIM KOMMUNE
Barne- og familietjenesten Vest

FAGTEKST A – KONKLUSJON AV MELDING/HENVISNING

*Barnevern
pedagogisk psykologisk*

NAVN:	F.NR:	↓		
FORELDRE/ FORESATTE:	LOVVERK (STATUS I DAG - SETT KRYSS):	BV	PP	LOST
	MELDING/HENV./SØKNAD:			
	HENLEGGES <i>Disminert</i>			
	UNDERSØKES/UTREDES <i>3 mtt.</i>			
	TILTAK/OPPFØLGING <i>Uteped.</i>			

BEGRUNNELSE FOR UTREDNING/UNDERSØKELSE/HENLEGGELSE:

Reason for referral, & actions rationale

for action → assessment (3 mtt.)

service with 3 mtt. (helped).

*Statement/
"disability
special
needs"*

SAKEN ER FORDELT TIL:

BEGRUNNELSE FOR FORDELING:

At this time

Focus of the

FORELØPIG SPØRSMÅL/HYPOTESE - FOKUS I VIDERE ARBEID MED BARNET:

Statement

*this is
what
we
think*

ii

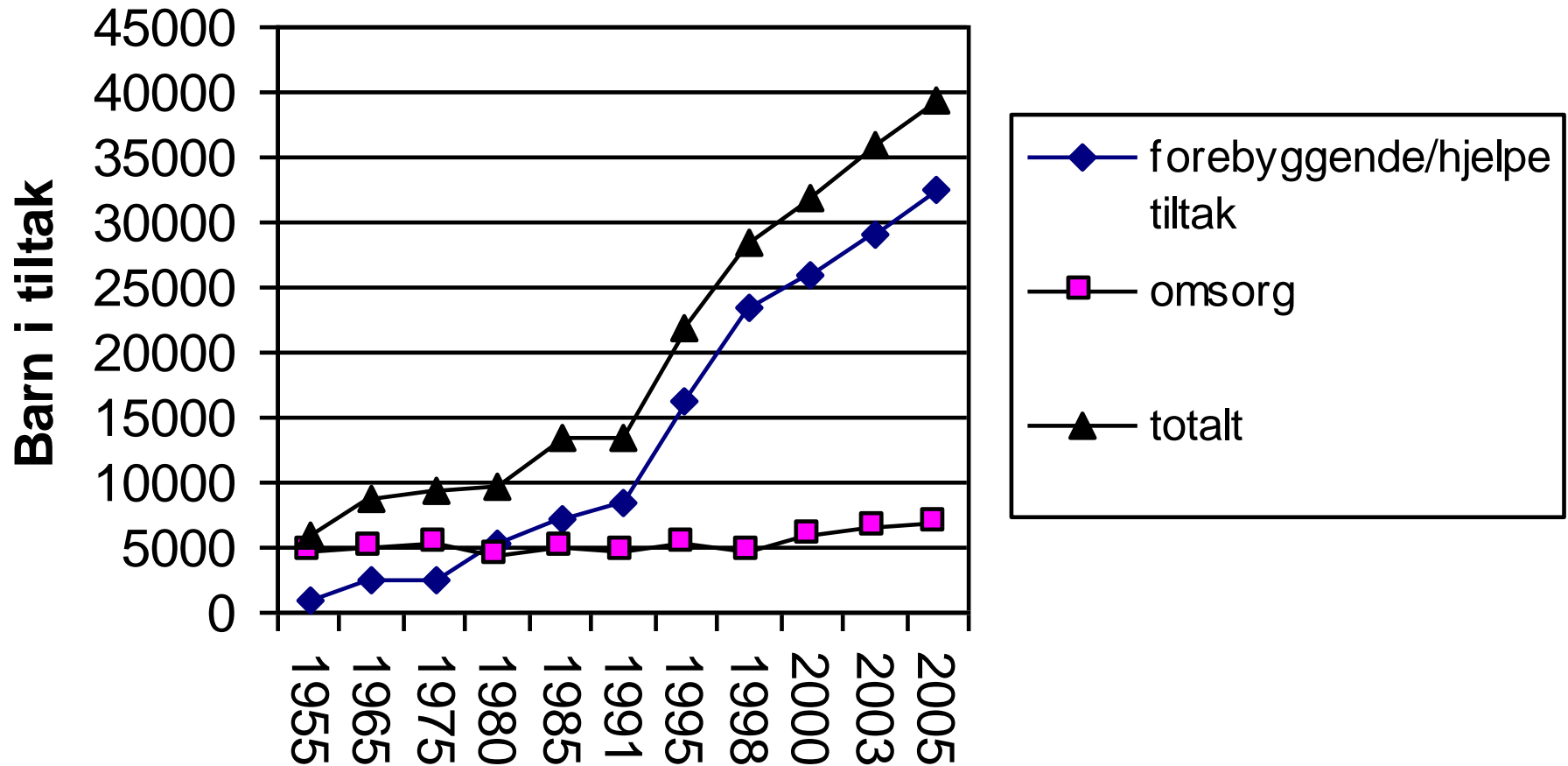
*Assessment team's notes about what quickly
needs to be assessed, what should be the focus
for the assessment.*

Provides the orientation for the assessment.

Implementing the Virtuous Cycle

- Children Looked after England
 - March 1997 51,400
 - March 2016 70,440 **37% increase**
- North Lincolnshire
 - March 1997 220
 - March 2016 200 **9% decrease**

Barnevern 1955-2005



Framework for observing systems for ordering work in child welfare referral-taking suites

- **Systems of ordering -**

- *(How people organize activity in a particular context of action)*

-

- **Office layout-**

- *Physical location, desks, computers, telephones, filing cabinets, filing baskets*

-

- **Technology-**

- *Information systems, written down procedures, forms, diaries, action baskets, notebooks,*

-

- **Social organization**

- *Informal "repertoires" of action; the supervision of activities, networks of relationships between people, aspects of organization and relationships which people consider make their work easier or more difficult between people*

Every Child Matters

October 2003 Green Paper p. 58

The advantages of using a common assessment framework across agencies are:

- Referrals are appropriate. During the pilot phase, child concern referrals to social services dropped by 64% - in many cases this was due to other agencies taking responsibility for addressing the child's needs themselves. Previously, police made 50-60 referrals to social services per month. Now the figure is 8-9. This means social workers provide more services than simply dealing with unnecessary referrals.

The advantages of using a common assessment framework across agencies are:

- Children and families do not have to repeat their information to different professionals as the assessment process is the same, irrespective of which agency the child or family go to for help
- Services are provided more promptly and coherently as professionals trust one another's assessment of need as it has been made using agreed 'common' indicators of need about what is required by a child and their family

The advantages of using a common assessment framework across agencies are:

- Assessments are triggered when concern about a child is raised, rather than when a child reaches a crisis point
- If any further assessments are required, these then build upon the Common Assessment, rather than duplicate it

What are the Key messages
I heard?

What does this mean for
me?

How will this change my
practice?