

An introduction into
Children's Social Care: using
the outdoors therapeutically
to work with children, young
people, and families, who
have an involvement with
children's service



Session Aims:

- ▶ The historical collaboration between the outdoor professional world and these groups
- ▶ The different types of children's services in England
- ▶ The entry points for a child or family accessing the various services in this sector
- ▶ Some of the terms used, such as Section 14, Section 47, Child We Care For, LAC, etc.
- ▶ Answers to any questions you may have (if I know the answer)

Introductions

Please
introduce
yourself if you
are happy to.

- ▶ What would you like to get from this workshop?



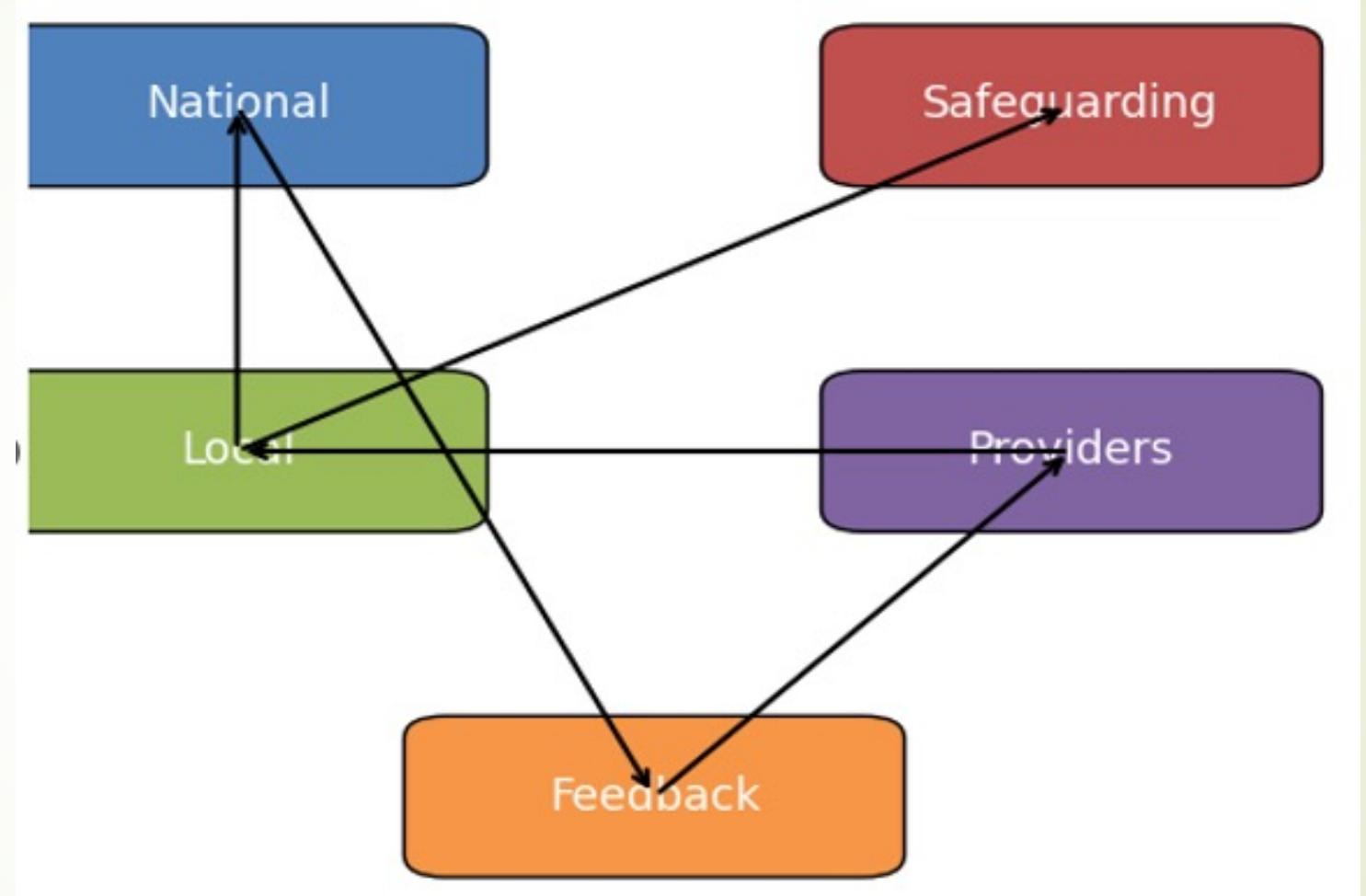
The historical collaboration



