

Inquiries into Social Work Services that highlight communication as an issue

Author/ Title/Date	Details	General Implications	Communication comments	Publisher
Hammond, H. (2001) <i>Child Protection Inquiry into the Circumstances Surrounding the Death of Kennedy McFarlane, d.o.b. 17 April 1997</i>	Inquiry into the death of Kennedy McFarlane , aged 3, killed by her mother's partner. Report concluded that her death could have been avoided through earlier intervention and identified deficiencies in child protection practice and inter-agency communication.	Prompted Scottish Executive audit and review of child protection, leading to establishment of child protection reform programme, the publication of the Children's Charter and Framework for Standards in Child Protection.	Raised issues of effective communication in terms not only of mechanical procedures (forms, faxes, E-mails) but relationship issues at a number of levels.	Dumfries and Galloway Child Protection Committee
Report of the Child Protection Audit and Review (2002) <i>It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright.</i>	Review of child protection in Scotland based on an audit of the practice of police, medical, nursing, social work, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, and education staff.	Provided evidence of both good practice and areas for improvement. Found that families didn't always get help when they needed it, some children remained unprotected and agencies not always able to respond effectively.	Identified a number of inter-related weaknesses in information, assessment, planning and recording systems which seriously under-mined practice.	Scottish Executive
O'Brien, S. et al (2003) <i>Report of the Caleb Ness Enquiry, Executive Summary and Recommendations</i>	Inquiry into the death of Caleb Ness , aged 11 weeks, killed by his brain-damaged father whilst on the at-risk register. Report criticised decision to allow unsupervised care and highlighted serious errors within Edinburgh City Council's Child Protection Unit.	Council responded by reorganising services. At the time there was criticism for failing to acknowledge resource constraints.	Child Protection Case Conference Process flawed. Report prepared for it was inaccurate with significant gaps in information. Staff lacked training in Case Conference procedures.	Edinburgh and Lothians Child Protection Committee
Laming, H. (2003) <i>The Victoria Climbié Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Lord Laming</i>	Inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié , aged 8, killed by her great aunt and partner. Inquiry identified major failings at all levels of child protection and recommended widespread reform of children's services. Highlighted responsibility of senior management and concern over resourcing social work.	Led to Green Paper <i>Every Child Matters</i> and the Children Act 2004 in England and Wales. In Scotland added impetus to child protection reform programme	Concluded that staff must be held accountable for the quality of information they provide. Each agency must accept responsibility for making sure that information passed to another agency is clear, and the recipients should query any points of uncertainty.	The Stationery Office
SWSI / MWC (2004) <i>Investigations into</i>	Scottish Borders Inquiry into services for people with learning disabilities following	Prompted establishment of 21 st Century Social Work Review and proposed	Failure to communicate with service users or engage	Scottish Executive with Social Work

<i>Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders Services for People with Learning Disabilities</i>	high profile failures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse. Indicated misunderstanding of balance between individuals' rights to self-determination and their rights to protection.	legislation imposing duty on social workers to investigate and prevent abuse of adults, now passed as the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.	them in assessment; very poor standards of case recording; breaches of SSSC's Codes of Practice.	Services Inspectorate (SWSI) and Medical Welfare Commission (MWC)
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