

# Being Professionally Curious in your practice



**Dudley Safeguarding  
People Partnership**



# Look

- Is there anything about what you see that makes you feel uneasy?
- Could what you see be a sign or symptom of abuse, neglect or self-neglect?
- Consider why someone is behaving a certain way; think broadly about what this might mean?
- Does what you see match with what you are being told? Could there be an alternative explanation?
- Be aware of people's responses to questions and read body language; are they seeming reluctant to answer the question, is something being held back? If so, why might that be?



# Listen

- Does something not sound right?
- Are you being told anything which needs further explanation?
- Have you spoken to the person that you are concerned about?
- Are they free to give their views?
- Can you talk to them on their own?
- Does what you hear, match with what you have seen?
- Could there be an alternative explanation?



# Ask

- Are there questions you can ask, to explore what you have seen or been told?
- Maintain an open mind - Try to avoid making assumptions, taking information at face value and jumping to conclusions.
- Is your use of language, clear, accessible, understandable to the person you are talking to?



# Check out

- Treat what people say with 'respectful uncertainty'. This means take what people say seriously, but then look for other information that confirms or challenges what you have been told.
- Be the first to check out your concerns, be proactive, don't wait for others to ask you. Can you build a picture of what is happening?
- Are other professionals involved? Have other professionals seen or been told the same as you? Are there family members you could speak to?
- Are others concerned? If so, what action has been taken so far?
- Have you recorded your concerns? Have you discussed them with a manager?
- Is there anything else which should or could be done by you or anyone else?
- Refer to your organisation's policy and procedures
- Consider the need to raise a safeguarding concern





# Supervision and Professional Curiosity

For many agencies, effective supervision serves as a critical tool for enhancing decision-making, accountability, and professional development among practitioners.

Supervision also provides an opportunity to question and explore case understandings.

Access to high-quality supervision allows practitioners and their managers to routinely play 'devil's advocate,' considering alternative actions, explanations, or hypotheses.

## **Tips for Practice:**

- Play 'devil's advocate'
- Present alternative hypotheses
- Present cases from the child, young person, adult, or another family member's perspective