

SUPPORTING PARENTS – SUPPORTING CHILDREN

Parenting Strategies and Service Provision



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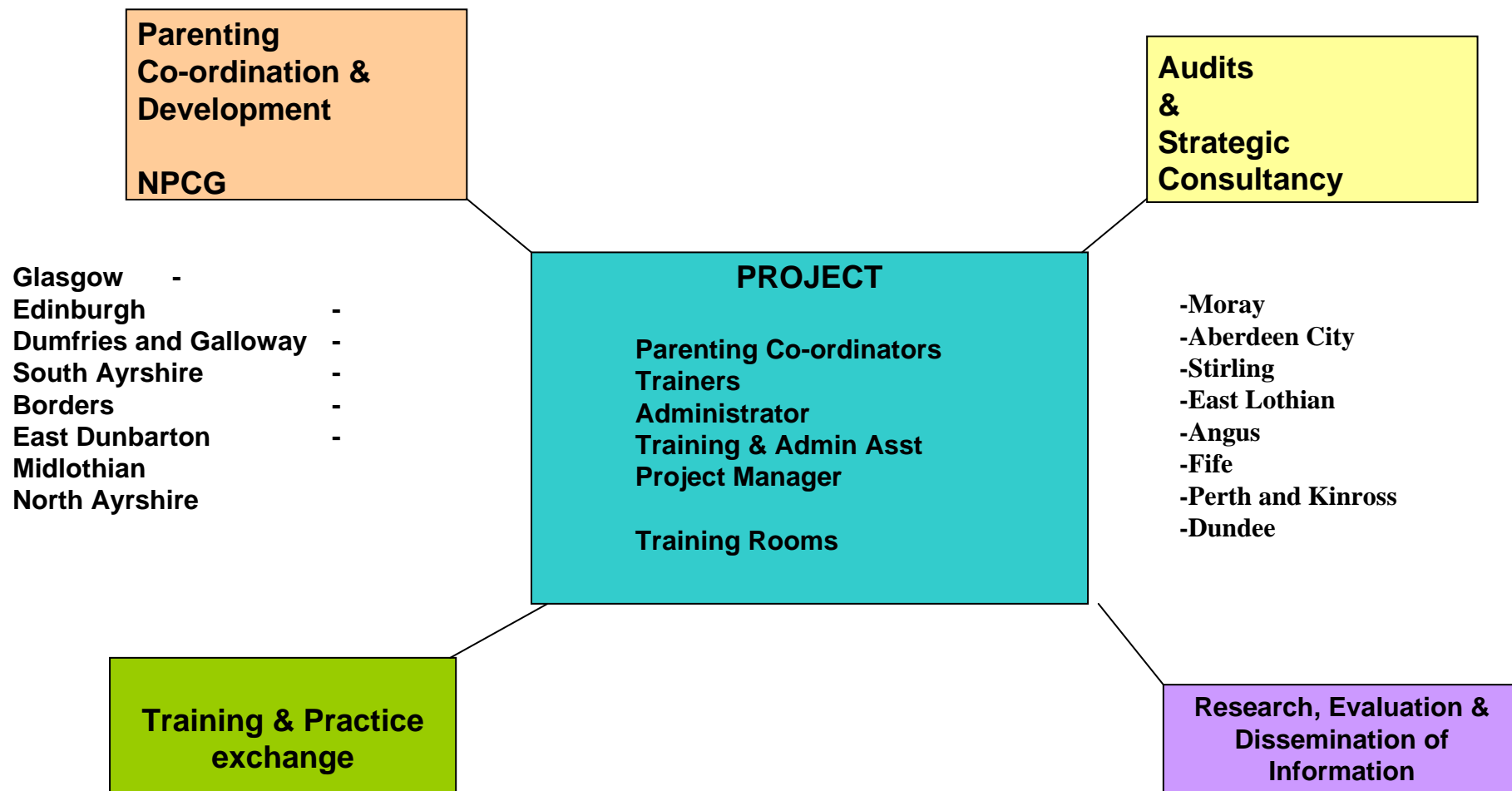
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KEY QUESTIONS

- How are parenting services being developed at present?
- What importance is being given to the parent-to-parent relationship?
- How can services supporting this relationship be promoted and included?

