Centre for Research on the Child and Family

Understanding Serious Case Reviews and their Impact

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Patterns in Serious Case Reviews

- **Are SCRs unique or part of a pattern**?

(Both) 350 SCRs between 2003-2007 studied – some patterns evident (new study confirms patterns)

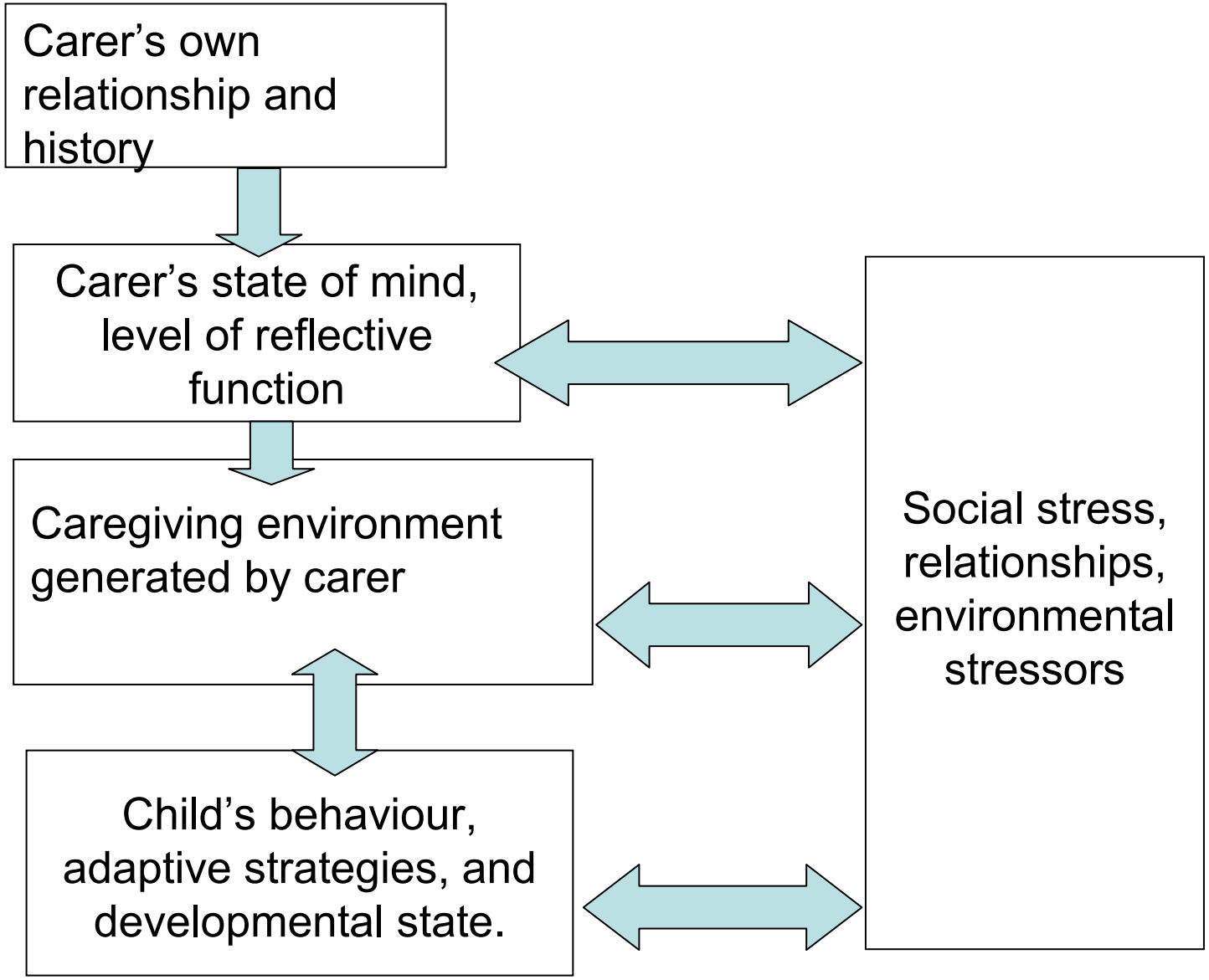
- **Known to CSC?**: Just under half of children NOT known to CSC at time of incident (BUT ¾ known to CSC in past)

