

What Impact has the Training and Conference had on Practice?

Working Together Training

The following report provides an analysis of responses by practitioners who attended the Working Together training in August, September and October (1 course per month) 2015 delivered by Barnardo's – three months after they had attended the training.

1.0 Background

The training course offered spaces for 30 practitioners to attend each course and has the following aims and objectives of its contents for practitioners when booking. The course is offered as part of NSCB training delivered by Barnardo's as a half day course.

- To explore the strengths and tensions of inter-agency working to protect children;
- To reflect on how our personal and professional experiences and values may influence our approach to protecting children;
- To understand the confidentiality and consent issues involved in communicating across agencies;
- To consider the information needed when making a referral and
- To be aware of the range of interventions available to protect children and support their families.

Target Audience

For the multi-agency workforce working with children and young people and their families.

The initial post course evaluations conducted by Barnardo's following the training course can be found under Appendix 1.

2.0 Methodology

This analysis looked at the difference the training made to individual's practice in their ability and confidence to work effectively in partnership with other agencies.

The research was conducted by way of a questionnaire accessed via Survey Monkey by participants who attended the training in the specified timescales. The survey remained open for a period of 1 month (4th – 29th January 2016) with 2 reminder requests to complete sent during that period. Participants were asked to respond to statements with the following options strongly agree / agree / neither agree or disagree / disagree and strongly disagree. Participants were then asked to comment on why they had chosen that option and evidence what had been done / changed as a result. See Appendix 2 for the questionnaire.

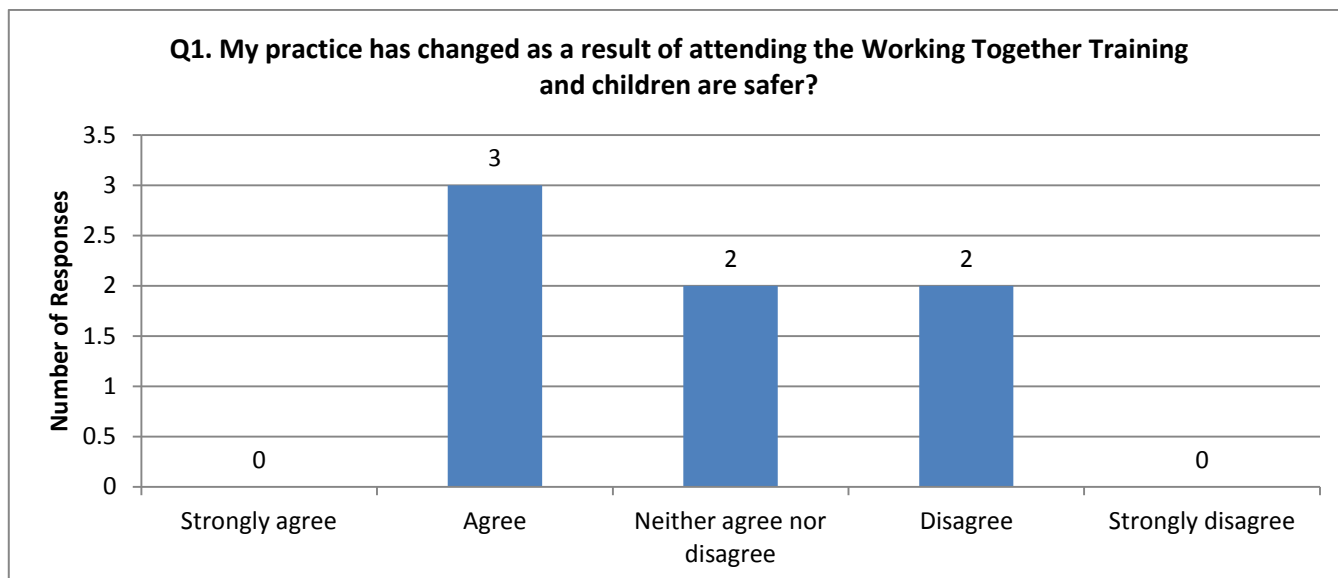
3.0 Response Rate

In total, 44 e-mails requesting delegates complete the questionnaire were sent out (16 August attendees, 22 September attendees and 6 October attendees). Of the 44 questionnaires sent out only 7 (16%) practitioners responded which is a slightly disappointing return rate. As detailed above, questionnaires were sent on several occasions with reminders in order for an accurate report based on a significant number of returns to be obtained.