SOME KEY PRINCIPLES

- **The prime aim of working with parents is to produce better outcomes for children**
- **That Parents need to be seen as an active resource - part of the solution rather than just part of the problem.**
- **The aim of integrated working is to design seamless services that reflect the way people live their lives rather than the way in which we, as professionals, choose to organise ourselves.**
- **That Early Intervention means early in the life of a problem as well as early years – need for a common language**





CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE *for* SCOTLAND

“What Works?”

Underlines importance *inter alia* of parenting and family factors, including:

- Parenting style
- Parental supervision / attachment
- Parental conflict
- Parental rejection
- Fragmented family relationships

family structure less relevant

www.cjsw.ac.uk



CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE *for* SCOTLAND

“What Works?”

Review found that:

- Scottish and UK “what works?” evidence was limited
- Much evaluative research based on US based programmes
- Evidence on issues around **duration, intensity and sequencing**
- of programmes of intervention also limited

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE *for* SCOTLAND

“What Works?”

“The evidence suggests that a continuum of support from **universal provision through to specialist targeted provision** is likely to be required to meet the needs of children and families at different ages and stages across the life course, related to levels of difficulty and matched to **appropriate provision** (Carr, 2000; Tunstill and Aldgate, 2000; Moran *et al* 2004; Department for Education and Skills, 2007).” Hutton *et al*, 2008)

-progressive universalism - UNCRC (1989)

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE *for* SCOTLAND

“What Works?”

Evidence points to importance of:

- ‘pick up’ mechanisms for identification of the risk factors for poor outcomes
- a combination of universal and targeted services within *non-stigmatising early years* universal provision

Within Scotland, current health visiting practice, pre-school provision and primary school provide opportunities for further development in these areas

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RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

RISK FACTORS

- Parental and sibling criminality
- Parental neglect, including lack of supervision
- Chronic family conflict, either between partners or between parent and child/young person
- Harsh or erratic discipline

Loeber & Stouthorner-Loeber (1996)

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Use of positive discipline
- Active monitoring and supervision
- Supportive parent – child relationships
- Families who advocate for their children
- Parents who seek information and support
- Positive adult couple relationships



Kumpfer & Alvareido (1998)

