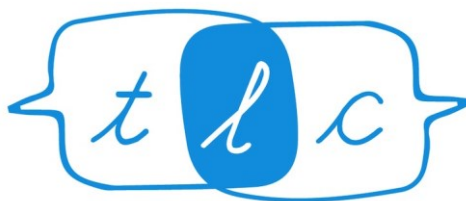


## TALKING & LISTENING TO CHILDREN



Exploring how social workers  
and children communicate

### **The TLC Project: Talking and Listening to Children Participant Information Sheet for Social Workers: Scotland**

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

It is vital that social workers are able to communicate well with children in child protection work. The aim of this project is to explore how social workers communicate with children in their everyday practice, and how the social workers and children involved in these encounters experience and understand them. The research aims to generate new knowledge that will enhance the quality of social work education, practice and policy and in so doing improve children's experiences of practice and practice outcomes. Specifically the research will:

- Identify how social workers communicate with children in practice, in both early encounters and established relationships, encompassing the high priority areas of child protection and providing care for children looked after by the local authority;
- Enable practitioners and children to reflect on specific practice encounters, helping to identify the barriers and enablers to attuned communication;
- Identify how practice in this domain could be improved and develop paper-based and video/digital resources to enable these improvements to be realised.

#### **Who are the researchers and who is funding the research?**

This is a four nation UK two-stage research project and in Scotland is led by Professor Viv Cree. The lead researcher for the fieldwork is Fiona Morrison. Viv and Fiona are both based at the University of Edinburgh's School of Social and Political Sciences; there are also researchers in Cardiff, Belfast and Southampton. The research has been commissioned and funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and has been approved by the University of Edinburgh School of Social and Political Studies Research Ethics Committee and Cardiff University School of Social Sciences Ethics Committee. This information sheet relates to phase one (for more information about phase two, please see the information at the end of this sheet).

#### **Why you have been asked to take part**

This research is interested in the ways that social workers communicate with children and young people at the point of referral and assessment. It is hoped that the learning from this research will contribute to improving individual and organisational practice.

#### **What you would have to do**

Over a period of few months, Fiona will be based in the office, initially to familiarise herself with the setting. During this time, Fiona will make notes about how practitioners talk about communicating with children and young people. She will not make notes about any sensitive data.

The main research activity is for Fiona to accompany you on your assessment visits to children and their families, and make observations on the interactions between you and the children. This would only be for those visits which you deem to be appropriate. We would also ask you to share our information sheets about the research with families prior to the visit for us to gain their consent. You will also be asked pre and post-visit follow-up questions for your reflections on the visit. These short informal interviews will be audio recorded and can take place 'en-route' to or from the visit or in your office.

Toward the end of Fiona's time at the office, you will be invited to take part in formal semi-structured interviews related to your involvement.

### **What will happen to the information you give**

The information will be anonymous and confidential. Neither you nor the social work team will be identifiable. You will not be identified in any observation notes recorded from office observations. Findings from the research may be subsequently be used for publication in academic journals or book chapters, and for training purposes.

We hope that taking part in this research will provide beneficial opportunities for you and the organisation to reflect on practice. However, should you have any concerns about any aspect of the research, please contact Viv Cree (Professor of Social Work) on 0131 650 9271. Similarly, the research team will adhere to the organisational 'whistle-blowing' procedures for any concerns regarding individual or organisational practice.

### **What if you wish to withdraw**

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can withdraw from any part of the research at any time you wish, without giving a reason. You can withdraw any or all of the information you have provided.

### **Contact details:**

If you would like further information about the study please do not hesitate to contact us at the following:

[fiona.morrison@ed.ac.uk](mailto:fiona.morrison@ed.ac.uk) or 0131 651 5003

For more general information about the TLC research project, please visit our webpage: <http://www.crrf.ac.uk/projects/current-projects/talking-and-listening-to-children-exploring-how-social-workers-and-children-communicate/>

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