

# Assessment for effective case rendering in Social Work

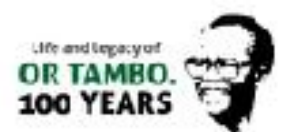
**Ms N Cekiso: Director: Child Protection**

**Ms SC Scholtz - Social Work Policy  
Manager**

**Dr L Naidoo - Child Protection**

**Technical Lead**

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# Presentation outline

- Background & research methodology
- Research findings
- Current practice outcomes
- Principles
- Case Management process
- Capacity requirements for social worker needed when conducting assessment

# Background

- Quality assessment is the **foundation** for effective service provision
- Inadequate assessments results into misinterpretation of client's presenting problems, resulting into secondary trauma as clients gets subjected to multiple assessments, poor case management and response.
- In order to improve and strengthen response to child protection particularly to Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation (CANE), the Department of Social Development embarked on a number of research processes since 2011.

# Background

- Qualitative research was conducted (2011 & 2012)- to develop a standardised assessment tool for social workers within the field of CANE.
- **Purposive** and snow-ball sampling techniques
- Data collection- desk top reviews (document analysis) & **semi structured** interview schedule for focus group discussions
- **Interviews** with key role-players
- Objectives:
  - ✓ Review of type of assessment tools utilised in the field of child protection
  - ✓ Process of application of tools
  - ✓ Conditions & resources that will enhance assessment processes

# Some research findings

## • FINDINGS

- Social workers not well equipped and trained to undertake a thorough and professional assessment
- There is a lack of knowledge and understanding of the various approaches and theories applicable
- Not able to bring the legal requirements and process flow of child abuse assessments in context.

## • FINDINGS

- Majority did not recognise the importance of assessment as part of the continuum of care but rather in criminal procedure (physical and sexual)
- 30% not familiar with assessment tools
- 70% utilised the generic case management forms
- Information required not relevant to all cases; limited questions & not comprehensive.

- A need for a standardised assessment procedure and instrument was identified.

# Current Practise Outcomes

- Increase knowledge and change of attitude towards the implementation of SRAT
- Linkage of child maltreatment indicators versus child developmental needs and impact of abuse
- Refreshing of theory and approaches for assessment
- Re-emphasizing the importance of assessment principles and child participation
- Supervisors having a framework to guide, assist and support the social worker in case discussion and take accountability
- Build the confidence of the social worker to present a professional report in court, with recommendations that are evidence based