UK history of activities being used to 'shape' young people for their and societies 'betterment'; many of these had strong Christian ethos's such as the Young Men's Christian Society (YMCA, 2025) which was set up in 1844, the British League Cadets (for disadvantaged young people in Edinburgh) 1861(Ogilvie, 2013) and the Boys Brigade (2025) in 1883. These organisations predate the 1889 Prevention of Cruelty Towards Children Act, which was the first child protection act (legislation.gov.uk, 2025).

English Children's Social Care System

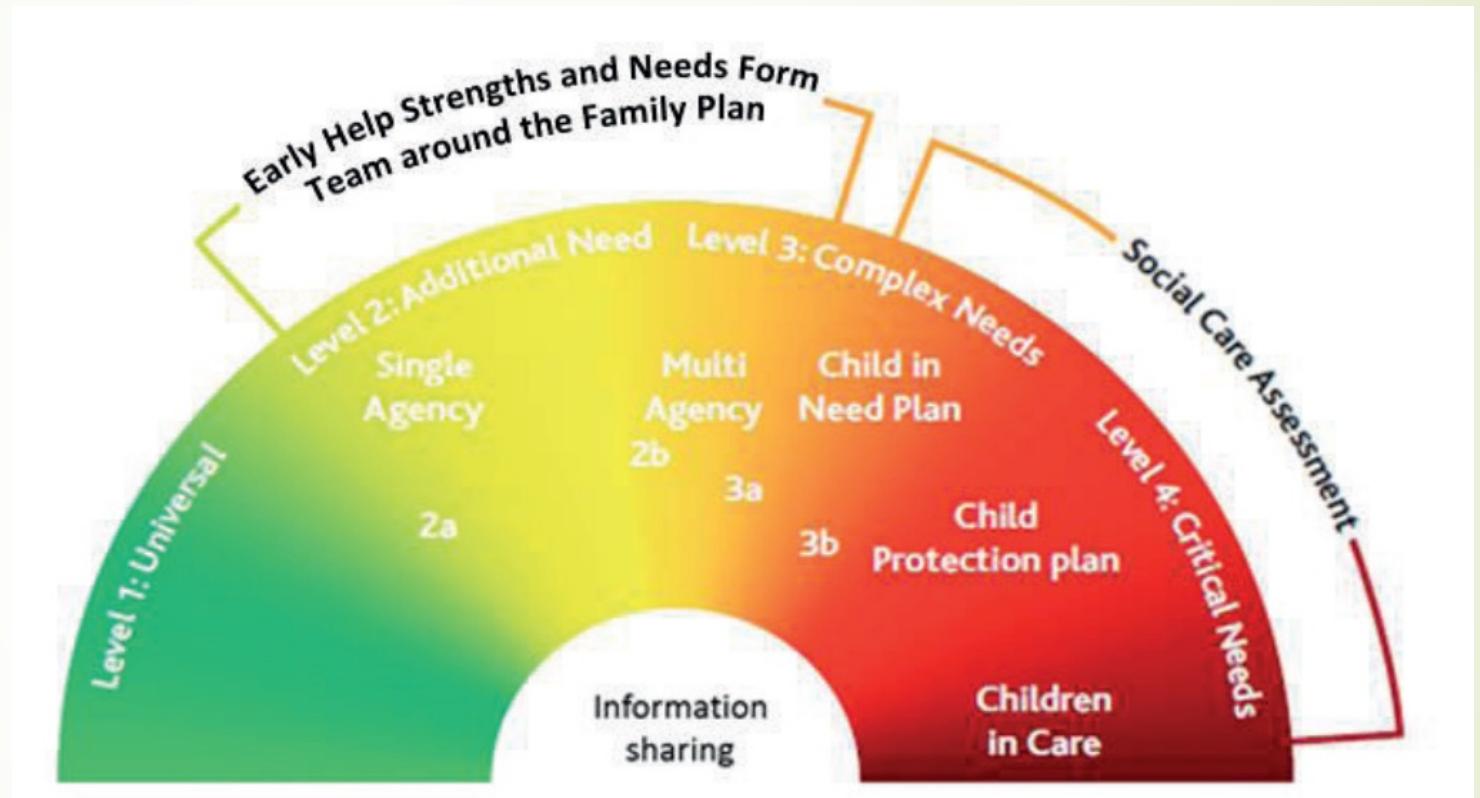
- ▶ Legend:
- ▶ National Governance (Blue)
- ▶ Multi-Agency Safeguarding (Red)
- ▶ Local Authority Pathway (Green)
- ▶ Provider Landscape (Purple)
- ▶ Feedback Loops (Orange)



