

The Participation of Fathers in Child Protection Conferences: A Practitioner's Perspective

Fathers' involvement in child protection processes appears to remain low and is problematic given their influence over the lives and wellbeing of their children and partners. Men's views need to be taken into account, as part of consideration of risk and the meaning of their participation for others in the family. While the risk or presence of abuse may necessarily limit how the participation of a father is managed in case conferences, and needs to be explored and challenged, in most cases it does not justify failing to contact or seeking to involve fathers. Involving fathers is crucial to actively managing and tackling risks. Most work on engaging fathers has been focused on engaging them one-to-one or in families. This article focuses on the neglected issue of the participation of fathers in child protection conferences and subsequent inter-agency team work on the child protection plan recommended at the child protection conference. It argues that, with careful preparation and chairing, fathers' participation can be managed using the skills of relationship-based and authoritative practice in tandem. Copyright © 2012 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

KEY PRACTITIONER MESSAGES:

- Including fathers' participation and views should be a requirement of good practice and forms an integral part of the assessment and management of risks; the extent of live participation depends on, and needs to be limited to manage, the immediate risks.
- Even in complex cases involving multiple fathers, careful planning and skilled chairing can make it possible to include all the men in conferences.
- The energy and commitment that can be generated for fathers at conferences can be harnessed to help enable them to change.

KEY WORDS: fathers; gender; men; social work; inter-agency working; child protection; case conferences

Men are often not included effectively in child protection processes. However, their role as fathers, stepfathers or partners of mothers is significant whether they are living in the family home or not (Ashley, 2011). Fathers therefore need to be treated as 'core business' in child protection

Sarah Goff*

Ann Craft Trust, Centre for Social Work,
School of Sociology and Social Policy,
University of Nottingham, Nottingham,
UK

'Fathers' involvement in child protection processes appears to remain low'

'Fathers' participation can be managed using the skills of relationship-based and authoritative practice in tandem'

'Men are often not included effectively in child protection processes'

* Correspondence to: Sarah Goff, Ann Craft Trust, Centre for Social Work, School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK. E-mail: sarah.goff@nottingham.ac.uk

‘Reflecting on my experience and linking it to some of the key literature’

(Scourfield, 2006). The growing literature on working with fathers has focused heavily on how to engage them one-to-one or in family groups. In this paper, I turn attention to the neglected but crucial issue of how to work with fathers in case conferences and other inter-agency meetings (Holland *et al.*, 2005). I write as a qualified social worker who until very recently (April 2012) worked for 13 years as an independent case conference chair in two local authorities. I will share some of what I have learned about work with fathers by reflecting on my experience and linking it to some of the key literature.

The case for men’s participation rests on it not just being about enabling fathers to give their views or being challenged to change, but involves reaching an understanding of the meaning of father involvement for the child and the care he/she receives and the effects on the mother and her needs. This applies whether the man is the biological/birth father, stepfather or cohabitee and whether or not the man is an actual carer for the children. Including fathers is vital to understanding the child’s networks and day-to-day lived experiences, and to exploring the key relationships and dynamics which affect the environment in which a child grows up (Munro, 2011).

I will explore the way in which child protection conferences can work effectively to include fathers if conferences are seen not simply as an ‘event’ but as a process to be consciously planned and prepared for. I will show how conferences, like the child protection inquiries that lead up to them, are relational activities in which there are choices to be made about what methods and relationship-based skills to use to successfully engage fathers.

Work with Fathers and Families Pre-Conference

‘Avoiding delays in establishing who the father is and what their views are is a key issue in respectful and courteous practice’

The earlier the contact and dialogue with fathers during child protection inquiries the more likely it is this will have helped to engage them and develop a relationship (Ferguson and Hogan, 2004). Avoiding delays in establishing who the father is and what his views are is a key issue in respectful and courteous practice. This may help in avoiding a build-up of frustration, fear and anxiety, or in fostering a sense of the man being ‘irrelevant’ (Scourfield, 2003).