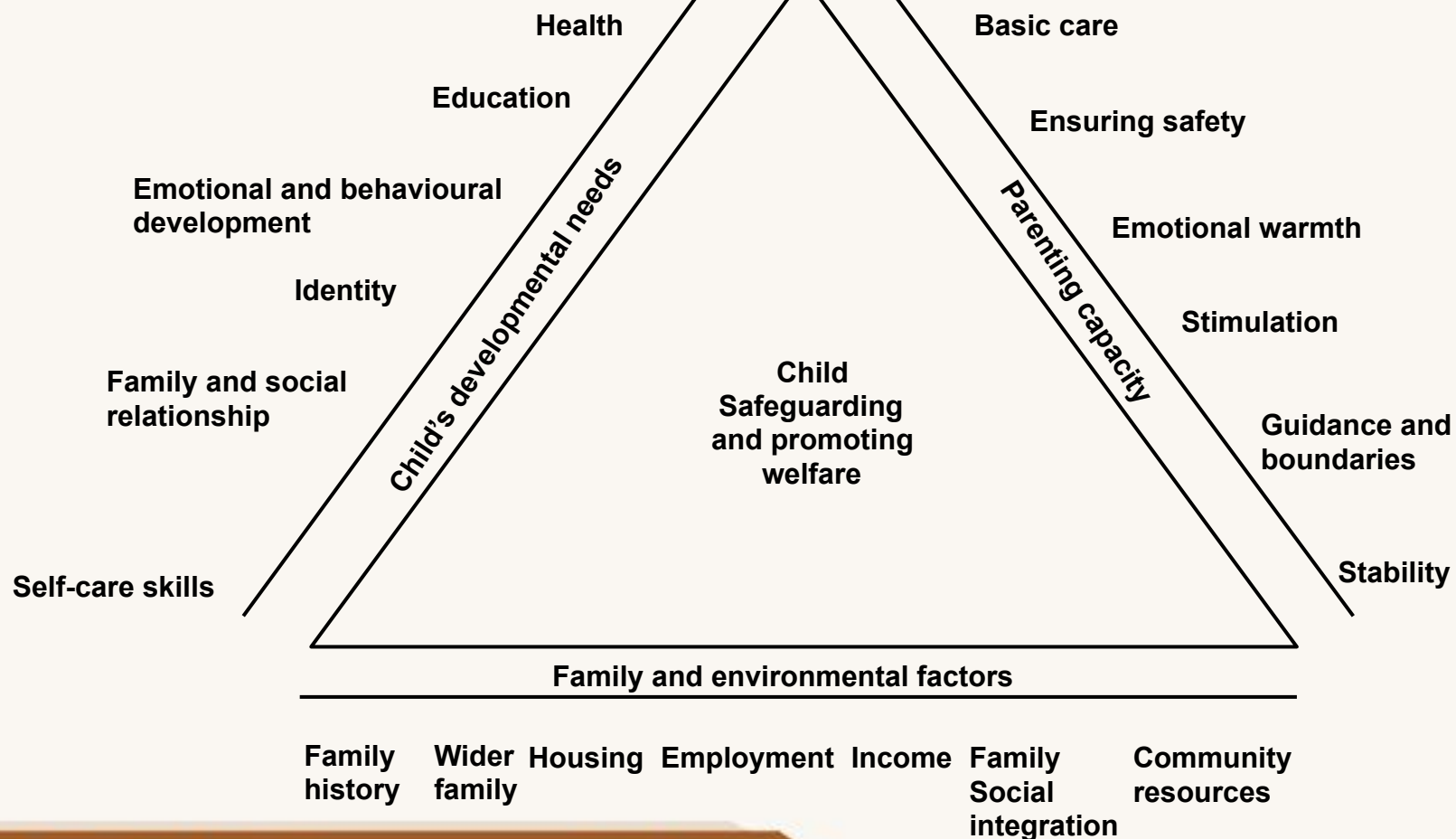


# Principles

- **best interest of the child**
- **be child centred**
- be rooted in child and family development
- be grounded in **evidence-based knowledge**
- be ecological in approach
- be based on an inter-sectorial approach
- ensure equality of opportunity
- involve **working with** children and families
- build on **strengths** as well as identify **challenges**
- consider **other actions and services** to the child and/or family;
- be a **continuous process** and not a single event

*(DePanfilis & Salus, 2003:11; Department of Health, London, 2000:10-16)*

# Framework for the assessment of a child at risk (diagram 1)





# Case management process

## Intake

- Generic assessment – Form SWS02
- Children's Act – Form 22 (reporting)

## Assessment

- Generic assessment
- Family Preservation – Developmental assessment
- Safety Assessment (sect 110)

## Planning/Intervention

- Provide a needs based programme according to:
  - Developmental, therapeutic and other needs of the child
  - Family preservation services
- Permanency plan, Care Plan and Individual Development Plan – (alternative care)

