

# Neglect Conference

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**Bridging Gaps: Enhancing Neglect workstreams with cultural and intersectional insights**

# Definition of neglect

- + To be able to define, recognise and address neglect it is important there is an agreed shared understanding, across the partnership, of what constitutes neglect.
- + For the purpose of this strategy, neglect is defined in accordance with the definition contained in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023):
  - + *“The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect will occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:*
    - *Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).*
    - *Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.*
    - *Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers).*
    - *Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.*
    - *Provide suitable education.*
- + *It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs”.*
- + It is important to remember that neglect can occur at any time including the teenage years.

medical  
neglect

nutritional  
neglect

emotional  
neglect

educational  
neglect

physical  
neglect

lack of  
supervision

Horwath (2007) identified six classifications of neglect which are widely recognised by professionals across England. These should be read alongside the Working Together definitions. The six areas are;

# National Context

**1 in 10** children in the UK have experienced Neglect (NSPCC)

Approximately **50%** of child protection plans in the UK are due to Neglect.  
(Safeguarding Network)

Neglect is the most common reason for a child to contact Childline. (NSPCC)

# Our Local Principles

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1. The child is at the heart of what we do. This means that we need to listen/ observe the child's views and experience to understand the impact neglect has had and is still having on their lives.

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2. All professionals have a responsibility to identify needs and concerns in relation to children and take action to ensure those needs and concerns are addressed at the appropriate level of intervention. This should always be at the lowest possible level to address the issues.

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3. Interventions will be conducted openly and honestly with children and families and all agencies will work in partnership with children, parents and carers.

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4. Assessments will be holistic, taking account of all views including parents that do not live with their children. Assessments will be evidence based and identify strengths as well as areas of concern. Assessments will focus explicitly on each child in the family.

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5. Plans will be clear and directly related to the strengths and concerns identified in the assessment. All plans will have clear timescales that will be reviewed regularly

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6. All agencies will work together positively to address the identified needs and risks for the child and their family. Any concerns about the effectiveness of the interventions with the child should be raised using the "resolving professional differences policy"



# Partnership priorities

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**Priority 1:** Strategic commitment across all agencies to understand, prevent and reduce the impact of neglect

2

**Priority 2:** Improve the capability of the multi-agency workforce to recognise and act on the signs of neglect.

3

**Priority 3:** Improve the effectiveness of assessment, planning and interventions to reduce neglect and respond to neglect in a consistent and timely way.

4

**Priority 4:** Evaluate our practice and continually improve its effectiveness so we can reduce the neglect of children and young people.



## Thematic review of neglect – December 2022

- + Case reviews highlighted the impact of risk factors on the parents' ability to provide safe and appropriate care, and to meet their children's needs. These included:
- + parental domestic abuse or drug and alcohol misuse
- + parents with mental health problems or learning disabilities
- + young parents
- + social isolation
- + financial problems including housing problems, homelessness, poverty and unemployment
- + children with complex health needs, disabilities or who were born prematurely.

