



## **CPCScotland Neglect Learning Series**

### **Final Report**

**November 2022**

#### **1 Summary**

- Neglect is an area for development identified initially through the Child Protection Improvement Programme (2017), and more recently within the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021).
- As part of the response to this priority area the CPCScotland Neglect subgroup, with support from CELCIS and Scottish Government, delivered a series of free, online learning events between March and September 2022.
- Attendance at the webinars in the learning series was excellent and far in excess of expectations. The first webinar was particularly well attended with 476 attendees with each of the other webinars achieving on average 389 attendees
- Response rates for the evaluation were however a little disappointing with on average 89 attendees responding after each session (25% of potential returns)
- Those who did respond to the evaluation questionnaire generally provided positive feedback in their comments. Positive feedback was received regarding the organisation of the webinars along with specific comments on the individual speakers and the topics covered
- The webinar format was found to suit participants' learning 70% of evaluation returns reporting the format 'very much suited' participants' learning and 28% reporting the format mostly suited participants' learning.
- A challenge noted to the webinar format was the limited opportunity for direct engagement and discussion between participants and presenters. The option to submit comments and questions via the 'menti meter' tool was taken by a small number of participants.
- A link to the recordings from the webinars has been uploaded to the CPCScotland webinars and from 8<sup>th</sup> April until 7<sup>th</sup> November these had been accessed 2,566 times in total.

- The advice and support of the planning group, drawn from the neglect subgroup membership and CELCIS, along with practical support from CELCIS events team and financial support for speakers' fees from Scottish Government were essential to the success and smooth running of the learning series.

## **2 Background**

CPCScotland, with support from CELCIS and Scottish Government, delivered a series of free, online learning events. Across four webinars, child protection leaders and practitioners across Scotland had opportunities to engage with key speakers and organisations on child neglect and practice.

An area of development identified initially through the Child Protection Improvement Programme, and more recently within the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, these learning events aimed to stimulate conversation and raise awareness nationally about the impact of neglect on children and young people. Attendees had the opportunity to gain further insight into good practice and approaches to benefit their own learning and practice.

The webinars ran from March to September 2022.

The Webinar recording and slide decks for all 4 webinars can be accessed on the Child Protection Scotland website publications page. [Publications - Child Protection Scotland](#)

## **3 Webinar 1 (17<sup>th</sup> March 2022)**

### **Thinking critically about neglect**

The speaker was **Dez Holmes**, Director of [Research in Practice](#). Research in Practice works with organisations enabling them to access, understand and apply evidence from research in their work with children and families, young people and adults.

Key issues discussed in the session were:

- Key research messages about how young people can experience neglect, and the impact it can have on them.
- Stigma, shame and inequality, and what this means for practice.
- The importance of critical thinking when working with families where neglect is a factor.
- Strengths and development needs for current practice.

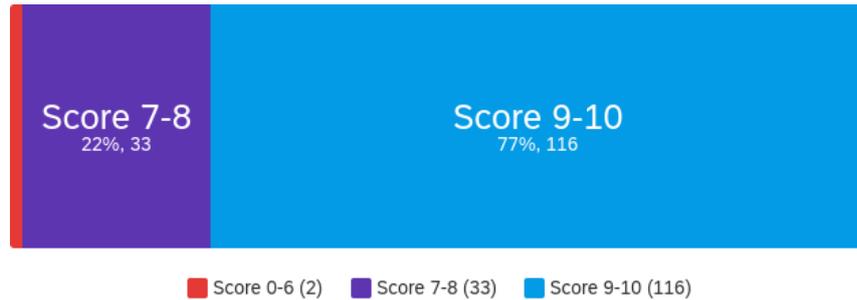
The webinar was attended by 476 participants from across the country and from a range of backgrounds with a high proportion of attendees categorised as practitioners or operational managers.

