



PRISM

Practice Reflection Improvement Short Module

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1 Introduction

This reference guide has been designed to provide you with the information needed to deliver PRISM in your local area.

PRISM is essentially an open learning event where the evaluation of local practice that is undertaken by the local Child Protection Committee, is shared and discussed with a multi-agency group of practitioners, small group reflection is then supported and consideration is given to how local practice can be improved.

2 Practical arrangements

PRISM is best delivered in a room which is designed for learning and development activities. Projector, laptop, flipcharts, small tables for groups to be seated around etc. are all necessary.

There are no entry requirements for PRISM – all staff involved with families are encouraged to attend. Therefore, you will need a room big enough to accommodate the numbers you expect to attract.

PRISM is designed to be delivered in a half-day session (three and a half hours, with 15 minutes break). Consider varying the times and days of your PRISM sessions to increase accessibility and support the participation of your local workforce.

3 Preparation

Those leading on the development and delivery of PRISM require to undertake a significant amount of preparatory work.

The topic to be focused upon in PRISM should be drawn from joint evaluation activity undertaken locally – the core premise of PRISM is that participants are more involved in evaluation and improvement of *local* child protection practice.

Examples of materials to use are things like a multi-agency case file audit, an initial or significant case review, staff surveys, feedback from families who use child protection services or child protection statistics (or a combination of these).

Those delivering PRISM should review the chosen material to agree which aspects of practice will be selected for focused reflection. For example, a multi-agency case file audit may have identified learning across different aspects of practice (information-sharing, risk assessment, voice of children/young people, working with resistance etc.), however facilitators may have to prioritise two or three aspects to focus upon rather than trying to sufficiently reflect upon all aspects of practice learning during PRISM. It is still important to *share all the learning* during PRISM, but it is prudent to *focus on two or three aspects of practice* in the allocated time of three and a half hours.

The material should then be structured to be delivered in “chunks”, each of which provides participants with the necessary information required to focus on the agreed priorities for reflection. For each aspect of practice that is to be a focus for reflection, the facilitators should develop some prompts to structure group reflection. An example would be:

“In this case, we have observed that some adult services were not involved in child protection planning for this child. From your particular service perspective, consider what this means to you.

How does this finding compare with your experience?
How can we use this finding to improve practice?”

4 Facilitators (2 people are recommended)

Those involved in facilitating PRISM need to have:



The ability to establish a safe learning space for participants



The ability to present evidence clearly in a way that engages participants and supports reflection on practice



The ability to facilitate multi-agency reflection on practice, “holding” and “managing” any anxieties experienced by participants



A good understanding of local child protection practice – ideally due to direct involvement in joint self-evaluation activity



A thorough knowledge of the evidence being presented within the PRISM itself, including methodology (what evaluation activity was undertaken and how?), findings (what did this evaluation activity tell us about local child protection practice?) and implications (what might this learning mean for us in terms of improving practice?)

5 Structure

Following introductions – of everyone in the room – present key objectives of PRISM:

- To share findings from local evaluation activity
- To reflect on current practice, including both areas of strength and barriers to best practice
- To consider ways of improving practice
- To ensure staff in X area are more fully involved in child protection evaluation and improvements

Then spend time creating a safe learning space by outlining “ground rules”:



Confidentiality

PRISM uses evidence about local practice because this best promotes what we are trying to achieve – involving staff in evaluation and improvements as fully as possible. This means a case may be featured that is recognised by a participant, or they might know staff who were involved in the case. Remind participants to keep this confidential and not reveal the identity of the case or staff.



Respect and Sensitivity

When Child Protection Committees evaluate practice they have the benefit of hindsight, of objectivity, of having all available information provided and the benefit of time and space to reflect and consider. These are all benefits provided to PRISM participants. This is not the context within which practice takes place! Remind participants to be respectful and sensitive about the case practice being discussed. It is important to explicitly state that staff directly involved in cases being discussed may be present.



Support reflection

PRISM provides opportunities for reflection. Reflecting on practice can often trigger thoughts about work and families we have previously been involved with, or are currently involved with. This can have quite an impact. Different practitioners will have different experiences of reflecting on practice – some organisations such as social work will have this routinely built in, others such as education or police, much less so. Reflection is a skill as well as a process and it takes strength to examine your own practice and consider ways it can improve – this should always be supported and no one should feel criticised through this process.)




Sharing concerns

A reminder to participants about the circumstances in which information about children needs to be shared.