PARENTS

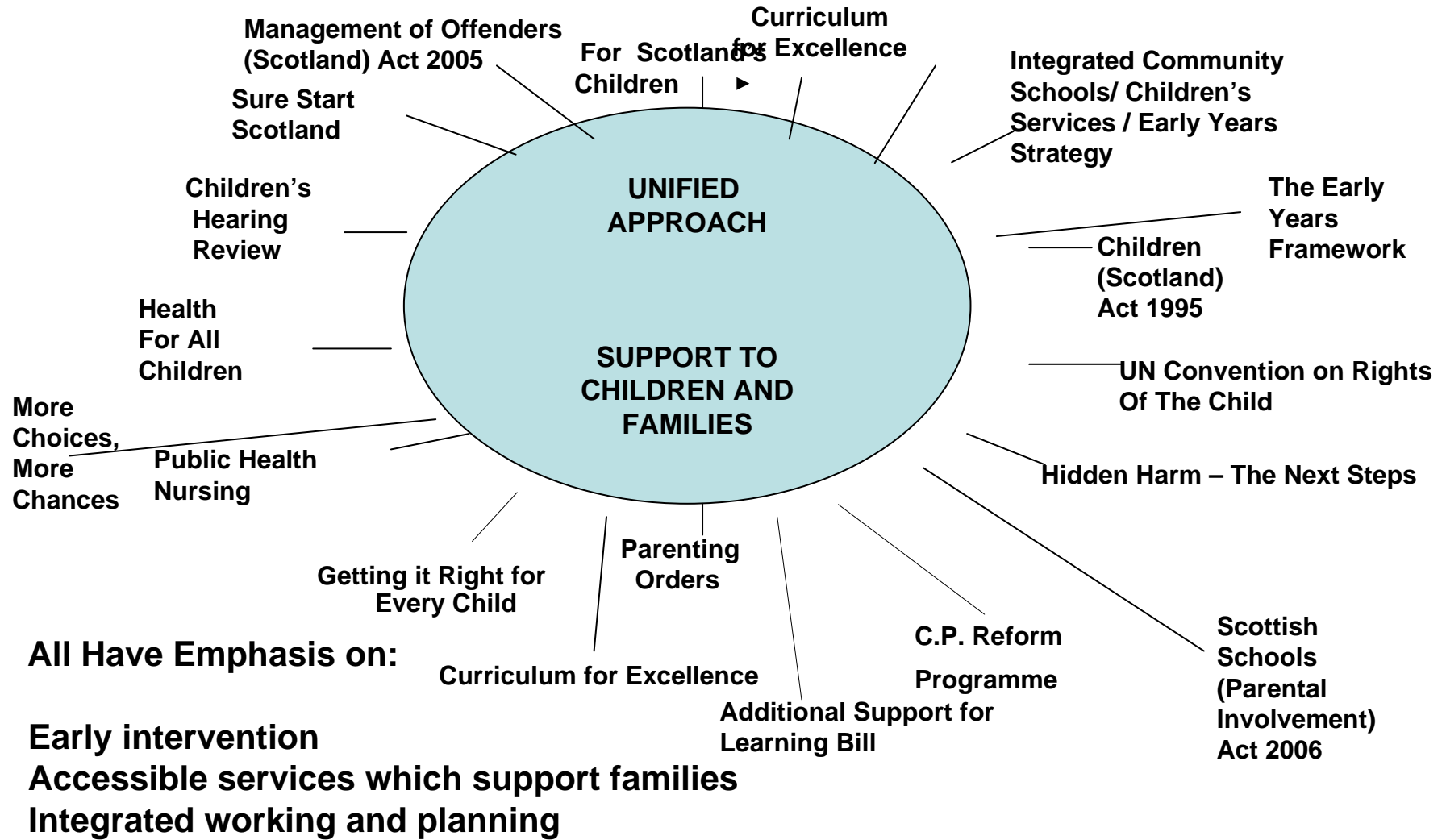
Parents wanted services

- ✓ To be practical
- ✓ To treat them like adults
- ✓ To involve them as partners in problem solving
- ✓ To take their views seriously
- ✓ To be fast and responsive
- ✓ To listen to them and be emotionally supportive
- ✓ To treat them as partners or part of the “team around the child”
- However, it’s not just *what* is offered but *how* it is offered that engages parents
- Tackling poverty and lack of resources is a key part of tackling parenting problems.