### **Evaluation**

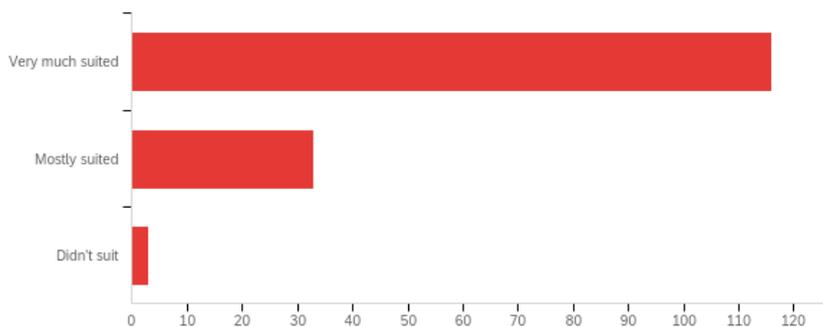
152 participants returned evaluations

Some key findings from the evaluation returns are given below

*Do you feel the webinar provided you with a valuable learning experience? (score 1-10 where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'I found it very valuable')*



*How did you feel that the format suited your learning?*



Sample of comments from evaluation forms:

*What would you do differently in your practice following this webinar?*

- I liked Dez's phrase that the partnership supporting a person should be like an orchestra. I will encourage more practitioners to think of our joint working like this.
- Raise awareness on use of language and structural impact of poverty on neglect. Enjoyed hearing of relationship intervention and use of critical analysis to our own interventions.
- This was a thought-provoking input, and it was excellent to see the passion that Dez has for the subject matter. I will take away not just taking things on face value, but to think about why things are the way they are, e.g. families should eat together, a child's hair should be brushed daily - Dez provided basic reasons as to why this doesn't happen, and sometimes we don't look for these, but just take things at face value.

- It challenged my thinking around permitting others to use language that I do not agree with. I will definitely be keeping the idea of "Talking about things as if the child is present"
- Definitely think differently - some very stand out statements 'forget the politics, see the people' 'how do we stay humane and encourage hope'. I would like to explore this further with my teams, look further at the research and hopefully improve practice.
- I have thought of so many applications already. It provided space to consider current cases through a different lens. Extremely interesting and so pleased to have attended.

*Other comments / questions*

- The speaker Dez was truly inspiring as well as incredibly knowledgeable. if you are able to pass the comments on to her, please say I would have thrown flowers!
- By far one of the best Seminars ever attended. Dez was very engaging, her style allowed a depth of research and knowledge to be discussed easily. Very valuable points made.
- The presentation by Dez was first class and has, thankfully, confirmed that I am not deluded! In our area, we have consistently raised the issue of the language that is used in reports, particularly by Social Work. More often than not, the parent does not know what needs to change as it has not been explained to them in words that they can understand. Dez spoke so much sense today that she was an absolute joy. Thank you!
- Inspirational and thought provoking - we've got to challenge our mindsets - thank you for helping me to do this.
- Absolutely loved this webinar today! The ethos and language resonated with me. I could have listened to Dez all day. Dez made research accessible in a way I could understand and adapt to reflect on some practice issues. The examples given of research findings and what this looks like in practice were invaluable.

Up to 7<sup>th</sup> November the recording of this webinar had been viewed 1,197 times

The recording and supporting materials can be found here:

[Learning About Neglect event series - Thinking Critically About Neglect - webinar no. 1 - Child Protection Scotland](#)

## 4 Webinar 2 (21<sup>st</sup> April)

### 'From the Beginning': Family Group Decision Making for unborn babies and young infants.

The second webinar focused on unborn babies and young infants.

Key issues discussed in the session were:

- Family Group Decision Making, and the strengths-based approach to working with families, as highlighted in the National Child Protection Guidance.
- Principles, practice and approach used by the Edinburgh Family Group Decision Making Service when working with families where there are unborn babies or infants at risk.
- Using strength-based approaches when working with families to address areas of concern, including child neglect, and the practice principles that inform this.