The entry points for a child or family

Threshold of needs

Threshold of needs -
Oxfordshire Safeguarding
Children Partnership



Terms that may be used in this area

1989 Children Act

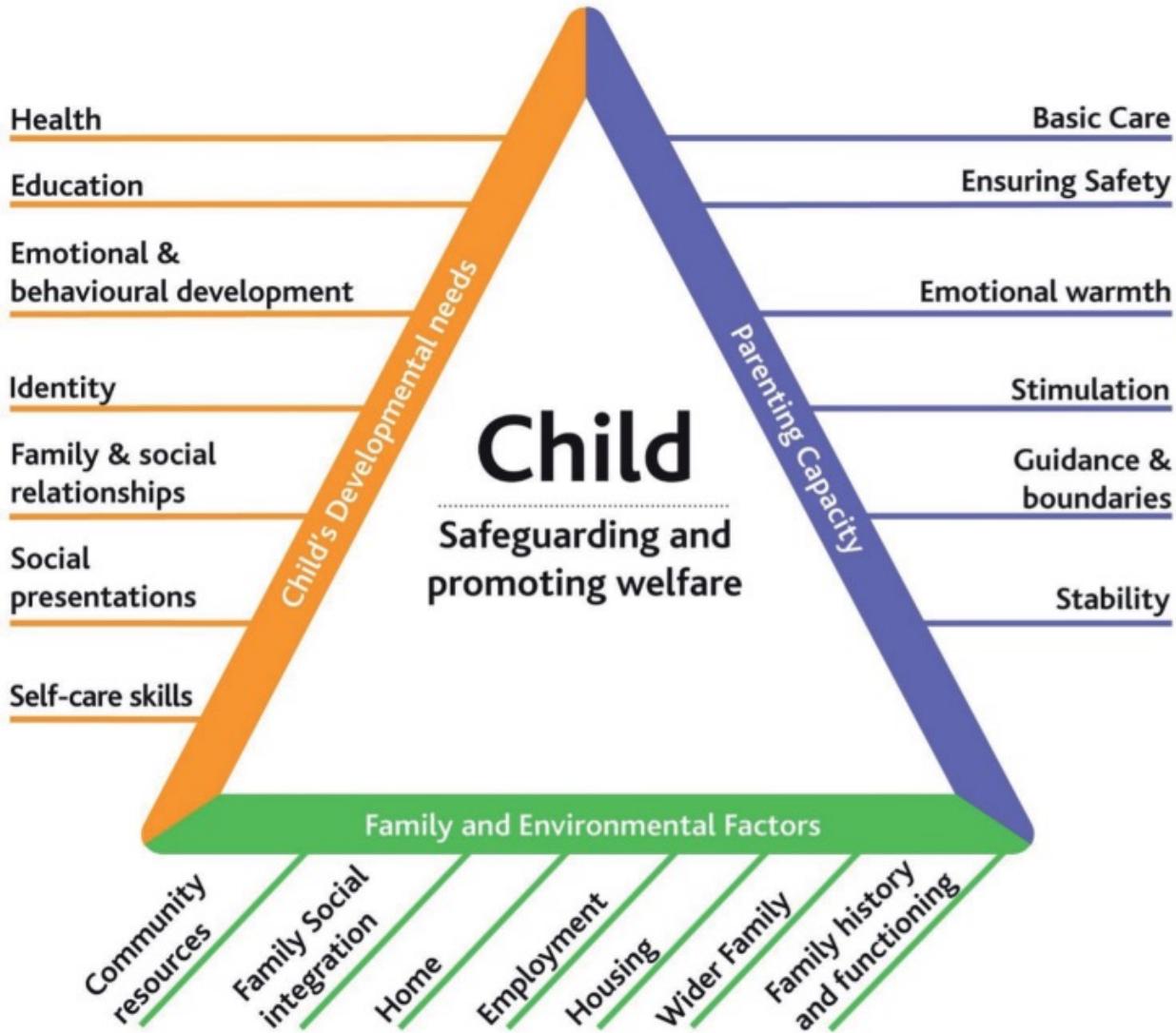
- ▶ Section 17 – children in need (Level 3)
- ▶ Section 17 – Young Carers (Level 3)
- ▶ Section 47 – children in need of protection (Level 4)
- ▶ Section 20 – duty to accommodate (Level 4)
- ▶ Section 31 – care orders (Level 4)