4.0 Results

4.1 Questionnaire (Full data tables, graphs and responses can be found in Appendix 3)

Q1. My practice has changed as a result of attending the Working Together Training and children are safer?



Q2. Please give details on how your practice has changed or what has prevented you from making changes.

- Updated on course content
- I am already working within our local policy and procedures on safeguarding. Therefore, my practice is unchanged.
- Brings working with other agencies to the front of your thinking.
- I realise other agencies' limitations more and they realise our limitations also.

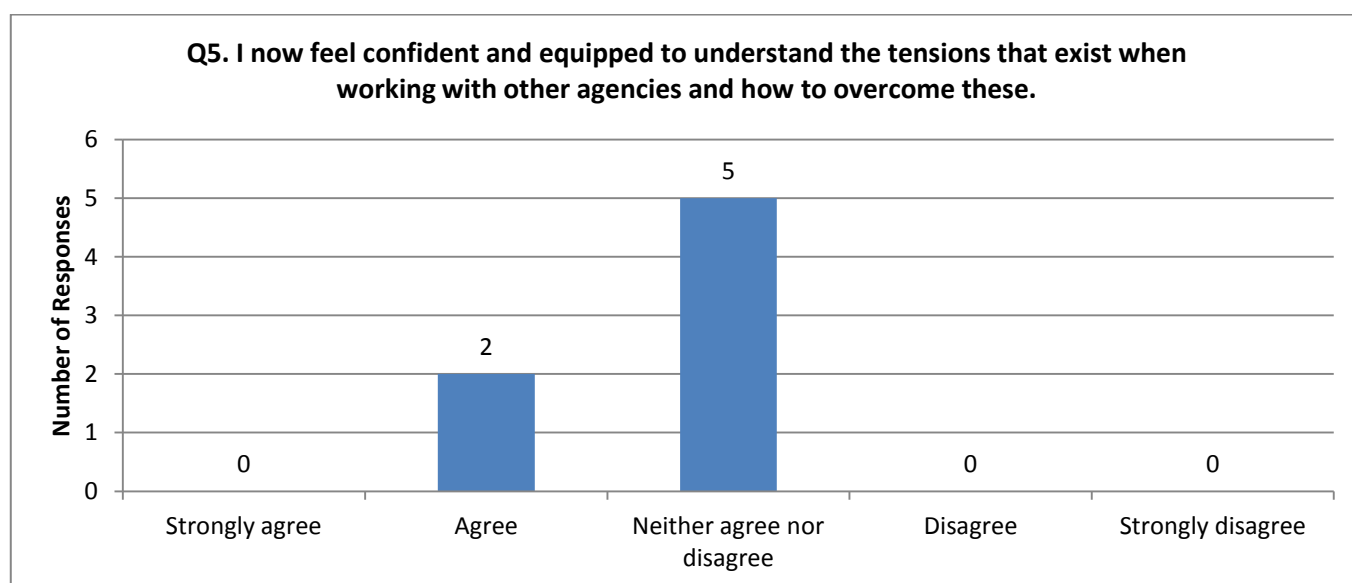
Q3. Attending the training has increased my confidence when working with practitioners in Northamptonshire.



Q4. Please explain how your confidence has increased as a result of the training, or what has prevented your confidence from increasing.

- More knowledge of course content which I can use to encourage others to attend.
- I have found it extremely difficult to get referrals into other teams accepted over the last 12 months. I do not feel confident in some of the external referral.
- It helped me know who, when and how to contact.
- Networking whilst completing the tasks was very useful and interesting to see from other people's perspective.

Q5. I now feel confident and equipped to understand the tensions that exist when working with other agencies and how to overcome these.

