

TAVISTOCK POLICY SEMINARS

'CONNECTING PUBLIC POLICY AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS'

Falling Between Minds: *Inter-disciplinary work with children in care - and its difficulties*

Presenters: Paula Conway
Jacky Tiotto

Date: 15 November 2007 (6pm - 8pm)

Venue: The Tavistock Centre, Lecture Theatre

Why doesn't policy simply translate into practice? Presenters

Key policy documents repeatedly emphasise the need for multi-agency working, and better communication within and between services, in the interests of the child.

This is valid and commendable policy, which most services for children work hard to implement, but which frequently runs into difficulties. Splits, disagreements, rivalries and even hatreds develop between and within services. Nowhere is this more evident than with children in care, between the multitudes of professionals providing their care. Foster placements frequently break down despite everyone's best efforts, leaving behind a trail of bad feeling between professionals, carers and young people. Complaints abound and a culture of blame becomes endemic.

Policy development tends not to focus on the emotional realities of damaged children and their carers. This makes for 'messy' policy that is hard to implement or performance manage. Working together across professional silos involves culture change. There has been little central government modelling of such a change programme and few drivers have been identified to make a better reality of this on the ground in local areas. We need 20 years to turn around the outcomes of the 5 yrs olds looked after now.

That however is unlikely to be accepted and so we will rush now to continue to develop superficial policy responses to a real crisis looming for these children and young people whose outcomes are worsening.

Paula Conway, Co-ordinator, Tavistock - Harringey Looked-after children project

Jacky Tiotto, Department for Education Schools and Families

Programme

Seminars will begin at 6pm with the main presentations. There will be a short break for refreshments at 6.45pm after which the seminar will resume with an open dialogue and end with brief commentaries from the speakers.

Contact

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