The speakers for this event were Julie Falconer and Heather Rush from [Edinburgh's Family Group Decision Making Service](#). Julie, a Social Work Team Leader and Heather, a Senior Practitioner have spent many years in varying settings within the local authority and voluntary sector. They are passionate about their work with Family Group Decision Making as a way of holding risk, addressing concerns, including neglect, and building upon existing strengths in partnership with families and professionals.

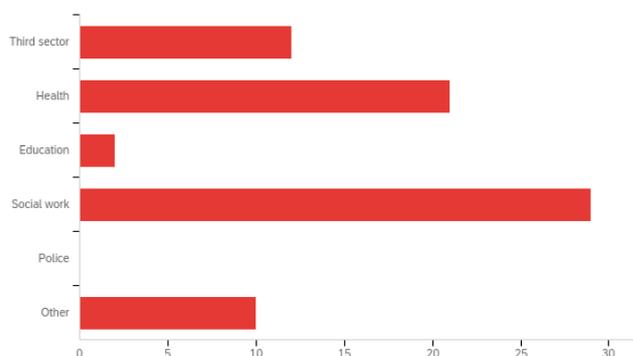
The webinar was attended by 393 participants from across the country and from a range of backgrounds with a high proportion of attendees categorised as practitioners or operational managers.

### **Evaluation**

74 participants returned evaluations. 62% defined themselves as front line practitioners and 20% as first line managers / team leaders.

39% of participants who completed an evaluation form were from social work, 28% from health and 16% from the third sector.

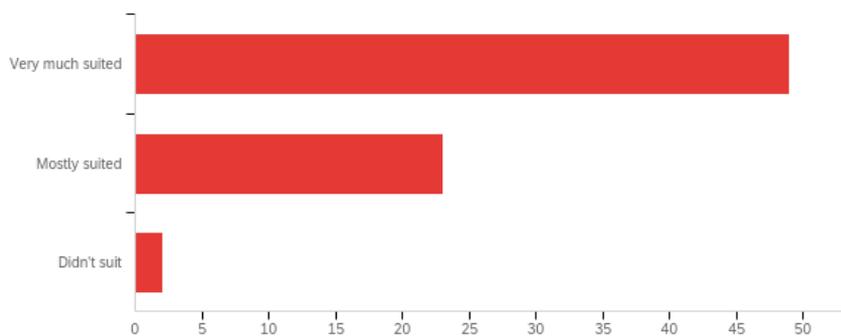
Which agency / Sector do you work in?



*Do you feel the webinar provided you with a valuable learning experience?  
(score 1-10 where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'I found it very valuable')*



*How did you feel that the format suited your learning?*



A sample of comments from evaluation forms:

*What would you do differently in your practice following this webinar?*

- Consideration of using the FGC model
- Explore if family group conferencing could be available in my area, but even if not, I will hold the partners I work alongside accountable to having early, open conversations with families.
- I will raise this subject in my Team Meeting and suggest we consider doing something similar so that we are consistent with all unborn baby referrals that we receive.
- I will consider FGDM earlier and start these discussions with professionals and families where appropriate.
- I work for a perinatal service and feel that FGDM is underused in my area - hopefully I can suggest this resource at an early stage when considering the future of our babies.
- It made me think of my own family and my own childhood, when things could have been improved, a bit like the "team around the child" except its "family and friends around the child"

- I would like to include some of the learning about implementation, overcoming resistance and helping families to have hope within the courses that I deliver.
- This webinar has inspired me!

