Briefing on Procedural Guide on Child Abuse (revised 2007)

Ms PANG Kit-ling
Chief Social Work Officer
(Domestic Violence)
Social Welfare Department
Background

➢ To tie in with new service developments:
  • Restructuring of the former Child Protective Service Units
  • Re-engineering of family services
  • Formation of Integrated Children and Youth Service Centres
  • The provision of Student Guidance Service in primary schools

➢ To review the ‘Guide to Participants of the Multi-disciplinary Case Conference on Child Abuse
Endorsed by Committee on Child Abuse (CCA) in 2004 to review the Procedures.

A task group was formed with representatives from:

- **Government**: LWB, EDB, HA, DH, Police, SWD
- **HKCSS**
- **NGO**: HKFWS, ACA
AIM

➢ To provide guidance to government departments, NGOs and other concerned sectors:

◆ To SERVE THE BEST INTEREST OF CHILDREN AND PROTECT THEM FROM ABUSE

➢ Key to effective action is built on MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH OF:

✓ WORKING TOGETHER
✓ TRUSTING EACH OTHER
✓ FOR THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN
Outline

Section I – Introduction
Section II – Basic Knowledge
Section III – Multi-disciplinary Collaboration
Section IV – Handling of Referrals/Enquiry/Investigation
Section V – Roles of Relevant Departments/Organisations
Section VI – Handling of Allegations against Staff
Presentation Format

- Adopt a standard statement to direct readers to make reference to respective chapters (e.g. handling of reports/referral procedures in Chapter 6 & 7) which could be commonly shared by different disciplines

- Use of Frequently Asked Questions

- Section V: Grouping by service setting instead of by agency
Section I – Introduction

- Basic philosophy and Governing Principles for handling of suspected abuse cases are emphasized basing on United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

- Serving the best interest of children while the views of the parents/guardians should be sought and considered in formulation of welfare plan
Section II – Basic Knowledge

Strengthening areas in

- Definitions of child abuse (e.g. Neglect) and Guide to Identification of child abuse in Chapter 2
- Legal Aspects: Ordinances related to Child protection and abuse are listed out in Chapter 3
- Add FAQs (Annex I to Chapter 3) to illustrate application of the Ordinances to child protection work
- Information sharing and Confidentiality in Chapter 4
  - Elaborate PD(P)O and its exemption (Annex IV to Chapter 4)
  - Confidentiality Issues of Medical Practitioners (MP), Clinical Psychologists (CP) and Social Workers (SW) included
  - Let other professionals know about the principles which MO/CP/SW are required to observe
Section III – Multi-disciplinary Collaboration

- **Chapter 5**: to adopt case manager approach to facilitate coordination of services among multi-disciplinary

- **Chapter 6** (Initial Handling of Reports/Referrals) and **Chapter 7** (Initial Assessment and Referral Procedures) provide a general and generic chapter on handling procedures that could be commonly shared by different disciplines.
Chapter 6: Initial Handling of Reports / Referrals

- Amendment on Appendix I re: Definition of Known Cases for Welfare Organisations
  - ‘Freeze period’ for Closed cases of IFSCs/ISCs/FCPSUs changed from 6 months to 3 months
  - Define as known case if intake/outreaching with recommendation not yet endorsed after one month
  - Not applicable to other NGO units other than IFSCs/ISCs

- NGO Units other than IFSCs/ISCs is defined (e.g. ICYSC, YOT)

- Rule for handling cases known to more than One service unit
Chapter 7: Initial Assessment and Referral Procedures

- Cover the procedures for handling cases where CPSIT is formed and cases where CPSIT is not formed
Section IV – Handling of Referrals/Enquiry/Investigation

Social Enquiry / Investigation

Medical Examination

Joint Investigation

Multi-Disciplinary Case Conference

Follow-up Services
Chapter 10: Joint Investigation

- Focus on the process of joint investigation when referral is made to CPSIT which is part of the ‘investigation’
- Roles of FCPSU worker & Police when CPSIT is formed
- Handling of video-recorded interview tapes by police is added (paragraph 109)
Chapter 11 : Multi-disciplinary Case Conference (MDCC)

- **Timing for MDCC**: within 10 working days and indicate the date and event from which this is to be counted
- **Membership**: delete ‘full member’ / ‘member in attendance’
- **Arrangement for Family and Child Participation** in MDCC (to inform them that they can give views in writing if unable to attend the MDCC)
- **Time frame for confirmation of minutes** is suggested [paragraph P (3) to (5)]
- **Sample format of minutes** of MDCC is revised (Annex IIB to Chapter 11) to highlight the roles of family members in MDCC
- **FAQs** (Annex III to Chapter 11) is added to give advice on some specific situations in MDCC
Chapter 12 : Follow-up Services

- Legal Representation Scheme for Children and Juveniles involved in Care or Protection Proceedings is added (paragraph 4)

- Domestic Violence Injunction Order under Domestic Violence Ordinance, Cap. 189 is included (paragraph 7)
Section V - Roles of Relevant Departments/Organisations

- Grouping by service setting:
  - Social Service Units
  - Health Services
  - Other Departments / Organisations

- Individual profession/discipline should refer to respective chapter for specific procedures and roles to be taken in case handling

- Delete Chapter on Private Medical Practitioner but newly added Chapter 25 (Housing Department) and Chapter 26 (other Departments/Organisations/Service Units) to capture/cover all departments/service units/individual practitioners that have contacts with children; to encourage them to report/make referral to FCPSU/responsible units
Chapter 14 : FCPSUs / SWD

- Elaborate division of work among FCPSUs and other units such as IFSCs/ISCs in handling reported/referral case (paragraph 5)
- Highlight handling of referrals received by SWD outreaching team after office hours (paragraph 9)
Chapter 17: Children and Youth Services

- Service coverage:
  - ICYSC with casework service of CSSS/SSE/YND
  - Independent SSWU
  - YOT

- Integrate gist of Chapters 6, 7, 8 & 9 of existing guideline and draw reference to ‘Guide to Multi-disciplinary Collaboration on School Social Work Service’
Chapter 23 : Educational Services

- Integrate the gist of chapters 6, 16, 17 and 18 in existing guidelines which are applicable to all school personnel in kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres, primary schools, secondary schools and special schools.

- Highlight the internal report mechanism in handling sexual abuse cases when the suspected abuser is a staff member of school.
Paragraphs 8 to 18 are newly added to elaborate the legal measures and handling procedures specifically set out for child witnesses.
Section VI - Handling of Allegations against Staff

Scope of concern:

- Confined to allegation or suspicion arises in connection to the individual’s work
- Provide general principles for reference
Thank you