In the authorities where I worked, the chair usually meets with children, mothers and fathers and any other family members immediately before the case conference. I will not go into detail about the very important issue of participation of children and mothers here except to say that the seeking and promotion of children’s and mothers’ views are vital and sometimes takes place in the face of opposition or attempts to prevent this. In such cases, the participation of fathers (and in some cases mothers) needs to be limited and they may be asked to leave while children’s views are shared, either because their presence may prejudice the child’s safety or because of current criminal investigations. In cases of domestic abuse, the chair will need to consider the safety of the alleged victim and children which may lead to limiting the participation of a violent partner to separate parts of the pre-conference meeting and the conference itself. The chair needs to exercise his/her authority to fully or partially exclude on occasions, and it will always be better practice for the social worker or team manager to have identified areas of concern about safety and raised them with the chair in advance. When this is not done and the need for this consideration is not identified until the last minute, this can increase anxieties for family members. It may also be necessary in cases of domestic abuse for addresses of women and children and contact

details to be withheld from the man and discussed confidentially. Here again, advance consideration and planning are extremely important.

The relationship of the chair to parents exists within a framework of power dynamics between mothers, fathers and professionals with powers to make decisions. The remit of the chairing role and basis of respect and willingness to involve and listen to the father are significant in how that power is used authoritatively and fairly. Fathers and mothers are usually encouraged to bring supporters. These can include solicitors, but supporters do not usually speak as they are not involved professionals or family members. Their role is to support and advise before and after meetings. This is usually a positive and empowering factor, but the chair will have the power to assess and not include a friend or family member supporter whose previous involvement or behaviour may affect the feelings of safety of the woman or her new partner or children.

This links to Keys' (2009) use of the concept of pro-social modelling which takes place through the manner in which professionals behave and interact. This role-modelling creates an unspoken set of ground rules, and in cases of good practice seeks to imply respect and courtesy toward the person and his/her feelings. In conferences, these will be explicit and will include listening and being listened to in ways that allow differences to be explored safely by managing language, manner and conduct. The chair needs to state clearly that violence and threats are not acceptable and that the conference will not be allowed to be used as a platform to dominate, intimidate or control anyone.

The conference may involve a couple now cohabiting but where older children have different fathers who need to be included. Consideration needs to be given to relationships between the mother, her current partner and the fathers of her older children. Potential conflicts may need to be managed and participation staggered where it is considered that relationships are not at a stage for it to be safe to be together. In these cases, best practice would be that this is explained to the father at the time when he is invited, not just before or during the actual conference. In the actual conference, this means that I will ask father 1 to leave the room while information relevant to the mother and father 2 is discussed. Father 1 is then brought back in; some parents do respond well to this when the concern is for their family safety as a whole and the need for confidentiality. They may then accept that the information about them is being fairly managed; for others this is difficult and the chair has to use his/her authority to manage it.

Some families involve three or four fathers and father figures where the issue is not only the safety of women and children but the dynamics and relationships between the fathers and partners or exes. Occasionally fathers (and mothers) may be unable to accept this and the chair takes a break to discuss and resolve it, occasionally having to ask a parent to leave, but only rarely is this necessary in my experience.

These complex situations pose challenges for tightly time-structured meetings and need creative solutions. The chair seeing one parent separately on another day is a possible solution. However, while his/her views may then be relayed, this does not give that parent the benefit of the dynamic interaction and potential for movement in terms of perceptions and beliefs that may come from hearing the views of the agencies and others participating in the conference as a whole. This poses challenges to current ways of convening meetings and is an area that would also pose difficulties for family group conferences. The practice of some

'The chair will need to consider the safety of the alleged victim and children'

'Listening and being listened to in ways that allow differences to be explored safely'

'Some families involve three or four fathers and father figures'

‘Shaking hands is a symbolic greeting that in some cultures confers a degree of acceptance and respect’

‘The discussion covers how the father manages difficult feelings’

‘Professional jargon can be disempowering for parents and difficult for interpreters’

workers sending reports as substitutes for attendance mirrors this and limits the dynamic processes of active teamwork and participation.

I always try to meet with the mother and father or partner together immediately prior to the meeting if they are together in a relationship, or are willing to meet and there are no significant safety issues. When meeting the parent (in this case the father) before the conference, I would usually use the conference room itself to give the father a chance to settle, see the space, and slowly acclimatise to new and unfamiliar experiences. Shaking hands is a symbolic greeting that in some cultures confers a degree of acceptance and respect; the issue of conveying a sense of being welcome needs consideration in each case. This concurs with Ferguson’s (2011) argument concerning the significance of touch in making meaningful connections with service users in child protection.