- **CP Plan?:** Less than 1:5 children with a current CP plan (BUT in 1:3 cases, child or sib had plan in the past)

- **Age of child? :** Nearly half under 1, nearly quarter 1-5, nearly quarter 11-17, (less than 10% aged 6-10)

- More cases of death than serious injury, but serious injury cases rising

Theory to understand: Ecological transactional analysis



Chaotic families: Professional responses & behaviour

Fixed views about family,
Fixed assessment views
(eg neglect)

Overwhelmed chaotic families,
negative family support,
drugs, violence,
mental ill health, criminality

Invisible children

Efforts not to be judgemental, whole picture missed, silo practice.

Too much to achieve, low expectations,
'success' is getting through the door, muddle about confidentiality

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Impact on practitioners of being involved when a child dies/is seriously injured

- The impact is profound and long lasting.

  I am emotionally scarred by this.
- Loss of professional confidence

  I guess, initially, it made me completely lose all my confidence. It made me question my trust in any of my judgements.
- Restored professional confidence and ability to challenge:

  It is every professional's responsibility to say "No, I disagree".

  Wherever they sit in the hierarchy, at the end of the day they are just a person. And at the end of the day it is about the child.
- BUT: Practitioners felt excluded from the SCR pr

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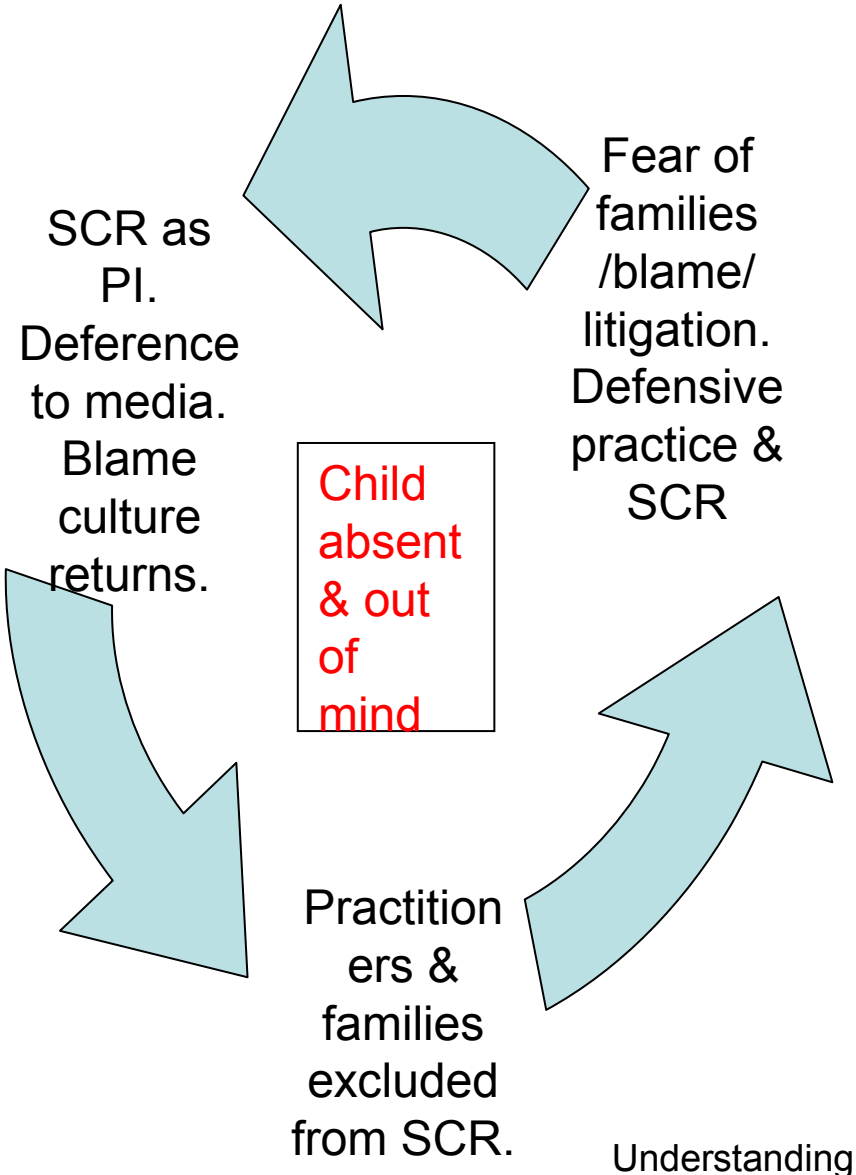
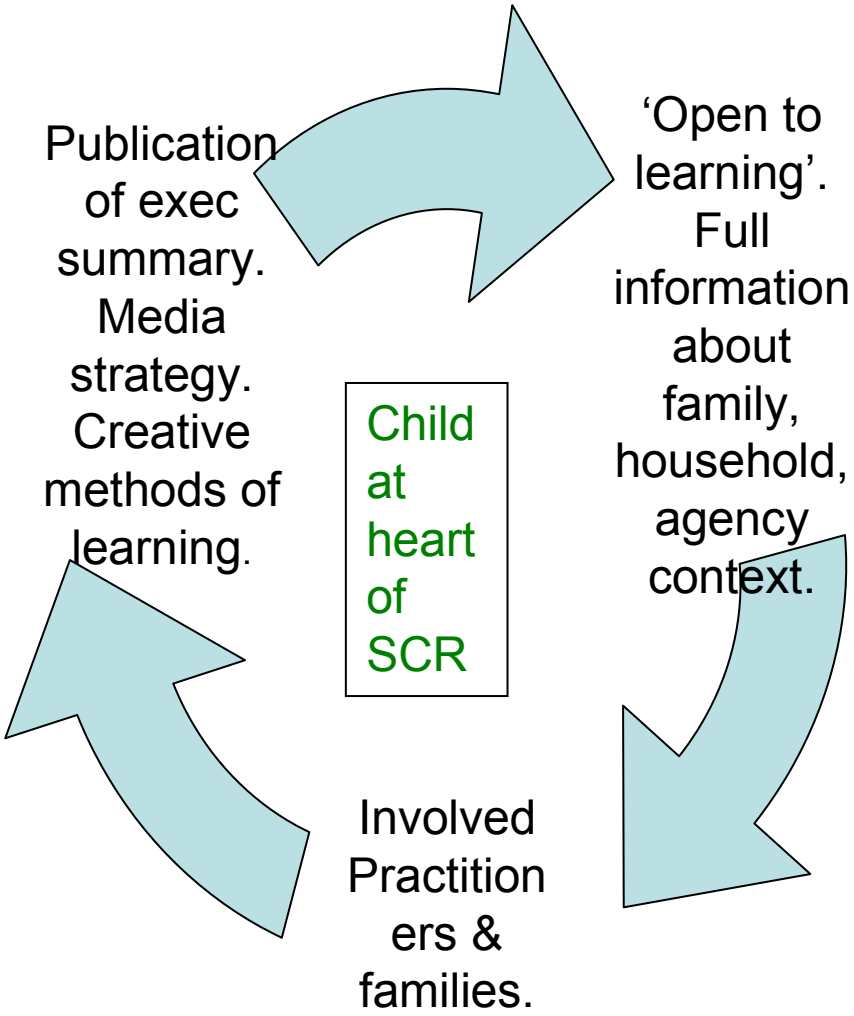
Negative SCR cycle



Positive SCR cycle



Understanding SCRs and their Impact 2005-7