

# Is Child Protection a Public Health Issue?

## Developments in the UK

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# British context

- ‘Forensic’, investigative approach
- Some current anxiety about a ‘nanny state’
- Heavy reliance on national and local guidelines and procedures – case conferences etc
- No mandatory reporting – but strong guidance
- Scottish system more of a ‘hybrid’ – Children’s Hearing System, whole child approach, ‘needs not deeds’.

# Impetus for change as a result of:

- inquiries into child deaths
- audit and inspections of practice
- shifts in expectations of public services
- increased emphasis on support for parents
- resource constraints
- public concerns about perceived dangers to children
- theoretical discussions about the nature of child abuse.

# Most recent drivers

England and Wales:

- *‘Every Child Matters: Change for Children’*

Scotland:

- *‘Getting it Right For Every Child’*

# England and Wales

- Five government expected outcomes for children are:
  - being healthy
  - staying safe
  - enjoying and achieving
  - making a positive contribution
  - achieving economic well-being.

# Scotland

- Seven outcomes are:
  - safe
  - nurtured
  - healthy
  - achieving
  - active
  - respected and responsible
  - included.

# England and Wales

## *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*

- Increasing the focus on supporting families and carers
- Ensuring necessary intervention takes place before children reach crisis point and protect children from falling through the net
- Addressing weak accountability and poor integration
- Ensuring that people working with children are valued, rewarded and trained



# Scotland

## *Getting it Right for Every Child*

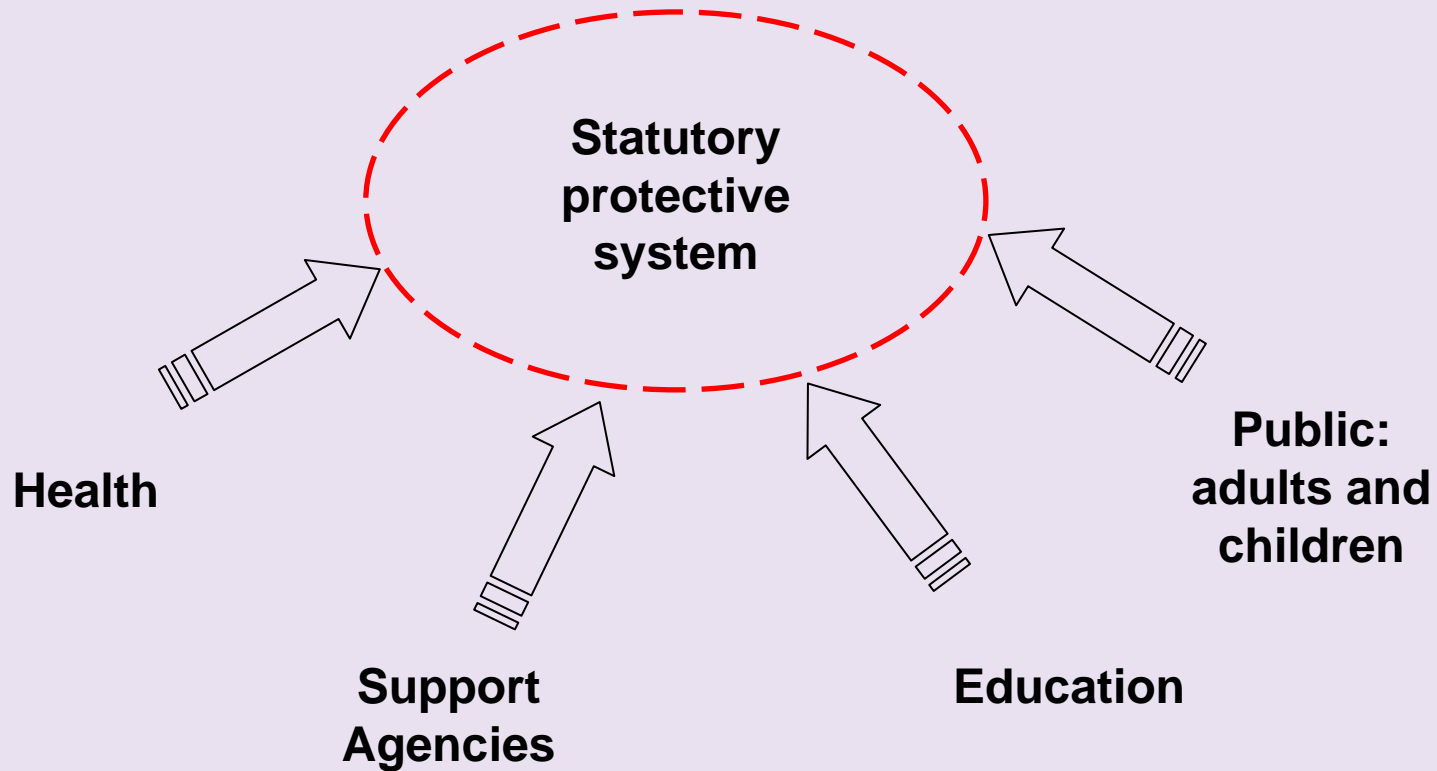
- Children should get the help they need when they need it
- Agency of first contact must aim to offer help
- Children and parents must not be passed from pillar to post and be screened out of services.
- Reduce bureaucracy