Meetings, and especially ones that discuss relationships in a professional language about children and emotions, may be very unfamiliar for some men (and women). For some, being invited to an office may echo feelings associated with being in trouble with authority. It is important to both acknowledge and work with their feelings as well as to seek to reframe them. These are areas which the social worker will have covered but often need to be repeated because of the father’s anxieties. The time available will always be limited; usually about 20 minutes for all of the various family members whom I saw alone or together prior to the conference, depending on the situation, tensions and relationships. Again, this mirrors in some ways the preparatory process prior to a family group conference (Ashley, 2011). It provides an opportunity to reflect briefly on how they are on arrival, describe any immediate concerns about participation and to start to focus as we discuss how the meeting works and their participation in it.

The discussion covers how the father manages difficult feelings and how as chair I will manage the situation if he becomes upset or angry. It sets out clear boundaries about the management of behaviour of professionals and of parents, including turn-taking, listening and managing the urgency of the need to reply. It is important to consider coping strategies, the use of breaks, the role played by making notes or doodling and ways of managing to stay calm. In this pre-conference discussion, the father has a chance for a brief ‘rehearsal’. The concept of ground rules used by Basarab-Horwath and Morrison (1999) in their work on staff training and management of anxiety is also useful in conferences; ground rules such as respect and courtesy provide a framework within which discussions can take place and views including conflicting perspectives of family members and professionals can be expressed. They provide a framework for the chair to refer back to with a simple reminder should the over-exuberant participant need this (see also Calder, 2008).

If the family members’ first language is not English and there are interpreters in use, it is important to include them in this pre-meeting to ensure they have been briefed and to plan how we will work together. Professional jargon can be disempowering for parents and difficult for interpreters. I try to de-jargonise any words they are unsure of and explain that in chairing I will seek to ensure clear explanations, and stress that it is alright to interrupt to ask what things mean. It is important to check that they have been given, gone through and understood the social worker’s and any other reports.

Sharing reports in advance, preferably the day before, is a significant task for professionals in terms of time which is often in short supply, but is crucial in

facilitating the involvement of parents. It provides them with an opportunity to consider their feelings, reactions, own ideas and responses, and to consult further with the workers or their solicitor if they wish. Professionals need to be mindful of literacy, language, length, dyslexia and any special needs such as the colour of the paper or the need for a hearing loop, interpreter or signer. Being literate may not mean that a parent has understood a report; for many, anxiety about the meeting and its possible consequences may mean that they have not taken in what they have read. They may need to hear that the meeting will focus on the effects on the child and what they as adults need to change and how they could be helped to do so rather than them simply being 'criticised'. For some fathers, discussions at previous meetings or home visits have led to arguments and their fear may be about how they may respond and whether it could get out of hand. They may not yet manage to take turns or resolve disagreements but need to be aware and reassured that this will be managed in the meeting and plans made to explore a way forward (this process of containment is very usefully discussed by Howe, 2010).

The pre-meeting process described here is significant as the chair has no other casework role and the one-to-one time allows for the formation of a relationship on which to base management of the meeting. It is helpful for the continuity of relationships for a chair to follow through chairing all subsequent conferences involving the family.

The Conference

In the actual conference, management of physical space is significant in creating a sense of safety, both from the point of ensuring that eye-to-eye contact is not possible, but also in allowing parents to choose who to sit by, where this does not conflict with safety. For these reasons, as chair I actively manage the seating in discussion with the social worker. As well as introducing the powers and role of a conference (as set out in HM Government, 2010), I reiterate the ground rules of respect and courtesy that frame everyone's participation and behaviour. Introductory remarks include welcoming parents, making explicit that their presence is important and acknowledging the presence of difficult feelings. I also say explicitly that it is not alright to say or do things that harm or intimidate others and seek to set a warm and collaborative tone.

A further consideration in terms of family structures is for the chair and workers to be clear who knows what and consider the potential for 'secrets' or undisclosed information to be revealed. Great care is needed over names, nicknames and family names, spellings, addresses, who lives where and how quickly that may change. Workers need to be culturally competent and to ask about naming systems, who has meaning for the child and what the meaning of the domestic structures is (Ben-Ari and Strier, 2010). Second or family names may change, perhaps after a family break-up, or just have been differently given when a family registered with a general practitioner or school. Sometimes different names are used with different agencies to avoid being found. Having all of the names that an adult (as well as the child) has been known by facilitates inter-agency checks regarding the parents' as well as the child's educational history, learning needs and health or police histories. Without access to other professional information, ecological assessments are