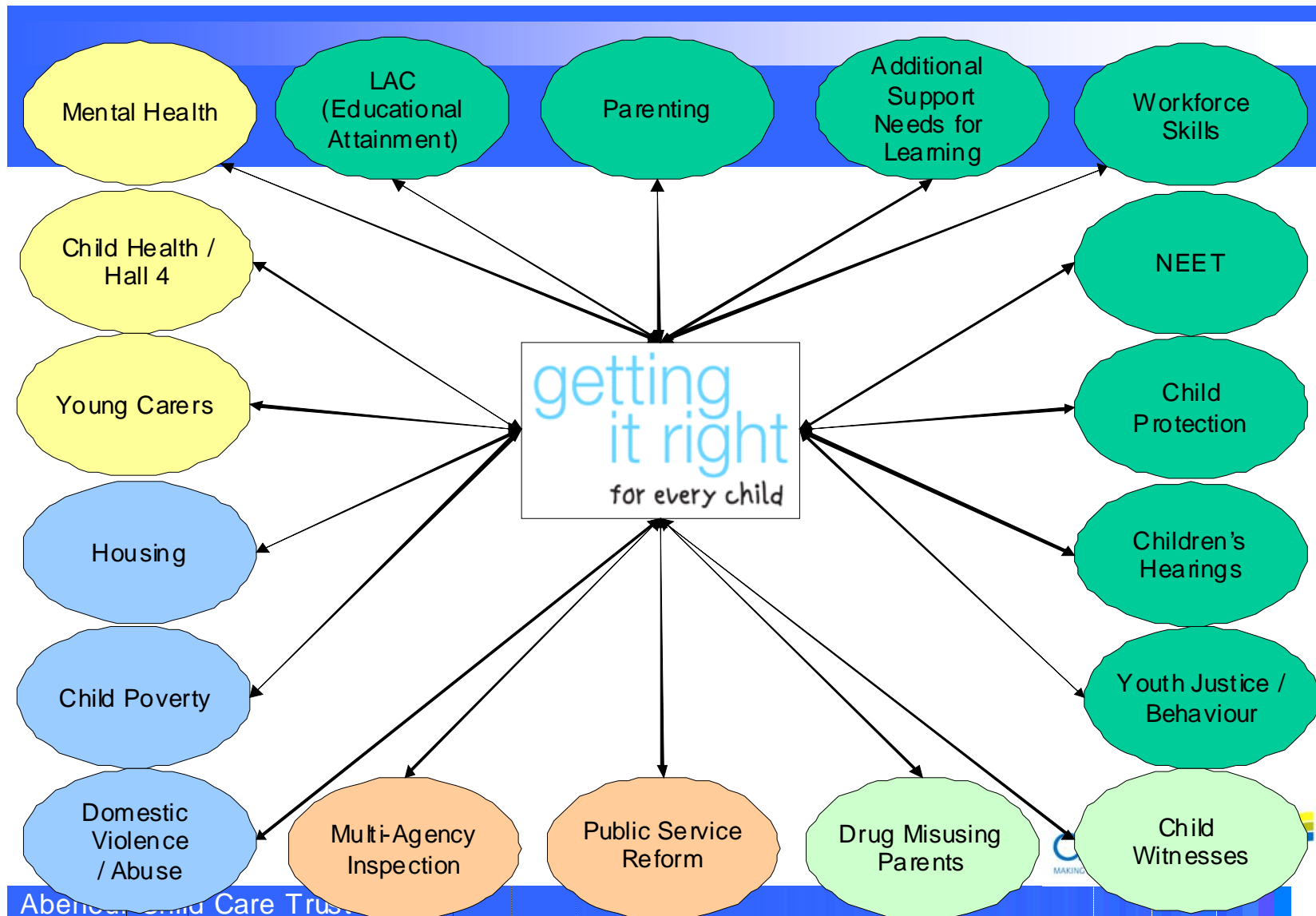
Quinton D (2004)



