

Outline for Masterclass
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Learning from cases of serious and fatal child abuse

This interactive masterclass will examine the learning that has emerged from national studies from England and Wales of over 600 cases of child death or serious injury from abuse and neglect from 1998-2010. The studies were carried out to discern themes and trends in these worst outcome cases to inform policy and practice. The linked themes of learning from research and learning from and for practice will be pursued. Findings in relation to managing reviews into child fatality through abuse will be discussed as will the impact on professionals of working with families where a child death occurs. The theoretical approach used to inform the studies, an ecological transactional perspective, will be presented and debated as a way of understanding and making sense of a range of inter-acting risk factors in families. This requires a thorough understanding of parental history and psychology and a careful consideration of the interaction between children and their caregivers. Case studies will be used to illustrate the way in which inter-acting factors play out in relationships within families and in communication and responses between families and professionals. A number of practice tools have emerged from the studies and these will also be presented and discussed.