'Anxiety about the meeting and its possible consequences may mean that they have not taken in what they have read'

'Management of physical space is significant in creating a sense of safety'

'Sometimes different names are used with different agencies to avoid being found'

‘The chair consciously observes the process of communication and dialogue’

‘The chair needs to ensure that a professional feels able to give their honest views’

‘The process of information-sharing and exchange of views may pose challenges for some family members’

limited and workers have to rely on self-report by family members, which may lead to bias or concealment because of fear or avoidance (Broadhurst *et al.*, 2010). Without basic details including name, address and phone number, it is hard for social workers to directly contact and assess fathers and partners and there are risks in asking women to provide these where there is domestic abuse.

During the meeting, the chair consciously observes the process of communication and dialogue between parents and professionals at the same time as keeping the child in mind and what he/she may be experiencing. It is important to tune into parents’ emotional responses to what is said and to professionals’ ability to say things in a measured and balanced way, including a discussion of strengths. The process of writing reports in advance helps professionals reflect on what they plan to say and the words and information they are going to use, and doing this enables them to better explain their concerns clearly. Parents need explanations that are direct and straightforward and which outline the effects on the child’s wellbeing and changes needed, rather than using language that is generalising and blaming. The importance of fairness and acknowledgement of positives is very significant in engaging parents (Turnell and Edwards, 1999). On the other hand, the chair needs to ensure that a professional feels able to give his/her honest views about risk and harm to the children and is supported in doing so if needed. The presence of managers can be helpful in this. The chair seeks clarification on whether other agencies agree or not with the views or version of events being described as a means of conveying to the parent that this is not an individual perception, but a professional and shared view which he/she needs to consider.

The chair will ensure that the meeting listens to the views of each child and parent and gives time to discuss their views on what safety for the children and family means to them, and their view with regard to the concerns, the help they need and the plans being proposed. This includes reflecting on areas of childcare that include physical as well as emotional care and play. Scourfield (2003) highlights the unfairness and dangers of placing responsibility for childcare tasks solely on the woman, thereby reinforcing gendered roles and expectations. It is crucial to ensure that the sharing of tasks is considered and that the role and meaning of involved fathering are spelled out.

The process of information-sharing and exchange of views may pose challenges for some family members in terms of basic relational skills such as turn-taking and listening to the views of others. This may be linked to attachment history and difficulties experienced in the family. Howe’s (2010) work emphasises ‘mind-mindedness’ and the ability to mentalise the experience of the child; he notes, however, that whether they are parents or professionals, ‘anxious people are less able to empathise and listen’ (p. 331). A number of authors have described men’s ambivalent feelings about help-seeking within a context of definitions of masculinity which equate it with weakness (Ferguson and Hogan, 2004; Walker, 2010). Ambivalence about a new situation, about sharing and talking about feelings and behaviours, and shame at the harm caused are factors likely to affect the course which a professional needs to steer to create a successful interaction. Attachment theories, theories of emotional intelligence and mind-mindedness are important in informing the kinds of reflective practice that are required in managing the self and these emotionally charged processes (Howe, 2008, 2010). Where things threaten

to get out of hand, reminders from the chair of the ground rules and the plans made before the meeting about managing urgent feelings and anger are needed. This can present a significant challenge for service users but conference chairs work hard to keep parents in the room and engaged without compromising the focus on the child's experience.

In terms of planning for work to follow the conference, the ground rules process remains significant for the multi-agency core group who will carry out the work (HM Government, 2010). Core group membership is recommended from the conference and should include plans for the roles of fathers and father figures. The core group will need to continue to manage relationships and seek to build trust and the conditions for change (Morrison, 1999, 2007). They will need, as in a conference, to use good authority to steer and maintain the focus on the child and his/her safety while forming relationships with the mother and father to engage and promote change (Ferguson, 2011). Baxter and Print (1999) advocate the use of teamwork skills and concepts of 'norming, storming, forming and performing' (p. 140), as workers seek to create a consistent but flexible network to hold and engage parents in a process of change. The process of managing parents' participation at all stages relies on negotiation, fairness, openness, warmth and empathy. Where it is the case that the combination of this and persistence are unable to achieve effective working relationships and the risks continue and increase, consideration does need to be given to contingencies and the need for recourse to greater powers. In the conference, after discussion, the chair will make recommendations about 'contingency plans' detailing what would need to happen should the mother or the father not work with the plan or should risks increase. The father and mother may then consider how they wish to move forward with support and advice. Specific reference should be made to the need for men not to interrogate women and children about what they have covered in sessions with professionals and this should be openly said to the man in front of his (ex) partner.

