

1. What is poverty?

“Poverty is less about shortage of income and more about the inability of people on low incomes to participate actively in society.”

Ferragina et al., 2013

Poverty should be understood as an inability, or lack of capability, to achieve and to flourish within society.

Recent statistics suggest that 23% of children in Calderdale live in poverty and 26% in Kirklees. (DWP & HMRC, 2019)

7. Conclusion:

It is vital that we “root our practice in the voices and experiences of those who are struggling to live, love and care in conditions which make it difficult to do so with dignity and respect” *Featherstone et al., 2019*

Poverty may affect any person at some point in their life. Assessments should be individualised to reflect how poverty affects the person’s physical or mental health and the response required.

6. Supporting a positive future:

Power imbalance inherent in society and the mistrust that this causes in deprived communities can cause service users to distrust professionals. There is a danger that this mistrust could lead to vulnerable adults not seeking support in abusive situations for fear of the intervention that will follow. This can be mitigated by taking the time to build trusted relationships, empowering people to make their own safeguarding decisions and showing empathy and understanding.

Safeguarding 7 minute briefing

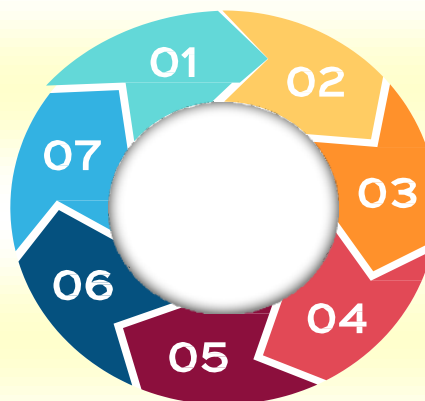
Poverty, inequality and the impacts on safeguarding



For further reading see below link to dissertation by Jessica Keenan



Social Work MA
Dissertation Final .doc



5. Recognising what to do:

The belief that those in poverty are to blame for their own circumstances and the prejudice this creates is evident even among professionals working with the most vulnerable (*Krumer-Nevo, 2016*)

Use supervision/ reflective discussions to understand and address any unconscious bias

Understand the impact of poverty from the person’s perspective.

2. Why it matters:

Poverty brings intolerable levels of stress for families, relationships and children. It is necessary to recognise the limitations poverty places on individuals’, families’, or communities’ ability to participate in society. Poverty has adverse effects on all areas of people’s lives including on physical and mental health, educational attainment, quality of life, on notions of freedom, well-being and self-worth.

3. The prevalence:

Poverty increases the risk of suffering abuse and neglect both in children and adults. Children in the most deprived decile are around 13 times more likely to be on a Child Protection Plan than a child in the least deprived decile. Chronic illness and disability further increase the risk of self-neglect, both of which are associated with poverty.

4. Recognising the impact:

The high levels of stress people experience due to poverty can inhibit their ability to plan for the future, adopt calm parenting strategies and develop their own or their children’s wellbeing.

Social exclusion, isolation, physical disabilities, substance misuse, mental health issues, stress, dependency and previous experiences of abuse have all been shown to increase the risk of abuse & neglect