

GCP2 CASE STUDY 1

FAMILY SAFEGUARDING

Background

Referral received from the fire service after completing a Safe and Well visit and having concerns about the hygiene and maintenance within the family home. There had also been some concerns about the children's school attendance.

The family comprised of mum and 3 children aged 7, 9 and 11 and they were living in a private rental.

The children were on a Child in Need plan for a number of months but due to home conditions not improving this was escalated to Child Protection. There had been no concerns about the emotional care of any of the children.

What triggered the GCP2 being completed?

As part of the Child Protection Plan, professionals wanted further clarity about the level and type of neglect within the family. The Family Support Worker introduced the tool to mum who she already had a positive relationship with. Mum was well educated and literate and so the FSW provided mum a copy of the GCP2 Parent's Guide and also a copy of the GCP2 Tool. The FSW used a strengths based approach to introduce the tool by telling mum how this tool would help to show how well she was caring for her children in lots of areas, and how it would also show where there were concerns and what could be done to address these.

What was the outcome?

FSW completed the GCP2 with mum over 2 visits. Mum and FSW went through the tool and discussed the grades together. Mum was honest and reflective when going through the tool. The GCP2 demonstrated that the emotional care of all 3 children and their safety was good. It also helped to show that although there were concerns about the physical environment at home, some of the concerns were related to the landlord and that mum had been pursuing getting issues resolved. Other issues that were mum's responsibility were also addressed. For example, there were a large number and types of animals within the home and this was having an impact on the hygiene and maintenance of the home. This was addressed by the FSW and Social Worker and the number of animals was reduced to a manageable level. The As a result of the GCP2 a notice was served to the Landlord to remedy certain issues with the home. The school attendance of the children also improved as mum's mental health had improved as a result of starting to address the housing issues. The GCP2 was useful as it not only showed mum how well she was caring for her children in a number of areas giving her motivation and pride, but it also helped the FSW to gain a holistic picture of the care the children were receiving, rather than just focusing on the negative aspects within the referral.

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Registered charity numbers
216401 and SC037717



Background

This case study relates to a family comprising of mum, mum's partner, a newborn baby and 1 year old, and also 3 year old twins and a 5 year old with a different father who had left the home.

A referral had been received from another Local Authority due to mum's partner having a history of Domestic Abuse. As a result of a visit from Surrey Children's Services, it became apparent that there were concerns about the home conditions and the hygiene of the children. A Child in Need Plan was commenced.

The CIN was escalated to Child Protection due to there being no improvement in the home conditions and the children's hygiene.

Mum moved out of the family home and out of county with her partner and their two younger children. The three other children (3 year old twins and 5 year old) moved in with their dad and paternal grandparents. This house was a 2-bedroom property and so there were concerns of overcrowding and also about the children's care. Dad has learning difficulties, the 5yr old has an EHCP and there are concerns of development delay with the twins, although it is not clear if this could be due to neglect rather than a neurological origin.

What triggered the GCP2 being completed?

Ongoing concerns about the physical care of the 3 children residing with dad and grandparents.

What was the outcome?

FSW provided dad with the Easy Read version of the GCP2 Parent Guide and talked through the process. The GCP2 Covid Tools were also used due to being briefer and its visual appeal.

The FSW spent one session with dad focusing on looking at the physical care of the children. There were concerns of moderate neglect across all subareas. However, dad did not agree with the FSW's grades, despite the FSW trying to show him the difference between the grades in different areas. The FSW felt that due to dad's learning disability, he was finding it difficult to understand what good care looks like.

During further visits the FSW did not physically look at the tool with dad as it was felt that this would not be helpful for him, but instead the FSW spoke about other areas of care. The GCP2 showed that despite the initial concerns being about the cleanliness of the home, there were concerns across all areas of the children's care.

The FSW also used GCP2 to look at the impact of the children's grandparents, to see what, if any, protection they provided to the children. This was useful in terms of the ongoing assessment of risk of harm to the children.

Each of the 3 children had a separate GCP2 completed, and this showed some useful evidence about the different individual experiences of care the children had.

The GCP2 has evidenced that despite dad's positive intention to provide a good level of care to his children, he does not understand what this looks like in many areas. Therefore, there is ongoing work with Adult Services' colleagues to explore how to support dad to be able to support his children better.

The GCP2 will be reviewed in line with the CPP to monitor the quality of care the children are receiving.



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Children with Disabilities Team

Background

A Family Support Worker was working with a family comprised of mum and her four children aged 16, 14, 11 and 3 years. The 11 year old is disabled and had been on a Child in Need Plan since he was 3 years old. There had been a previous history of domestic abuse within the family, and mum has a history of alcohol misuse and mental health issues. There have been a few incidents over the last 8 years leading to Strategy discussions but prior to 2020, the children had never been on a Child Protection Plan. One of these incidents involved the 11 year old leaving the house with his younger sibling and going missing for a short period of time. Mum had been having a shower and due to the doors being left unlocked, the children were able to leave the house. In 2020 mum attempted suicide and was found by her eldest child. As a result, all 4 children were then placed on a Child Protection Plan.

What triggered the GCP2 being completed?

Although the children had been on a CP Plan for over 6 months, subsequent to the Family Support Worker completing the GCP2 training, it was decided that the GCP2 would be useful in demonstrating the progress mum had made since the child protection plan commenced, and to evidence what further support was required.

What was the outcome?

The Family Support Worker took mum through the GCP2 and she was able to score herself. This was useful as it demonstrated that mum perceived the care she provided, to be of higher quality than the Family Support Worker. It also showed that mum didn't always understand the extent to which her behaviour impacted on her children. This information is useful for the Family Support Worker to reflect further with mum.