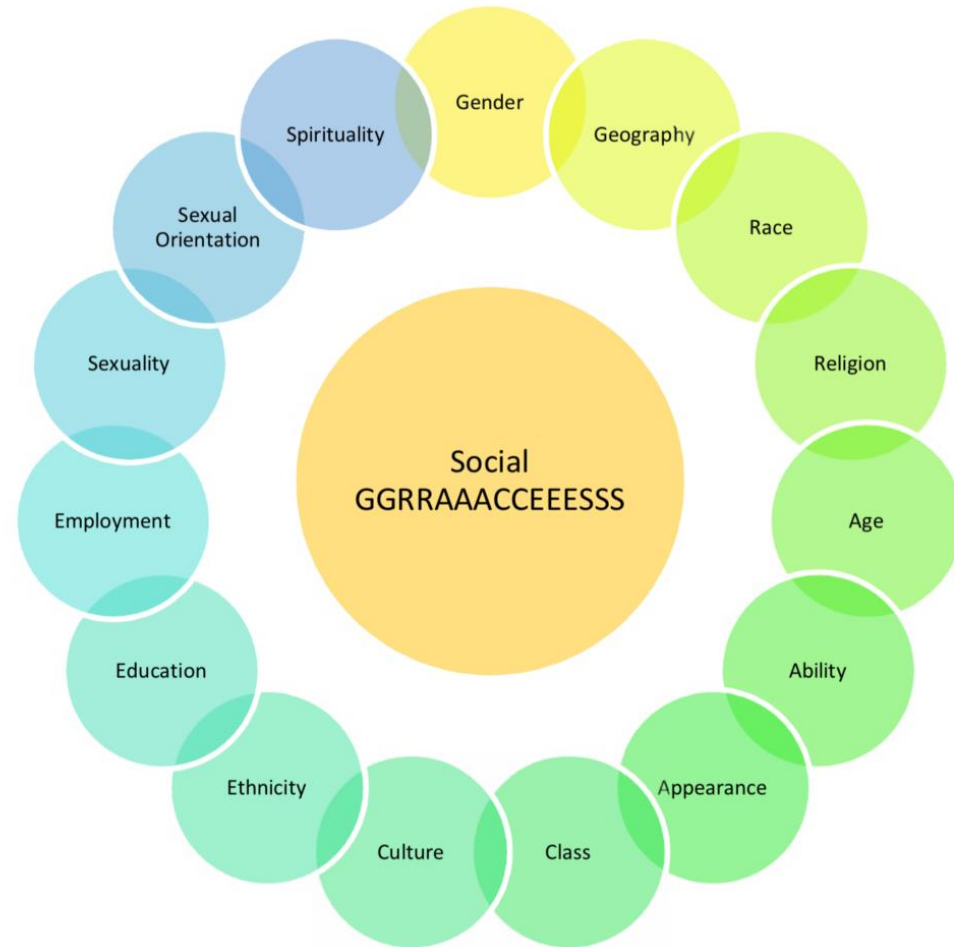
# Learning for Improved Practice

- + Be aware of children who are more vulnerable to neglect
- + Respond to missed appointments
- + Pay attention to untreated health conditions, accidents and injuries
- + Remain child-focused
- + Understand the child's lived experience
- + Build up a picture of cumulative experiences of neglect and assess parental capability to change
- + Retain professional curiosity and respectful uncertainty
- + Engage families
- + Work closely with other agencies to identify concerns and plan interventions
- + Provide timely and holistic early help
- + Undertake robust and comprehensive assessments – **Evidence based tools recommended in reviews include the Graded Care Profile ( GCP) which provides a structure for assessing the type and level of neglect so it can be addressed in a timely and appropriate way. This is the tool that we currently use in our local area**
- + Keep focus on the need to improve outcomes for the child



# Social GRRRAACCEEESSS

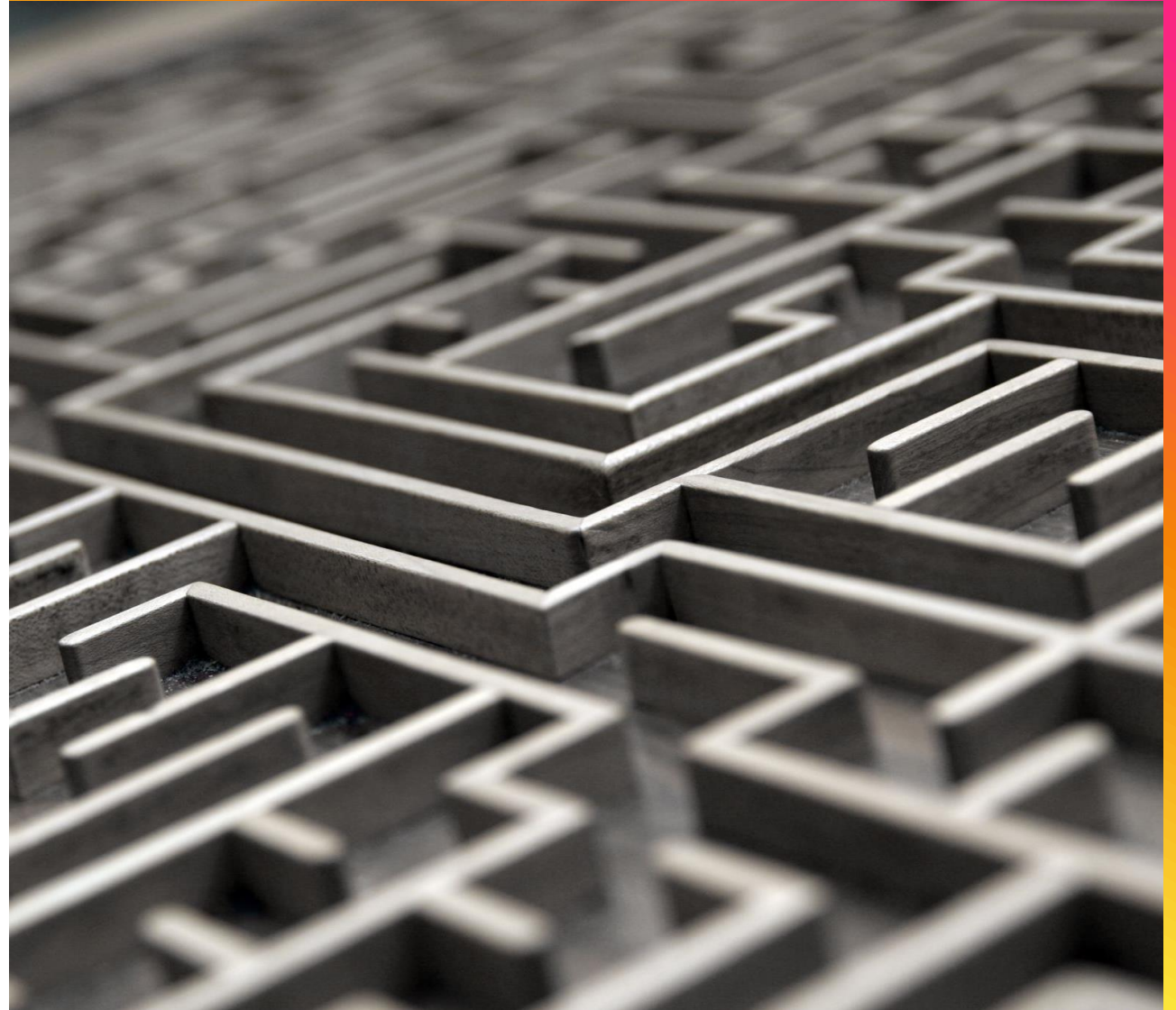
- + The Social Graces framework developed by Burnham (1992, 1993) and Roper-Hall (1998)
- + 'the term is an acronym representing: Gender, Geography, Race, Religion, Age, Ability, Appearance, Culture, Class, Education, Employment, Ethnicity, Spirituality, Sexuality, and Sexual orientation.



