

Professional competency: training, supervision and accountability of staff working with and for children

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Council of Europe: Growing with children's rights

Professionals working with and for children

- Council of Europe will support the development of child-friendly services and systems that are respectful, responsive, reliable and responsible, with a particular focus on children in vulnerable situations.
- Economic, social and technological developments have resulted in new
- challenges that children, their families and the professionals working with them are not sufficiently equipped or trained to handle. Integrated local, regional and national strategies are crucial to strengthen local, regional and national governments' ability to respond to existing and emerging challenges in a cost-efficient manner. (Strategy for Child Rights 2012-15)

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- **UN CRC Committee on professionals:44**
 - (d) *For professionals and institutions (government and civil society):*
 - (i) Providing initial and in-service general and role-specific training (including inter-sectoral where necessary) on a child rights approach to article 19 and its application in practice, for all professionals and non-professionals working with, and for, children (including teachers at all levels of the educational system, social workers, medical doctors, nurses and other health professionals, psychologists, lawyers, judges, police, probation and prison officers, journalists, community workers, residential caregivers, civil servants and public officials, asylum officers and traditional and religious leaders);

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- (ii) Developing officially recognized certification schemes in association with educational and training institutions and professional societies in order to regulate and acknowledge such training;
- (iii) Ensuring that the Convention is part of the educational curriculum of all professionals expected to work with and for children; **GC13**
The right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, 2011

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GC15 2013 on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health (art. 24)

Promoting knowledge of children's right to health (art. 42) 93 § The Committee encourages States to adopt and implement a comprehensive strategy to educate children, their caregivers, policymakers, politicians and professionals working with children about children's right to health, and the contributions they can make to its realization

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- Definition – all “helping professionals”, including all sectors and professionals working in health and social care, education, judicial, law enforcement
- Competency: The ability to do a job properly. It is a set of defined behaviors that provide a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of the behaviors in individual professionals
- Is training provided fulfilling these requirements? Proportion of theory and practice, skills, suitability, personality issues? Integrated, holistic child rights based approach, speaking the “same language”?

Supervision and job satisfaction



Supervision and job satisfaction

- Supervision should include all forms of help, support suitable for professionals, good practices like anonymous helpline would be helpful – feedback, evaluation, effectiveness, efficiency
- Prestige and remuneration, resources and heavy work loads and their impact on the quality of work (children and families, including the professionals own personal and family life)
- Austerity, crisis, budget cuts, restrictions is not helpful, decreasing and often lack of resources for supervision, vocational training, support.

Accountability



Accountability

- To whom? To clients, managers, community, tax payers, politicians?
- Rights to know what criteria are being used to judge them, how decisions are made, to involvement in the decision-making and having the information to enable them express their views and provide adequate services
- Introduction of procedures, standards, protocols and monitoring but balancing with the individual, personal decisions and deliberations of professionals
- Trust, sensitivity, self estimation, self confidence – support and evaluation
- Careful investigation of complaints, failures, crisis to learn from it but also clearly defining responsibilities, accountability

What works?

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare and well-being of children and families – depends on effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise
- The way to proceed in the face of uncertainty is through competent professional judgments, based on a sound assessment of the child's needs, risks and the parents' capacity to respond to these – including their own resources, ability to co-op and contribute, empowering them

Thank you for your attention!