Due to GCP2 breaking care in to really small and understandable chunks, it has been easier to help mum to see how she can make a difference with the care she provides. For example, the Family Support Worker helped mum to see that if she provided her youngest child with more toys, not only would this be good for the child's development and stimulation, this would also help to manage this child's behaviour.

The Family Support Worker thinks that GCP2 was helpful as it gave a good picture of all areas of care being provided to the children, not just the areas of concern. It is also limited subjectivity as the tool continues to bring you back to the objective framework.

In this case the GCP2 was used with a disabled child. The Family Support Worker had to be aware of the child's specific care needs to then be able to score and analyse appropriately. For example, this 11 year old needed help with personal care tasks and so this needed to be reflected in the GCP2.

The Family Support Worker commented that the tool was helpful and although it took a little time to complete, with more practice this will undoubtedly become easier and quicker as they will be more familiar with the framework.

One key learning point from this case, was to ensure that each child within the family had their own individual GCP2 report because the care that they received from mum was different in some areas and it would be helpful for mum to see this and understand how good care differs from the 3 yr old to the 16 year old for example.

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Family Centre

How is GCP2 being used?

In Surrey Heath Family Centre, the team are using the GCP2 not only directly with families, but also to support and further their reflective practice and also their understanding of neglect across the team.

GCP2 is frequently brought to team meetings, where team members will bring a family and then pick an area of the GCP2 tool to discuss in relation to this family, and what evidence they would be looking to collect, to be able to evaluate this area of care. This is helping all of the team to become more familiar with the tool and more consistent in its use.

The team have also been regularly discussing and reflecting on the families referred to their service and considering whether a GCP2 might be helpful.

Additionally, the team have practiced GCP2 scoring within their group supervisions to ensure that they rehearse and become more confident in using the tool.

Within the team there is GCP2 Champion who is supporting the team to use the tool and develop their practice in this area.

This Champion has been helpful in supporting and also challenging colleagues about their use of the tool. Offering support in scoring, interpreting the scores and considering appropriate intervention plans.

What impact has GCP2 had?

This approach to using the tool both directly and as part of reflective practice and ongoing professional development has been beneficial to the team, as well as to the families the team works with. It has kept neglect 'on the agenda' and so the team often consider neglect when discussing the families they are working with. By regularly looking at the tool and practicing its use, staff have become more confident in using the tool and the team are exploring and overcoming issues together. For example, the team have started discussing what would trigger the use of the tool, as it has been acknowledged that having 'neglect' explicitly stated within a referral should not be the only trigger point. Neglect is not always explicitly referred to, and concerns about parenting underly many referrals and so the GCP2 can be helpful in many different cases.

By using the tool within reflective practice, it has offered more support to the staff team and this has therefore had a positive impact on the tool being used more frequently, and also helping to share learning and improve practice. For example, by using the GCP2, the team have recognised that they needed to improve their action planning by being much more specific about the changes required to improve outcomes for children and families.

What are the takeaway learning points from this case study?

1. Identify a GCP2 practice lead within your team who can support the team in their use of GCP2.
2. Use GCP2 as part of supervisions and reflective practice to familiarise yourself with the tool, improve your practice and explore complex cases.
3. Consider when you would initiate a GCP2. Neglect may not be explicitly referred to, but the tool may still be helpful in exploring the child's lived experience of their care and issues surrounding parenting.

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Family Centre

Background

Elmbridge Family Centre received a new allocation from Children's Services where there were concerns about neglect in relation to a family who had been stepped down following a police referral and a Child and Family Assessment by Surrey Children's Services.

This family comprises of a young mum and her three children aged 4, 3 and 1 yr old.

During the initial visit, the Family Support Worker could see some obvious signs of concerns related to the physical care of the children and so explained to mum that she would be using GCP2 to help to show which areas of care she was doing well and what further support she needed. The FSW shared with mum the GCP2 Parent Guide and explained the process.

How was the GCP2 used?

During the GCP2 process, the FSW visited the family with her colleague, and mum was supported by the children's father who does not live with them. From observations and discussion, the tool was completed.

At first mum did not appear to want to take part in the process and she was a bit reluctant, but as she started to see that she was doing well in a number of areas, this reassured her.

During conversations there were some items where mum was scoring herself more favourably than the FSWs. However, because the grades were scored using the Tool and based on evidence, the FSWs were able to have open and clear discussions with mum to show her why the grade was slightly less favourable, rather than just using subjective opinions. It was also helpful for mum to be supported by the children's father as he was helping mum to reflect on her parenting, which appeared to be insightful for her.

The GCP2 was completed prior to the completion of the Family Star as neglect was the main concern within this family. The information gathered as part of the GCP2 was helpful in completing some areas of the Family Star and so there was no need to duplicate work. The FSW said that she felt the GCP2 and Family Star went 'hand in hand' as some areas of the GCP2 easily transfer to the Family Star areas.

Due to the GCP2 being completed by 2 individuals, this allowed for a useful debate about the scoring between these individuals.

What was the outcome?

The main areas of concern as a result of the GCP2 were within the physical care section. The FSW thinks that by using the GCP2 it was easier to be more targeted and specific with the intervention plan that followed, and because mum had been fully involved in the GCP2, these actions made sense to her.

Since the GCP2, support and resources have been provided to improve the cleanliness and maintenance of the home. This includes new cleaning materials, safety features and new clothes for the children. Work is ongoing to explore what impacts on mum's ability to always keep the house clean and in good repair, so that any underlying issues can be identified and addressed. The Instinctive Parenting Model is useful in doing this.

The GCP2 will be reviewed in 6-8 weeks' time to measure any change in the quality of care.



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