POLICY CONTEXT



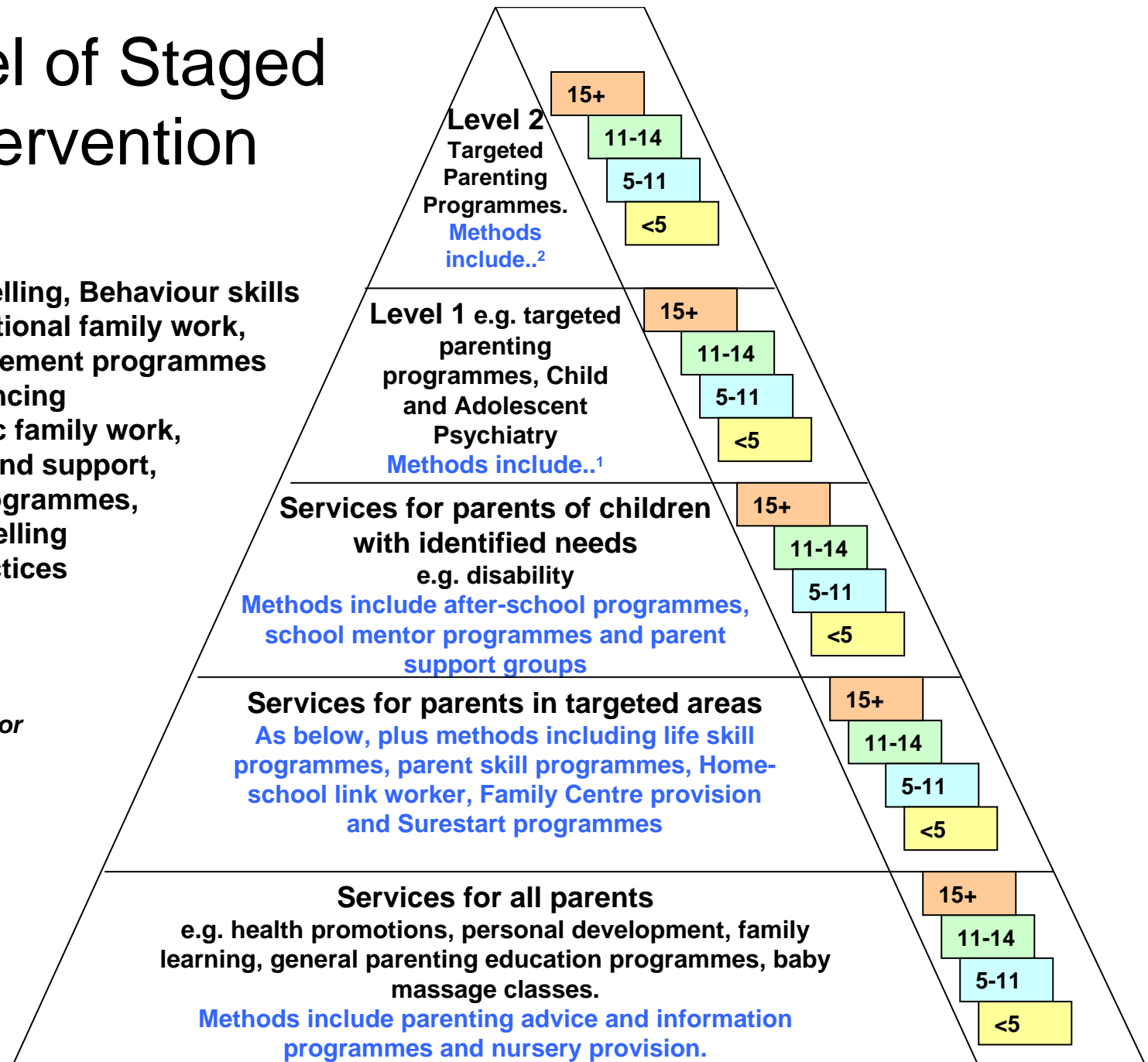
Getting it right for every child: main links across the Scottish Government



Model of Staged Intervention

- 1 In-home modelling, Behaviour skills programmes, Functional family work, Educational enhancement programmes and family conferencing
- 2 Multi-systemic family work, intensive wrap-around support, offence focused programmes, drug/alcohol counselling and restorative practices

NPDP Model Originally
Published in:
Bill Whyte et al.
Support and Services for Parents: A Review of Practice Development in Scotland
(2007)



