Research in Practice -Assessing risk of further child maltreatment: a research based approach.

Assessment considering risks and protective factors for Joshua Smith, DOB:13.6.2017 in relation to Mr John Jones, father.

Factors in italics are more strongly associated with increased risk: prior maltreatment, neglect, developmental delay, very young child, learning disabilities, parent- child difficulties, parental conflict, personality disorder, lack of social, family support networks and significant mental health.

Domestic abuse, mental health problems and substance misuse interact to escalate harm. Assessment to be reviewed at least every six months as significant harm increases with length of exposure (particularly in relation to domestic abuse and neglect)

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| Factors | Future significant harm more likely | Future Significant harm less likely | Sources of information |
| **Abuse** |  | **Less severe forms of abuse:**  Allegations in 2014 from Jack & Molly over physical assault (grabbing throat, punching, twisting arm and karate kicking in stomach). | Police investigation from 9.2014 to 5.2015. Outcome was Mr Jones was not convicted.  Section 47 assessment completed by Lincolnshire Children Services on 1.10.14 concluded children safe as in mother’s care. |
| **Multiple types of maltreatment:**  There have been allegations of physical abuse towards Jack, Molly and Evie in 2014. There have been police incidents in relation to domestic abuse incidents between Mr Jones and Ms Smith.  There have been allegations of emotional abuse from Mr Jones towards Molly. |  | As above.  DA incidents reported to police in:  2007, November 2009, 3.9.2014 and 26.9.2016.  Mr Jones known as suspect in DA and CP on police database. |
| **More than one affected child in the household;**  Jack, Evie and Emily are in the care of their father, Mr Jones. |  |  |
| **Child** | ***Developmental delay with special needs:***  Joshua has developmental delay and has possible FASD. Joshua also needs support with emotional regulation. |  | Health records files. |
| ***Very young child requiring rapid parental change.***  Joshua is 1 year and 2 month old. |  |  |
| **Parent** | **Lack of compliance:**  False compliance.  During initial assessment, Mr Jones reported he was aware that Ms Smith was consuming alcohol during early stages of pregnancy as he had seen her and knows when she is drinking. Mr Jones stated he had not informed professionals.  Mr Jones’ accounts of historical events were incongruent with information on files. |  | Section 47 assessment by Lincolnshire on 1.10.14  Single assessment by Lincolnshire Children Services dated 29.1.2015 |
| **Denial of problems:**  During initial assessment, Mr Jones stated Ms Smith was violent and he had only restrained her.  Mr Jones minimised the impact on his children from witnessing domestic abuse, moving between parents’ care and different counties, lack of contact with their mother and denied allegations of physical abuse.  Mr Jones did not show any empathy or insight into the impact on his children from their experiences. |  | As above  Initial assessment session on 31.7.18. |
| **Parenting and Parent/ Child Interaction** | **Disorganised and insecure forms of attachment**.  Observations of the initial contact with Mr Jones observed Joshua rocking back and forward and very little verbal interaction from Mr Jones towards Joshua. Mr Jones did not respond to Joshua showing signs of tiredness and rubbing back of head on the floor.  Recent observations have been more positive. |  | Supervised contact recordings on 11.7.18, 25.7.18. |
| **Lack of empathy for child:**  Mr Jones showed a lack of insight into the impact on his children from their experiences. |  | Assessment session on 31.7.18. |
| **Poor parenting competence;**  Mr Jones’ mother completes majority of parenting tasks. During initial assessment, Mr Jones was unable to describe the meal time or bedtime routine and there appeared to be very little family time. |  | Assessment session on 31.7.18. |
| **Own needs before child’s**  Mr Jones has prioritised maintaining a sexual relationship with Ms Smith despite conflict in this relationship, emotional impact on his children who are reported to not want any contact with their mother. Mr Jones also moved Ms Smith into the family home for approximately 2 weeks prior to Joshua’s conception and during assessment was unable to consider or reflect how this may have felt for the children. |  | Section 47 assessment by Lincolnshire on 1.10.14  Single assessment by Lincolnshire Children Services dated 29.1.2015  Assessment session on 31.7.18. |
| **Family** | ***Inter – parental conflict and violence:***  Allegations of physical and emotional abuse from Mr Jones towards Ms Smith. |  | DA incidents reported to police in:  2007, November 2009, 3.9.2014 and 26.9.2016.  Mr Jones known as suspect in DA and CP on police database. |
| **Power problems: poor negotiation, autonomy and affect expression:**  Information in assessments from Lincolnshire, accounts from Ms Jones, Molly and Jack in 2014 are congruent in describing Mr Jones as flipping over things, using violence without any warning or seeming trigger. |  | Section 47 assessment by Lincolnshire on 1.10.14  Single assessment by Lincolnshire Children Services dated 29.1.2015  Assessment session on 31.7.18.  Accounts from Molly and wider family members. |
| **Professional** | **Professionals lacking appropriate skills/ experience:**  There appears to have been an over reliance on Mr Jones’ account and documentation has not been viewed from Lincolnshire or Thames Valley Police.  The children have been seen on two occasions, both at home and there does not appear to have been knowledge or application of research around children experiencing domestic abuse and the anxiety/fear around disclosing. |  |  |
| **Social Setting** |  | **Social support**:  Mr Jones has significant support from his parents. |  |
|  | **Involvement of legal or medical services:**  Care proceedings have now been issued in relation to Joshua. |  |

References:

Source: Jones et al (2006) adapted by Rebeca Brown and Ward (2012), further adapted by NSPCC in 2015 to reflect White et al (2015).

Risk Assessment completed by: Name of Social Worker, Job Title Date: 8.8.18