The chair needs to address gaps in information and areas about which family members have been reluctant to talk. Written reports and assessments often indicate what is known, but workers may not highlight areas that they have been unable to explore; the significance of identifying gaps and reasons for these gaps needs to be recognised and any fears or anxieties about exploring certain areas considered in conference if possible, but also later in reflective supervision, so that the dynamics can be addressed. In some cases, ground rules and contingencies need to be explicitly addressed in conference to tackle intimidating behaviour. This could include discussion about joint visits with other agencies, management involvement, or further formal or legal planning meetings with fathers and/or mothers where assessments are being frustrated and levels of concern about risks of significant harm remain high.

Outcomes

Reflecting on trends in my own practice, fathers attend in about two-thirds of the case conferences they are invited to. Fathers in attendance were responsible for about three-quarters of the risks identified and in at least half of those cases were willing to work on the issues and verbally committed to change. In many of those cases, fathers participated very well in meetings and were able to

'Reminders from the chair of the ground rules and the plans made before the meeting'

'Teamwork skills and concepts of 'norming, storming, forming and performing'

'In some cases, ground rules and contingencies need to be explicitly addressed in conference'

‘Only in a very small number of cases were fathers not participating at all’

‘Telephone or drop-in crisis support at any time needs to remain available to such fathers’

‘Parents experienced some social workers’ communication styles as confrontational and aggressive’

accept turn-taking and listening as well as talking about their views. Some found it difficult to accept that there were different perceptions of the same event and needed help to consider motivation for change and to see the emotional and physical effects of their actions. Others, although as yet uncommitted to change, were still participating in the work on the child protection plan and part of the core groups. Some who were not actually present at the meetings were, nonetheless, working with the social worker or other professionals. Only in a very small number of cases were fathers not participating at all in any part of the process. These findings are supported by Holland *et al.*'s (2005) work on family group conferences. The non-participating fathers tended to be absent fathers who had not yet responded to attempts by social workers to contact them. In these cases, the conference discussed possible obstacles and alternative means of approach. Sometimes these have involved using other family members such as grandparents to talk first to the father and then accompany him; sometimes this has involved unannounced visits or joint visits with other professionals such as probation. There is a pattern of inconsistent involvement by a group of younger, vulnerable fathers who have in common problems with substance use, mental health and domestic abuse and a history of complex emotional needs. Some had at different times expressed a desire to change and a willingness to work with agencies but had been unable to hold to this. What was needed was robust multi-agency supportive interventions to address the fathers' own emotional and health needs; it needed a form of work responsive to the often crisis-led way of life they had. The opportunity for telephone or drop-in crisis support at any time needs to remain available to such fathers.

Efforts to engage fathers in both casework and conferences often take place in contexts where fathers are unused to working with professionals, given that so much professional activity and responsibility for childcare are directed at women. Some fathers, because of the complexity and severity of their problems, have experienced involvement with the statutory services as adults via the police and criminal justice and adversarial contexts. As Featherstone (2009) argues, the nature of help-seeking and lack of provision of support services for non-convicted men, particularly in cases of domestic abuse, are areas in need of service development. The work of Forrester *et al.* (2008) has re-emphasised the significance of worker/parent relationships in creating or reducing resistance. While many social workers and other professionals successfully do engage reluctant parents by honest, warm and empathic practice, Forrester *et al.*'s (2008) study indicated that parents experienced some social workers' communication styles as confrontational and aggressive, which provoked only more resistance (p. 23).

Another significant observation from my practice is the desire of some women to want men to have and be offered help, whether or not they stay together (see also Featherstone, 2009). Often, the plan is that the children want to see their father and, whether or not the couple stay together, changes are needed to facilitate contact safely for the children and in a way that does not pose risks to the mother and hears her views and needs. In some cases with complex and interacting factors such as substance use and domestic abuse, particularly where men have not wanted to work on changing, the women may feel the relationship is over, and the intervention may need to focus on safety planning, support to the woman and man in ending their relationship,

managing practical and emotional needs and working on plans for future safer supervised contact. All of this work needs realistic approaches to the time and resources that need to be invested in it.