Building on the *Children's Charter*:

- Get to know us
- Speak with us
- Listen to us
- Take us seriously
- Involve us
- Respect our privacy
- Be responsible to us
- Think about our lives as a whole
- Think carefully about how you use information about us
- Put us in touch with the right people
- Use your power to help
- Make things happen when they should
- Help us be safe

# The challenge is to move from..

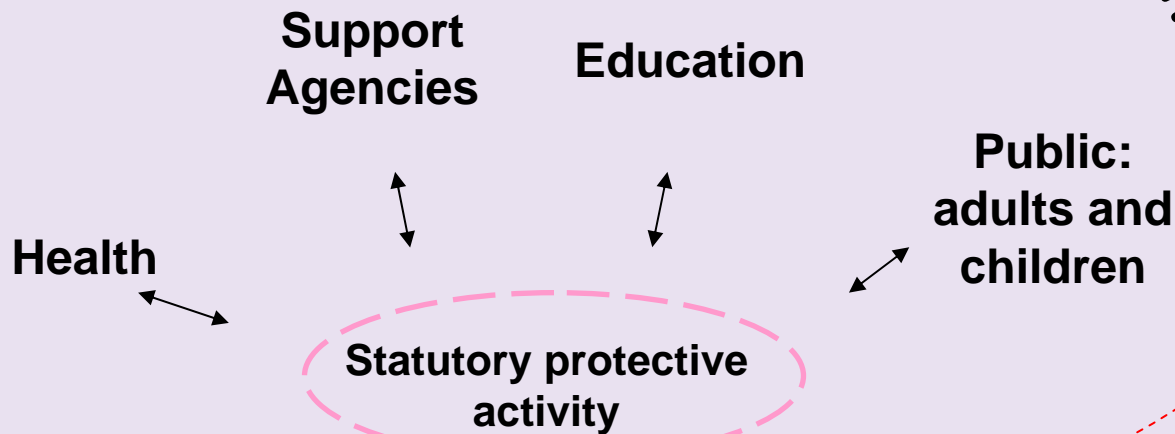
Other agencies referring **INTO** a protective system



# To a protective network

All agencies see themselves as responsible for welfare

*Protective network, well-being system*



## Family, school and neighbourhood support: based on individualised and population wide profiling, assessment and planning

### Urban and rural initiatives: health, education, social work

#### Universal services to respond to the changing needs of children and families:

*living in disadvantage, vulnerable, experiencing stress, in need*

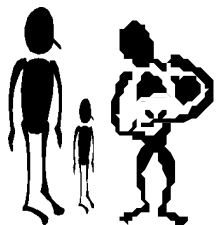


- ♦ Early years, school, neighbourhood and family supports
- ♦ Range of childcare
- ♦ Safe, supervised play and activities
- ♦ Community safety and health initiatives
- ♦ Employment and educational opportunities
- ♦ Advocacy, income maximisation



#### Intensive and therapeutic services for children and families:

*with complex and multiple needs, needing a range of intensive focused provision where neglect and risks of harm*



*Easy access, non stigmatising, supportive, preventive, inclusive*



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