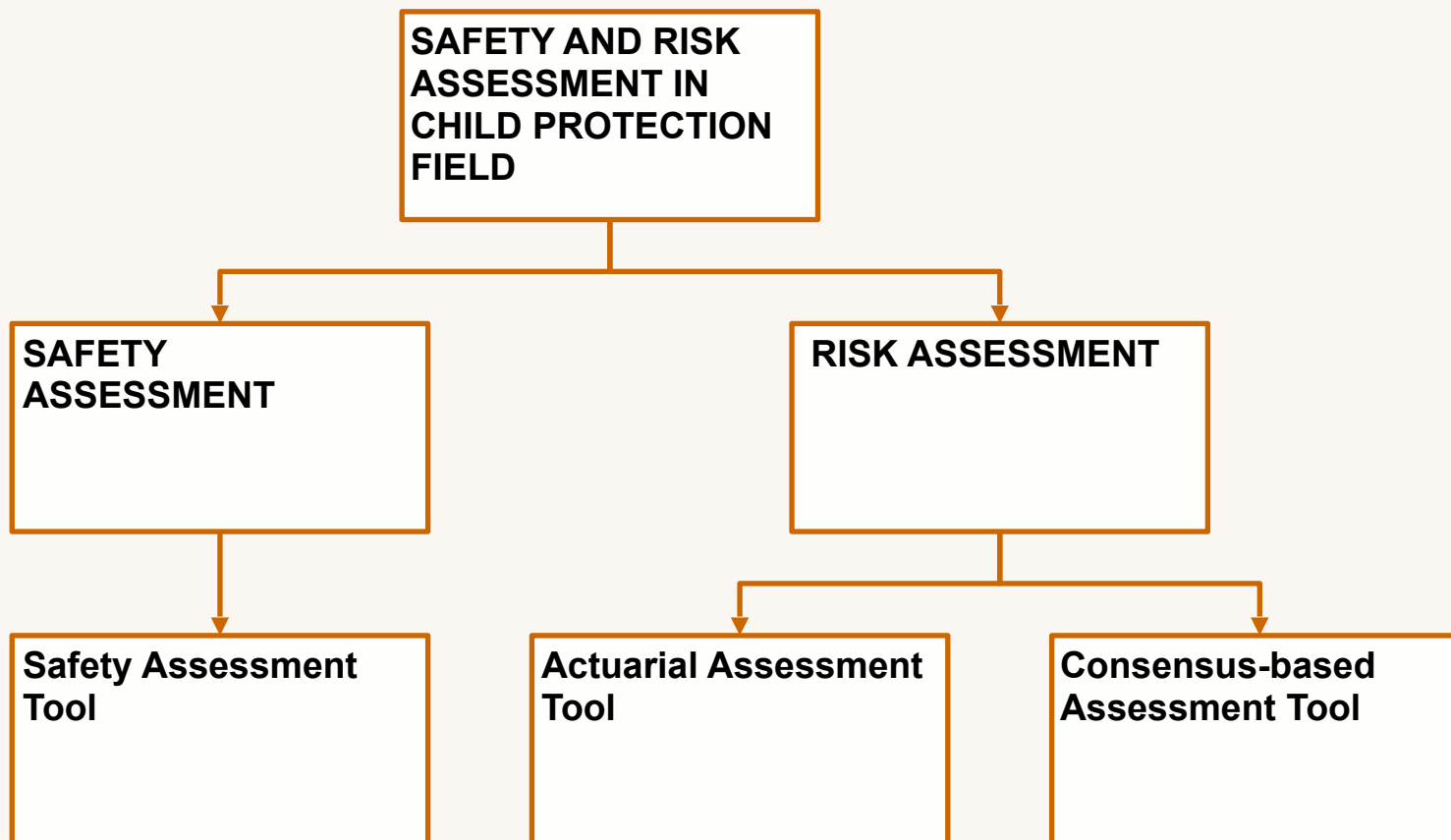
## Evaluation

- Impact of intervention and quality of services

## Termination

- Goals successfully met
- Referral to community based services

## Safety and Risk Assessment Tools (diagram 2)



# Developmental Assessment (diagram 3)



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# Capacity requirements needed

- Knowledge and application of **appropriate skills, techniques, theories and approaches** in child abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- To understand the **limitation of own skills** and knowledge and the boundaries in which the social worker needs to perform.
- Be able to **work in a multi-disciplinary team** approach and be willing to consult with other related professionals.

# Capacity requirements needed (cont...)

- Must have excellent **communication skills**, **analytical** thinking, good **report writing skills**, **sensitive to client's needs**, tactful and be able to establish a **trusting relationship** with the child and family.
- Be able to acquire and **maintain knowledge of current theory, evidence based-informed practises, relevant policies** to ensure the quality of service provisioning

# Thank you

[Neliswac@dsd.gov.za](mailto:Neliswac@dsd.gov.za)

[Stefanies@dsd.gov.za](mailto:Stefanies@dsd.gov.za)