#### *Other comments / questions*

- Great training, informative and I particularly liked the personal experience that was shared as this provided a concrete example of how processes can be used in a relational and strength-based way to promote best outcomes.
- Both speakers were really great. I loved listening to them and could see and hear the passion they both have for their roles.
- Thank you - really insightful session, very much appreciate the short film to bring it all to life. Clearly very dedicated professionals who presented.
- Thanks so much for another inspiring webinar. Reminds of what we do and why we do it.
- It would have been more helpful to hear about outcomes, rather than an overview of the model

Up to 7<sup>th</sup> November the recording of this webinar had been viewed 506 times

View the recording and access the supporting materials here:

[Learning About Neglect Event Series - webinar 2 - Family Group Decision Making for unborn babies and young infants - Child Protection Scotland](#)

## **5 Webinar 3 (19<sup>th</sup> May)**

### **Addressing Neglect and Enhancing Wellbeing**

The third webinar focused primarily on GIRFEC practice in Early Years and Primary School settings, the session offered attendees the opportunity to hear about the Addressing Neglect and Enhancing Wellbeing programme and hear about the learning from Dundee.

The speakers were Emma Hanley (Implementation Lead at CELCIS), Nick Weryk (Head Teacher at Camperhill Primary, Dundee) and Aaron Brown (Early Years Centre Manager, Hill View Nursery, Dundee).

Key issues discussed in the session were:

- The use of implementation methodology.
- The importance of child and family voice in decision-making about their lives.
- The significance of defining outcomes and coaching to practice development.

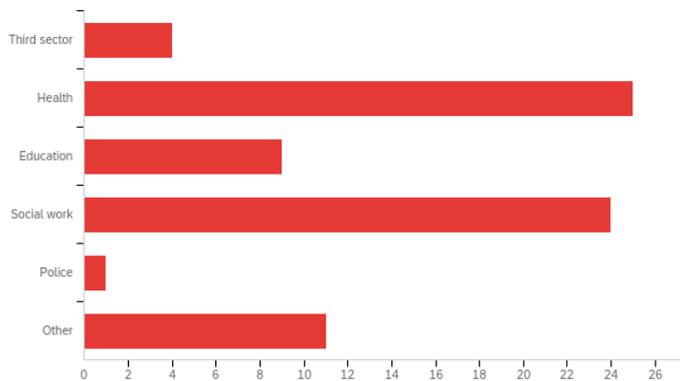
- The value of relationships in achieving positive outcomes for children and their families.

The webinar was attended by 388 participants from across the country and from a range of backgrounds with a high proportion of attendees categorised as practitioners or operational managers.

### **Evaluation**

74 participants returned evaluations. 70% defined themselves as front line practitioners and 13% as first line managers / team leaders.

34% of participants who completed an evaluation were from health and 32% from social work.

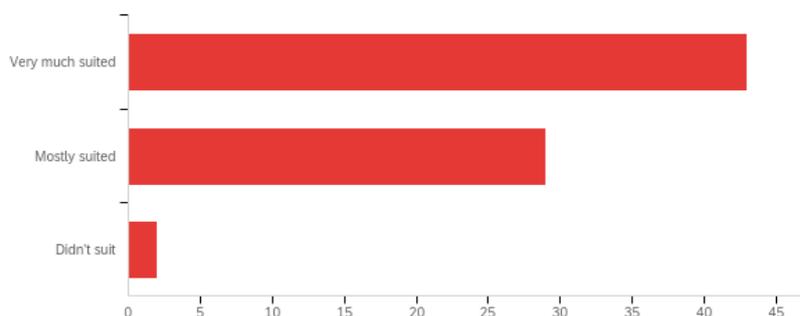


Some key findings from the evaluation returns are given below

*Do you feel the webinar provided you with a valuable learning experience? (score 1-10 where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'I found it very valuable')*



*How did you feel that the format suited your learning?*



Sample of comments from evaluation forms:

*What would you do differently in your practice following this webinar?*

- This allowed consideration around the collective depth of work required in getting it right.
- I am leading on a group looking to improve children's involvement in their Team Around the Child meetings and Child Plans so I will certainly discuss what was presented today with the group and then make other links as necessary.
- Have a review of my own actions with T.A.C (Team Around the Child) meetings and core group meeting to make sure parents and children's views are being heard
- I always learn a lot from these webinars and think about how I can help the child/young person to be heard in the Hearings that I am involved with.
- I loved the change of approach to the child's plan meeting, in giving the child's voice first, this is something that each practitioner can utilise straight away and I will change my practice immediately.
- More actively explore relationship elements in child protection work and supervision of HV as well as exploring how to access children and family views.
- Fresh focus on child's experience and use of multidisciplinary team to engage with children to support them to have a voice.
- Continue to promote the understanding and implementation of effective GIRFEC and relationship building with everyone involved. This gave insight to what is being working on with success in Dundee.
- Unclear as there would require to be systems wide changes in the authority I work in
- Look to make contact with Dundee to learn more of the Buddy system, also investigate what trainings available through Action Children regarding this.

*Other comments / questions*

- I enjoyed hearing how well the Child Meetings are going. It sounds like this new way of working has really improved practice and enhanced relationships with the child/family effecting positive change for the child.
- Fantastic event, that highlighted innovative practice methods, championing working with children & families.
- Excellent presentation delivered with such enthusiasm and positivity.

- Good to see how GIRFEC can be implemented. How can we now roll this out for all families where there are concerns, so that they don't progress to attending a Children's Hearing as being in need of compulsory measures. Very much looking forward to the next webinar.
- Very educational focused may be a more holistic / multiagency approach
- I have found this series of webinars from CELCIS very instructive and informative.

Up to 7<sup>th</sup> November the recording of this webinar had been viewed 657 times

View the recording and access the supporting materials here:

[Learning About Neglect Event Series - Addressing neglect and enhancing wellbeing - webinar 3 - Child Protection Scotland](#)

## **6 Webinar 4 (8<sup>th</sup> September)**

### **The adolescent neglect conundrum: How can we respond better?**

In the fourth and final webinar focussed on the issue of neglect during adolescent.

The speaker was Phil Raws, Senior Researcher at The Children's Society.

Key issues discussed in the session were:

- what do we know about adolescent neglect (including from research that took an innovative approach to measuring neglect)
- what are the gaps in our understanding of this complex issue.
- Learning from currently available research and evaluation on how to respond
- Clues in the findings from studies on wider topics that can inform improvements in safeguarding.

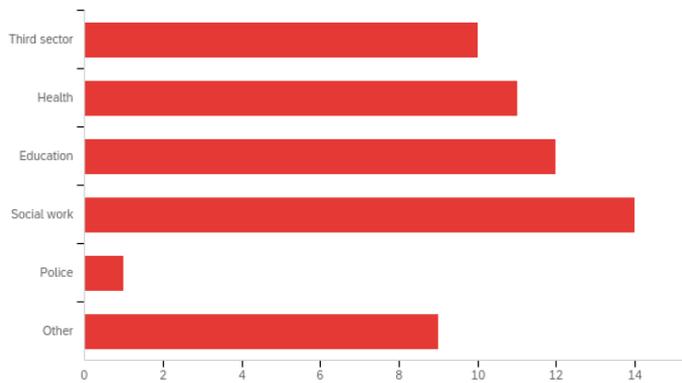
The webinar was attended by 386 participants from across the country and from a range of backgrounds including a significant proportion from 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations.

### ***Evaluation***

57 participants returned evaluations. 48% defined themselves as front line practitioners, 35% as senior managers or involved in policy development (including CPC chair or lead officer) and 17% as first line managers / team leaders. This was a lower proportion of front-line practitioners, and a higher proportion of senior managers compared to the previous webinar and may have been due to a higher percentage of respondents being CPC Chairs, lead officers,

staff with a learning and development role or managers of projects within the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector.

25% of participants who completed an evaluation were from social work, 21% from Education, 19% from health, 18% from 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and 16% classified themselves as 'other' (including CPC chairs and lead officers).