PROCESS

- Audit
- Strategy

Information Strategy

Menu development"/Service Priorities

Training Strategy

- Locality Roll-out

Approaches to deciding a “menu” of parenting services for a continuum of need

1. Select a ready-made “tiered” programme (eg PPP)

Advantages - common language Issues - cost; existing expertise/experience

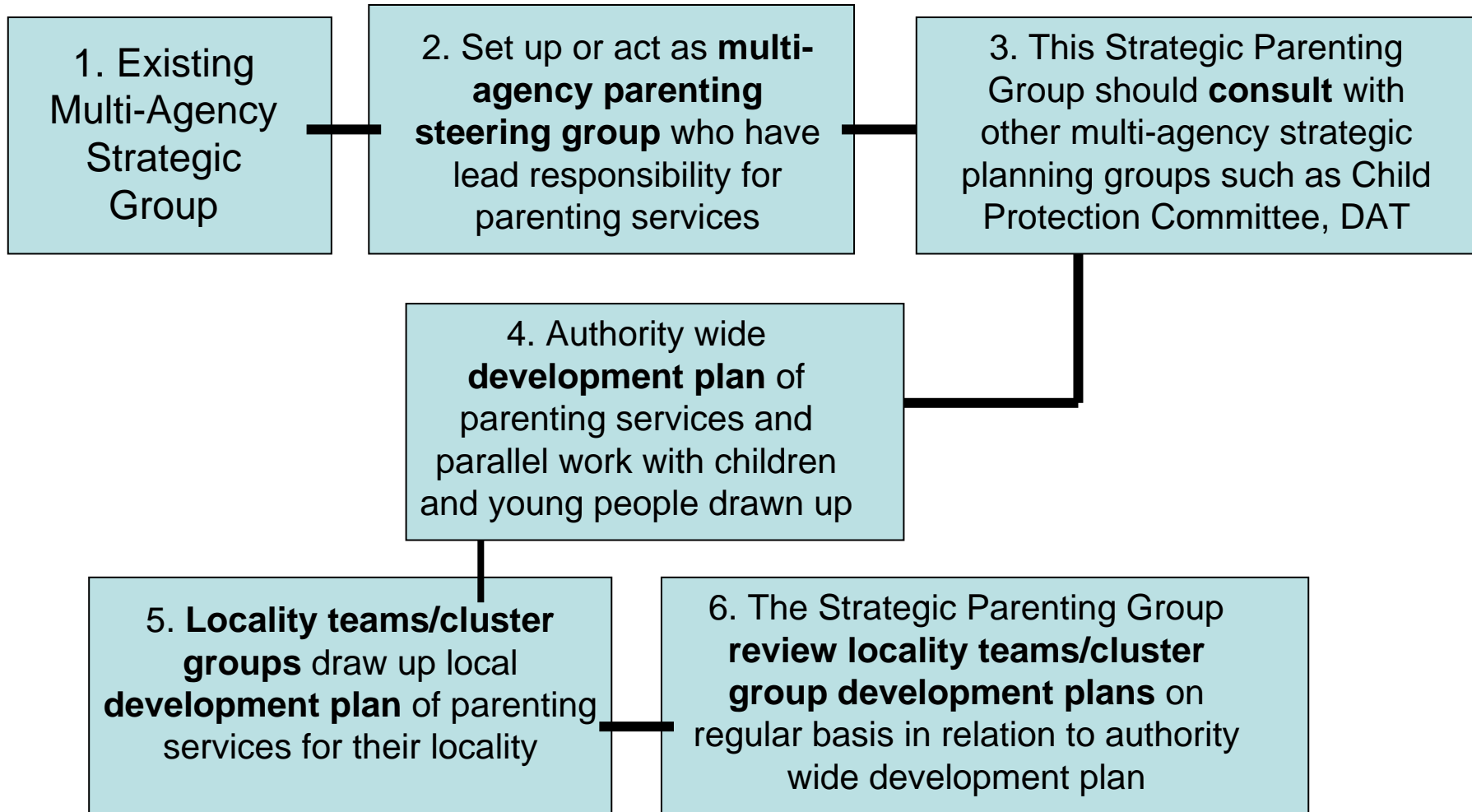
2. Audit

- Focus on priority gaps, eg teenagers (“Escape”)
- Extend existing embedded approaches/programmes (eg Solihull, Mediated Learning, Incredible Years, Mellow Parenting)
- Local initiatives, stronger evaluation (EG Parenting Toolkit)

Advantages – resources & experience Issues - consistency

Both – Workforce Planning -Learning Needs Analysis
Learning Communities – Practice exchange.