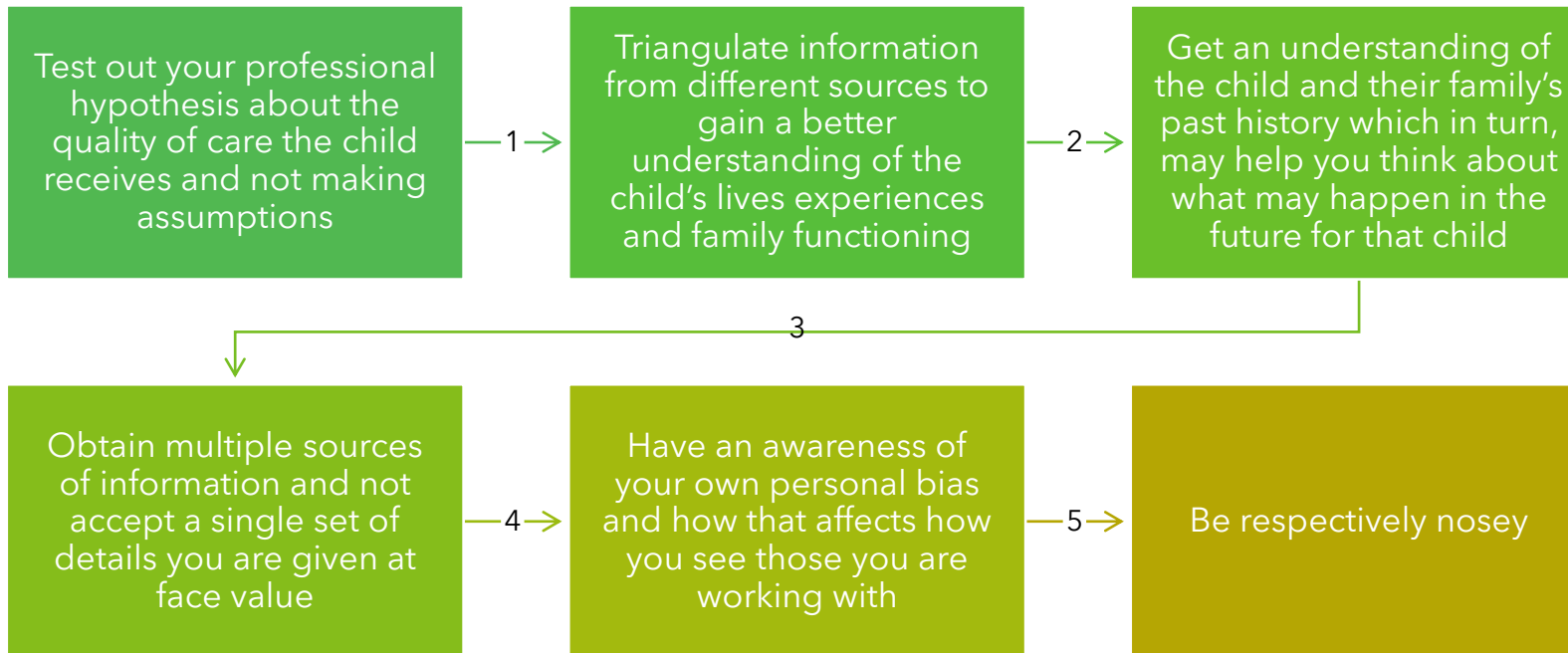
# Intersectionality

## Kimberle Crenshaw

- + "Intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking."



# Professional curiosity





# Cultural competence

- + Cultural competence means being able to work effectively with people from different backgrounds, valuing diversity, being aware of personal assumptions and biases and thinking about how to overcome barriers (Larson and Bradshaw, 2017). Rather than focusing on someone's knowledge of a specific culture, cultural competency highlights interpersonal skills such as openness, respect and willingness to learn.
- + Cultural competence helps professionals build on their existing cultural awareness by working with other people in a sensitive, positive way to develop a deeper understanding of their beliefs, attitudes and cultures. (NSPCC website)