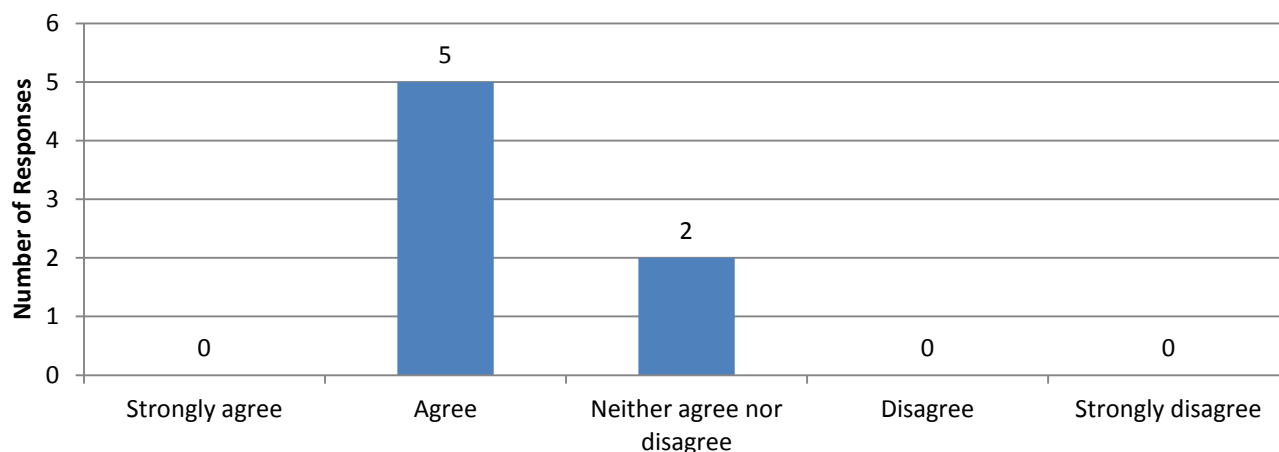


Q6. Please explain how you feel more confident or how you do not feel confident.

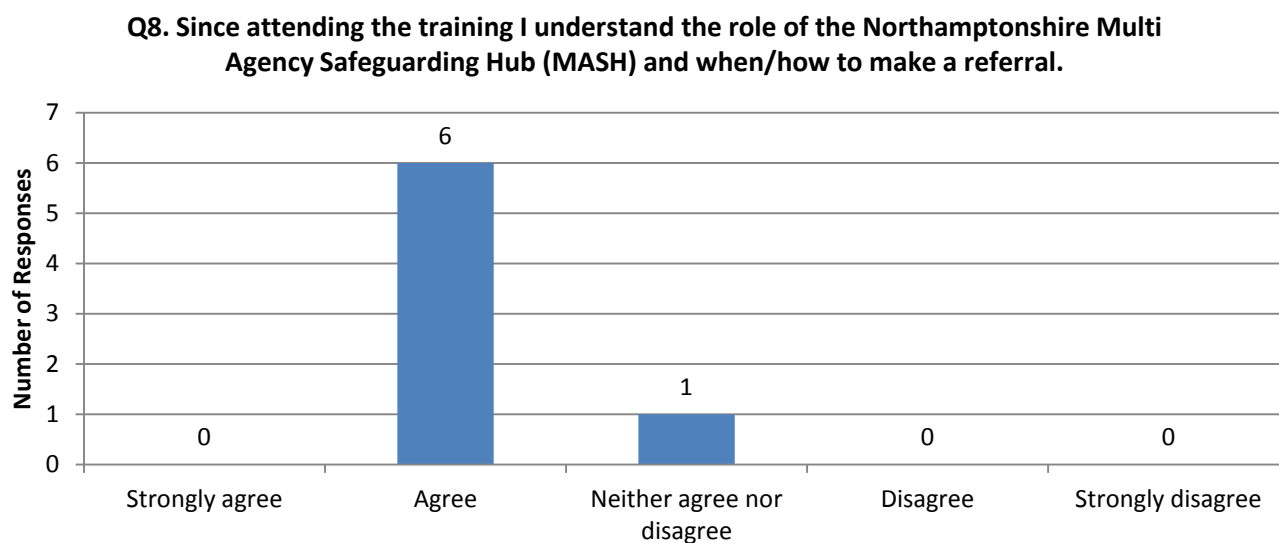
- Aware of the importance already
- I take this on a case by case basis.
- Individuals are still very protective and defensive

Q7. Since attending the training I understand the role of Early Help in making a referral.