LOCALITY PLANNING



REFOCUSING

- towards Early Intervention

- **Goal is to achieve a better balance of services between “early intervention” and more “heavy end” provision – social prevention/treatment**
- **Good prevention not necessarily “light”- often intensive and vigorous**
- **Acute and restorative services will always be needed**

Research points to:

- **Improved inter- agency working; increased efficiency; improving experience of service user; improved practice and output; increased user involvement**

Refocusing Children’s Services Towards Prevention- Lessons Learned From The Literature; Dartington Research Unit; Dept For Education and Skills; Research Report RR510

EMERGING ISSUES - SERVICES

- **Parenting work was often fragmented and lacked coordination across the various agencies and local authority partners.**
- **Professionals and parents often lacked information about what existed**
- **Duplication of services**
- **Lack of clarity about criteria and aims**
- **Less services for parents of children 5-12 years**
- **Gap in services for parents of teenagers**
- **Gap in services for fathers and ethnic minorities**

FATHER INVOLVEMENT

- Once fathers are 'involved' they remain so throughout childhood
- It plays a protective role against psychological problems in adolescence where parents have separated; this effect is stronger for daughters
- Father involvement at age 7 predicts higher educational attainment by age 20 – girls and boys

Erini Flouri and Ann Buchanan ESRC study based on NCDS ann.buchanan@applied-social-studies.ac.uk

EMERGING ISSUES

- SERVICES (cont)

- **Lack of robust evaluation systems**
- **Tendency to evaluate for outcomes for parents rather than outcomes for children**
- **Tendency for structured parenting work to be taken up by a few enthusiasts...difficult to maintain without strategic backing**
- **Lack of small but necessary budgets (cash & kind) for practical implementation – venue, transport, childcare, catering, time for planning & review**

EMERGING ISSUES

- **Workforce planning issues**

- Substantial amounts often spent on training in specific parenting programmes that were then not delivered because staff not released.
- Who does what work at what level?
- Gaps in training - in core skills such as group facilitation, engaging parents, holistic family approaches, supervision
- Demand for training in parenting & problematic substance use; parenting & mental health issues

Key points in strategic approach to developing parenting services

- **The importance of maintaining a “ baseline” of information on parenting need against which service development is planned**
- **Clear objectives and ethos for inter-disciplinary work, which should include service user participation towards “co-production” of services**
- **Strategies for maintaining inter-disciplinary networks are needed, particularly when key people may depart at any given point**
- **The need for a model of provision describing a range of approaches and programmes along a continuum of levels/stages of intervention, from universal to targeted and across age ranges.**
- **The importance of understanding any such staged model as “interactive”, in which, for example, early intervention is possible at higher levels of need and people with such higher levels of need may benefit from encouragement to access universal services.(*Link to IAF*)**

Key points (cont)

- **The importance of home visitation and “in - home modelling” of good parenting practice, alongside delivery of parenting programmes**
- **The need to maintain the integrity of given programmes; which is not to say that materials should not, or cannot be adjusted for local relevance, but that any adjustment should maintain the objectives of both a given programme session and the programme overall. *(Practitioner Groups)***

Alongside these points sits the increasing body of research underlining

- **The need to engage parents/carers through the building of trust and sound relationships**
- **That skills of programme facilitators are as important as programme content.**

CONCLUDING ISSUES

- Where do couple services “fit” ?
Universal? Targeted?
- Do staff – at any level of intervention - see themselves as working with the couple relationship?
- Are the skills to do such work regarded as necessary?
- Relatively low profile in planning to date