Conclusion

Case conferences have a vital role to play in engaging and helping fathers and their families. The energy and commitment that can be generated at a conference need to be capitalised on quickly and harnessed by realistic discussions about strategies for managing change, including the 'bad days'. The wish to change and the hard work needed to accomplish it need to be channelled by professional insight. If participation is to be more than just the giving of information to fathers who are or have been considered to present risks, then moving from a verbal commitment to change towards actual change which reduces risks is a major undertaking and needs skilled and well-resourced and supported intervention from all agencies working together. This must be informed by a shared understanding of gender and power, and the choices men can make to practice equality in their relationships with children and women and be safe, loving fathers.

'The energy and commitment that can be generated at a conference need to be capitalised on quickly and harnessed'

References

- Ashley C (ed.). 2011. Working With Risky Fathers (Fathers Matter Volume 3: Research Findings on Working with Domestically Abusive Fathers and Their Involvement with Children's Social Care Services). Family Rights Group: London.
- Basarab-Horwath J, Morrison T. 1999. Effective Staff Training in Social Care; from Theory to Practice. Routledge: London.
- Baxter B, Print P. 1999. Groupwork processes and the impact on working together in core groups. In Working for Children on the Child Protection Register, Horwath J, Calder M (eds). Arena: Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk; 135–158.
- Ben-Ari A, Strier R. 2010. Rethinking cultural competence: what can we learn from Levinas? *British Journal of Social Work* **40**(7): 2155–2167. DOI: 10.1093/bjsw/bcp153. Available: <http://bjsw.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2010/01/04/bjsw.bcp153> [13 June 2012].
- Broadhurst K, White S, Fish S, Munro E, Fletcher K, Lincoln H. 2010. Ten Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them: What Research Tells Us. NSPCC: Leicester. Available: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform> [13 June 2012].
- Calder M. 2008. Contemporary Risk Assessment in Safeguarding Children. Dorset. Russell House Publishing: Lyme Regis.
- Featherstone B. 2009. Contemporary Fathering. Policy Press: University of Bristol, Bristol.
- Ferguson H. 2011. Child Protection Practice. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke.
- Ferguson H, Hogan F. 2004. Strengthening Families Through Fathers: Developing policy and practice in relation to vulnerable fathers and their families. Department of Social and Family Affairs: Dublin.
- Forrester D, McCambridge J, Waissbein C, Rollnick S. 2008. How do child and family social workers talk to parents about child welfare concerns? *Child Abuse Review* **17**(1): 23–35. DOI: 10.1002/car.981
- HM Government. 2010. *Working Together to Safeguard Children. A guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children*. DCSF Publications: Annesley Nottingham.
- Holland S, Scourfield J, O'Neill S, Pithouse A. 2005. Democratising the Family and the State? The Case of Family Group Conferences in Child Welfare. *Journal of Social Policy* **34**(1): 59–77.
- Howe D. 2008. The Emotionally Intelligent Social Worker. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke.
- Howe D. 2010. The safety of children and the parent-worker relationship in cases of child abuse and neglect. *Child Abuse Review* **19**(5): 300–341. DOI: 10.1002/car.1136

- Keys M. 2009. Determining the Skills for Child Protection Practice: Emerging from the Quagmire! *Child Abuse Review* **18**: 316–332. DOI: 10.1002/car.1089
- Morrison T. 1999. Core groups a catalyst for change. In *Working for Children on the Child Protection Register*, Calder C, Horwath J (eds). (1999) Arena: Aldershot; 211–228.
- Morrison T. 2007. Assessing Parental Motivation for Change. In *The Child's World*, Horwath, J (2010). Jessica Kingsley: London; 305–325.
- Munro E. 2011. *The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report; A Child-Centred System*. Department for Education: London.
- Scourfield J. 2003. *Gender and Child Protection*. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke.
- Scourfield J. 2006. The Challenge of engaging fathers in the child protection process. *Critical Social Policy* **26**(2): 440–469.
- Turnell A, Edwards S. 1999. *Signs of Safety; a Solution and Safety Orientated Approach to Child Protection Casework*. Norton: New York.
- Walker L. 2010. My Son Gave Birth to Me': Offending Fathers – Generative, Reflexive and Risky? *British Journal of Social Work* **40**(5): 1402–1418.