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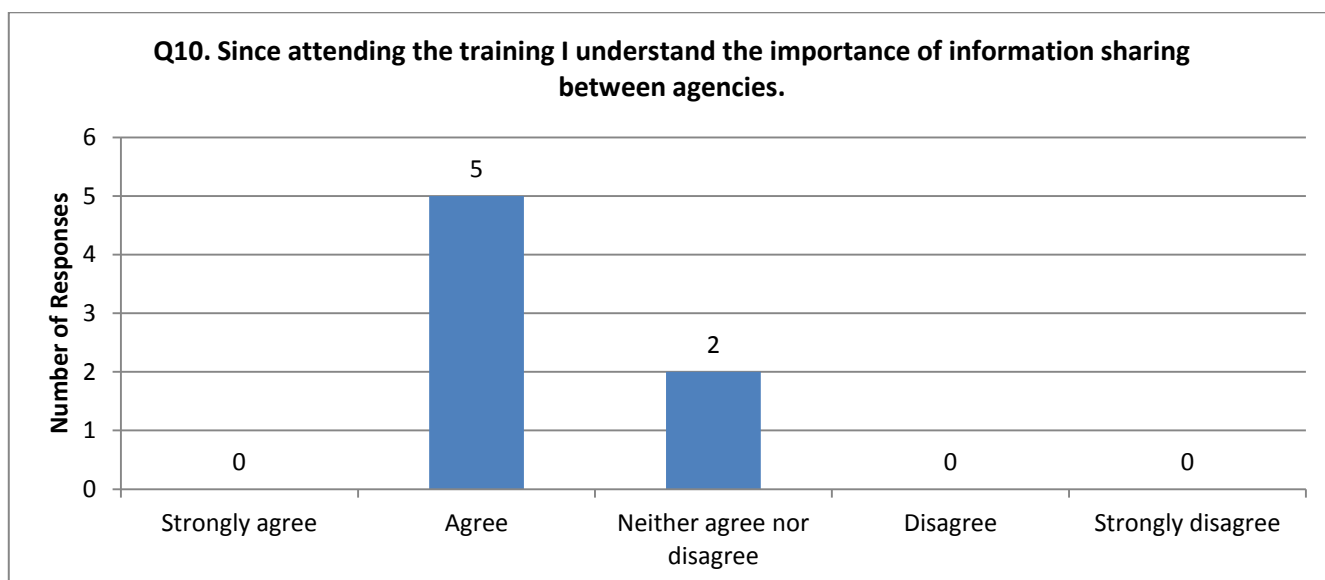
Q8. Since attending the training I understand the role of the Northamptonshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and when/how to make a referral.



Q9. Please explain how your understanding has improved or not improved.

- I knew this already.
- I had very recently made my first referral into Early Help just prior to attending the training.
- Useful to know that calls are now logged. Youth Offending has always worked closely with MASH.

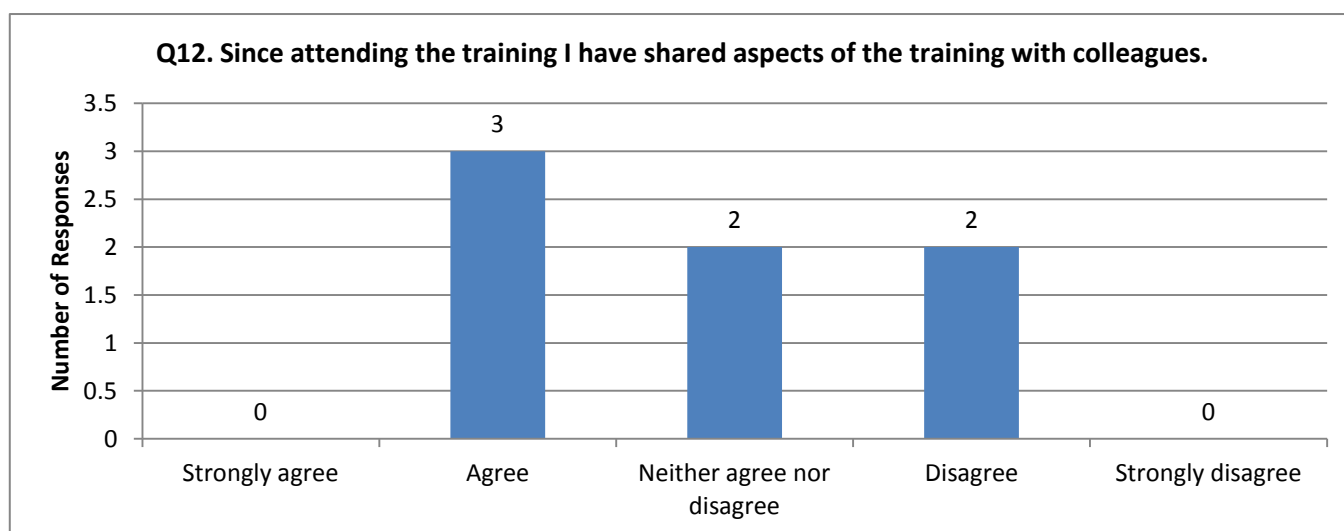
Q10. Since attending the training I understand the importance of information sharing between agencies.