People/ Posts

Social Worker/ Family or Early Help Worker/ IRO/ Senior Practitioner

Teams

MASH – Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub





The population size of CYPP&F

- ▶ UK Government (2025) reported that there were 75,240 children looked after on 31 March 2025, excluding unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- ▶ 1,249 children placed under severe restrictions because of concerns about their welfare in England and Wales in the year to June 2023.
- ▶ In England alone in the year ending 31st March 2025: 402,400 Child in Need plans (CiN), 49,400 Child Protection (CP) plans, 632,800 referrals to services and 648,800 assessment completed (GOV.UK, 2025).



Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding: Re-writing the rules of child protection | Carlene Firmin



Integrated Outdoor Therapy – What Is It?

Holistic Therapeutic Approach

Combines outdoor activities with therapeutic tools and clinical supervision for comprehensive healing.

Experiential Learning Model

Emphasizes relational engagement and learning through activities like bushcraft, cooking, climbing, and canoeing.

Therapeutic Interventions

Integrates methods like Video Interaction Guidance and Nonviolent Resistance to increase social bonds and raise parental presence in the family.

Benefits of Outdoor Setting

Provides a neutral, calming environment fostering openness, reflection, and is a setting away from home, school or a social care office.



Riverside Intervention Process

Pre-referral and Referral

Practitioners consult with staff to assess case suitability and submit referrals online for tracking.

Assessment and Formulation

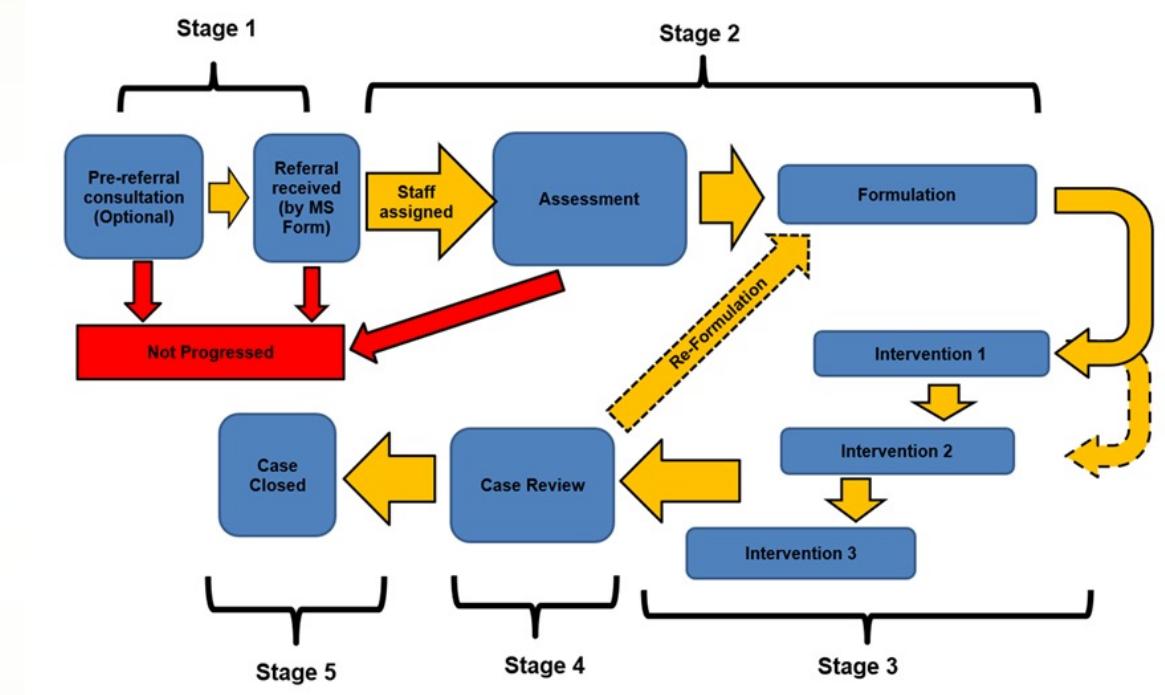
Use of tools like CORE and SDQs gathers data to create tailored intervention plans.

