

PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY

Background: Professional Curiosity is the capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family or for an individual rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value. Many safeguarding reviews refer to a lack of professional curiosity or respectful uncertainty. Nurturing professional curiosity and challenge are fundamental aspects of working together to keep children, young people and adults safe

Why it Matters? Children and Adults rarely disclose abuse and neglect directly to practitioners and, if they do, it will often be through their behaviour or comments. This makes identifying abuse and neglect difficult for professionals across agencies. We know that it is better to help as early as possible, before issues get worse. That means that all agencies and practitioners need to work together – the first step is to be professionally curious to gain clearer insight

Question to ask yourself?

- 6) What is the purpose of my intervention and what is my desired impact?
- 7) Am I curious about the exceptions to the problems?
- 8) Change the frame of the conversation, change the response.
- 9) How can I use relationships to create change?
- 10) We all have resources within us, tap into your expertise



Information: Professional Curiosity needs practitioners to practice ‘respectful uncertainty’ – applying critical evaluation to any information they receive and maintaining an open mind. Practitioners will often meet a child, young person, adult or their family when they are in crisis or vulnerable to harm. Responding to these opportunities to safeguard requires the ability to demonstrate a non-discriminatory approach, be more inquisitive to explore the issues to formulate judgments, recognise vulnerabilities....

Questions to ask yourself?

- 1) What am I contributing to this challenge/problem/difficulty?
- 2) Whose voice needs to be in the conversation? Extend your invitation to everyone.
- 3) How can I be of service?
- 4) How well do I know this family? What other ‘stories’ are there about this family that I am not privileging?
- 5) Do I need to change my mind? Are there gaps in my understanding?

- 3) An openness to other perspectives/willingness to try different responses.
- 4) An ability to build close partnerships style relationships with families whilst being constantly aware of the child’s needs/degree to which they are met
- 5) Judgements based on evidence not optimism
- 6) Clarity on what basis decisions are made

.....strengths and potential or actual risks of harm. Practitioners should maintain an open stance of Professional Curiosity, understand one’s own responsibility and know how to act.

Professional curiosity is supported by:

- 1) A child focussed approach with an ability to create suitably safe and trusting listening environment for children and young people
- 2) Identifying and exploring what is discussed as much as what is not