Q11. Please explain how your understanding has improved or not improved.

- Knew importance already.
- Poor communication results in a poor service.
- Have known importance of information sharing prior to this training.

Q12. Since attending the training I have shared aspects of the training with colleagues.



Q13. Please explain how you have shared aspects of the training with staff or what has prevented you from doing so.

- Highlighted need to practitioners to attend training.
- I did not feel that this training was of particular relevance to Borough and District Councils although it had been promoted as so.
- Everybody in my team has attended the training and so we are all aware of local practice.

- I have discussed with colleagues who have attended the course.

Q14. The aspect of the training I remember most is...

- Listening to trainer.
- Networking with other agencies.
- How important it is to share information.
- The size of the room - it was way too small for the number of delegates, which made the temperature and seating arrangements uncomfortable. There were no refreshments available on the day.
- Discussion with all the different agencies in the room.
- Other agencies and their limitations and expectations of my role.
- Barriers to info sharing.

Q15. I feel the training could have been in the following way(s).

- Room an issue.
- I didn't learn anything new. I think that more bespoke training could be given to Boroughs and Districts, which targets particular aspects of their roles e.g. Housing Allocation and Licensing.

5.0 Conclusion

Overall, it is difficult to draw extensive conclusions from this impact evaluation due to the relatively low numbers of respondents 7 (16%) which leaves 37 (84%) who did not respond. It can however be seen by the quality of comments made by those respondents who did complete the questionnaire this training has had an impact and gone some way to meeting the NSCB's aims for the course.

The responses to the first question about changing practice shows a even split across the responses although the 4 respondents who completed the additional questions gives valuable insight into how practice has changed and bringing interagency working to the forefront of practitioners minds which from an NSCB point of view is the major aim of the course. This is then further reiterated with 4 (57%) of the 7 respondents stating confidence has increased as a result of the training with comments re enforcing this stating "It helped me know who, when and how to contact" and "Networking whilst completing the tasks was very useful and interesting to see from other people's perspective".

Comments that raise concerns and need further investigation and discussion within NSCB meetings include the below which shows that some practitioners are not confident at working together and understanding of the different thresholds services have for access.

"I have found it extremely difficult to get referrals into other teams accepted over the last 12 months. I do not feel confident in some of the external referral".

"Individuals are still very protective and defensive".

One very positive area is the understanding of the role of Early Help when making a referral with no respondent disagreeing with the question and the same rate of response for understanding the role of the MASH. Further investigation would be needed to see if this correlates with a reduction in referrals to MASH and an increased number of referrals to Early Help services. The importance of information sharing is also well understood by respondents summed up in the comment "poor communication results in a poor service".

Respondents sharing aspects of the training also has an even split across the range of responses. Positives include highlighting the need for practitioners to attend this training and discussing its contents with other practitioners. One concerning area that needs addressing is the comment below:

“I did not feel that this training was of particular relevance to Borough and District Councils although it had been promoted as so”.

This further highlights the need for the NSCB to continue to work with all partners to promote the importance of Working Together and this course, as despite the comment the course and its content is relevant to all agencies and practitioners working in Northamptonshire. This is also shown by the cross referencing with the take up of this course which has one of the lower % capacity rates of the NSCB courses on offer. A review of course content to ensure relevance for all practitioners is underway. The continued findings in both local and national SCR's that agencies could work closer together shows the need and importance of this course now and moving forward that must be brought to the attention of practitioners.

6.0 Recommendations

1. This report is made available on the NSCB website for dissemination in agency newsletters.
2. The findings of this report are shared with the Quality Assurance Sub Group to analyse the value of agencies Working Together and the reality of Information Sharing across the partnership.

7.0 Process Lessons Learnt

Following the previous impact of learning evaluation conducted on the CSE conference it was discussed that practitioner interviews did not add much to the overall evaluation. While this can be said to be true for large scale impact evaluations such as events and conferences interviews should be included for smaller scale impact evaluations of training courses to give some more in depth data from practitioners who do not complete the online questionnaire.

Kevin Johnson
NSCB Project Officer – February 2016