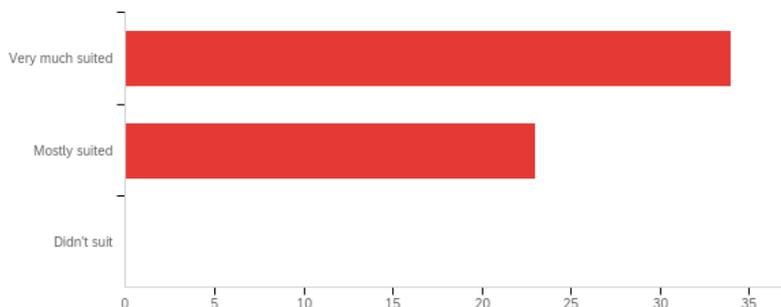


Some key findings from the evaluation returns are given below

*Do you feel the webinar provided you with a valuable learning experience? (score 1-10 where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'I found it very valuable')*



*How did you feel that the format suited your learning?*



Sample of comments from evaluation forms:

*What would you do differently in your practice following this webinar?*

- I will discuss the webinar and materials at my forthcoming CPC, and I look forward to following up the work undertaken by Luton Safeguarding Board.
- It will help me supporting staff in supervision who work with adolescents. I also like the thought of thinking of breaking down neglect themes
- have further discussions with colleagues to see how we can raise awareness of the key issues around adolescent neglect / how it's impacting on our pupils
- As a practice educator I will focus more on adolescents when discussing neglect with my students
- I want to review our assessment tool and consider if we need a version for use with adolescents. We will also add an additional training course on neglect looking specifically at adolescence.
- I will consider the assessment tools used with YP. I will consider the different categories of neglect and the particular impact.
- An awareness of the issues for young people and the evidence provided will help give robust reasons for the continuing support of young people.
- Speak more to the young person about what is going on within the family environment and remember that Neglect is often mis understood and interpreted by workers.
- Consider myself as a "feisty advocate".
- think about the possibility of this being an issue in the families I work with more often than I thought, make it more visible to others including families, talk about it more, making it more of a point to listen and invite the young person to share their views,
- Think differently about how I work with adolescents, treating them as assets/allies. This would greatly benefit my work.
- I liked that neglect is being linked to all areas of the wellbeing of a young person and that families are put into the context of their society.

*Other comments / questions*

- Very much enjoyed the session.
- Presentation was very interesting but some greater links to Scottish figures would have given greater context to the audience.

- This was an excellent webinar. Lots of food for thought but well presented by Phil Raws.
- Really enjoyed the presentation and it gave me much to think about a to discuss with colleagues.
- Really well facilitated session, appreciated the use of email prompts and information shared prior to the event.
- Menti meter could have been used better e.g., voting, see people's questions.

Up to 7<sup>th</sup> November the recording of this webinar had been viewed 206 times.

View the recording and access the supporting materials here:

[Learning About Neglect Event Series - Webinar 4 - The adolescent neglect conundrum: how can we respond better? - Child Protection Scotland](#)

## **7 Suggestions for Future Webinars**

The evaluation of the final webinar included a question to gather participants views on potential topics for future webinars. In total 28 participants made suggestions for future events.

Suggestions made by more than one participant were: -

- Child Exploitation (sexual, criminal financial exploitation)
- Families where services find it difficult to engage
- Child protection in families and children where there is disability
- Assessment / risk assessment & decision making (including chronologies)
- The impact of trauma
- Participation / engagement and advocacy
- Improving experiences for children in foster care / kinship care

## **8 Recommendation**

Subject to the availability of financial and practical support, a 2023 CPCScotland learning series should be considered.

Discussion should take place with CPCScotland chair and members to determine whether a 2023/24 learning series should continue to focus on neglect or consider an alternative theme or focus. This may result in an alternative governance arrangement.

**Thanks to all the speakers who contributed to the learning series**