After establishing the purpose of the session and creating a safe learning space, set the context for this work by explaining the role that Child Protection Committees have in improving child protection practice. This involves drawing on a wide range of sources of evidence, including:

- Child protection statistics
- Significant Case Reviews
- Inspections
- Staff Surveys
- Case File Audits
- Staff Focus Groups
- Feedback from families

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- Amend this list to reflect the evaluation and improvement work of your Child Protection Committee. The aim is to highlight to participants that a range of evaluative activity is undertaken and evidence drawn from a range of sources.
 - The source(s) of evidence for the PRISM being delivered should be clearly visible within this list.
 - Next, the specific PRISM topic should be introduced. Explain what evaluation activity was undertaken (i.e. Initial Case Review, Staff Survey, Feedback from families).
 - Present the findings of this evaluation activity step by step. See section 2 for guidance on chunking information.
 - In advance of delivery of PRISM, you will have decided which aspects of practice you wish participants to reflect upon. Consider these “stopping points” or “pause and reflect” points.
 - The content of PRISM in-between “pause and reflect” points should be paced to provide participants with the right information to facilitate the reflective exercises.

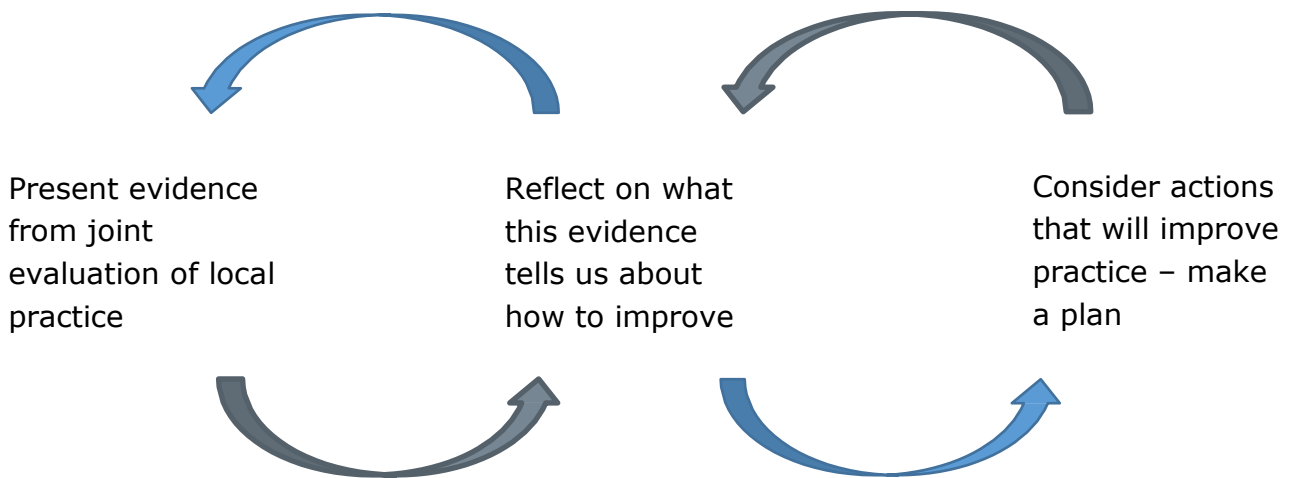
TIP

Regardless of the type of evidence you are presenting, try and incorporate a story of a family, or give examples using narrative that brings the evidence to life from a child’s perspective. Case studies are a very effective way of presenting this type of evidence.

PRISM should always end by focusing on improving practice. If you are presenting a finished piece of evaluation that includes an improvement plan approved by the Child Protection Committee, first invite participants to develop their own improvement plan or propose improvement areas, then share the one that has been approved by the Child Protection Committee.

If your piece of evaluation activity is recently concluded and an improvement plan has not yet been agreed, take the opportunity to involve participants in developing an improvement plan.

In either case, the more effectively you can engage participants with the improvement plan, the more likely it is that they will share ownership of this and work to implement it.



About CELCIS

CELCIS, based at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, is committed to making positive and lasting improvements in the wellbeing of Scotland's children living in and on the edges of care. Ours is a truly collaborative agenda; we work alongside partners, professionals and systems with responsibility for nurturing our vulnerable children and families. Together we work to understand the issues, build on existing strengths, introduce best possible practice and develop solutions. What's more, to achieve effective, enduring and positive change across the board, we take an innovative, evidence-based improvement approach across complex systems.

For more information

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