Intervention and Case Review

Interventions are flexible and reviewed regularly to evaluate progress and adjust plans as needed.

Case Closure

Final summaries are shared and outcome measures completed to close the case effectively.



Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire P 4-17

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the item seems odd! Please give your answers on the basis of the child's behaviour over the last six months.

Child's Name Male/Female
Date of Birth

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
Considerate of other people's feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shares readily with other children (treats, toys, pencils etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rather solitary, tends to play alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally obedient, usually does what adults request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many worries, often seems worried	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Constantly fidgeting or squirming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has at least one good friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often fights with other children or bullies them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally liked by other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easily distracted, concentration wanders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kind to younger children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often lies or cheats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picked on or bullied by other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often volunteers to help others (parents, teachers, other children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thinks things out before acting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steals from home, school or elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gets on better with adults than with other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many fears, easily scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sees tasks through to the end, good attention span	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have any other comments or concerns?			

Please turn over - there are a few more questions on the other side

Outcomes Star Star Chart

Young Person's Star™

The Outcomes Star for young people moving to independent living

Young person First Review Retrospective
Worker Completed by Worker and young person Worker alone Young person

Date of completion DD/MM/YYYY

5 Independent
4 Getting there with support
3 Trying to sort things out
2 Accepting help
1 Stuck

Young person: I was involved in completing this Star Chart

Young Person's Star™ © Triangle Consulting Social Enterprise Ltd | www.outcomesstar.org.uk
The Star Chart must be used with the Scales and workers trained by a licensed Star trainer

CLINICAL OUTCOMES in ROUTINE EVALUATION
CORE

Goal Attainment Form

Name: Date:

Name of Child: Date of Birth:

Identified Goals

Below are the identified goals / difficulties that we have agreed to focus on as part of the intervention:

Please rate the progress that you think has been made in relation to each of the agreed goals. A score of zero means no progress has been made towards a goal, a score of ten means a goal has been reached fully.

No Progress	Goal partly achieved	Goal achieved								
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

#	Identified Goal	Rating of Goal
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form

Outcomes & Impact

Improved Family Communication

Outdoor therapy enhances families' ability to express needs and listen effectively in a neutral environment.

Measurable Progress Tracking

Outcome measures like SDQs and CORE scores track family progress and inform case reviews effectively.

Emotional Resilience & Connection

Therapeutic tools and shared outdoor experiences foster emotional resilience and strengthen family bonds.

Sustainable Family Improvements

Structured interventions and tailored support lead to lasting positive changes in family dynamics.



Team Qualifications & Roles



Diverse Team Roles

The team includes a manager, lead therapist, specialists, and apprentices with defined roles and responsibilities.

Comprehensive Qualifications

Team members have qualifications spanning outdoor skills, therapeutic training, academic degrees, and certifications.

Ongoing Professional Development

Continuous training and adherence to professional standards ensure team expertise and adaptability.

Lessons Learned & Recommendations

Strengths-Based Outdoor Therapy

Relational, strengths-based approaches combined with outdoor settings enhance therapeutic interventions effectively.

Tailored and Flexible Interventions

Flexibility in tailoring interventions to individual family needs is vital for successful therapeutic outcomes.

Assessment and Reflective Practice

Thorough assessment and continual reflective practice maintain quality and ensure interventions meet family goals.

Staff Training and Collaboration

Investing in staff training and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration supports continuous improvement and accountability.





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