

Disguised Compliance

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Objectives

- ▶ To help you understand Disguised Compliance and how it may manifest.
- ▶ To clarify what we mean by '**respectful scrutiny**' and '**professional curiosity**'.
- ▶ To enhance use of effective questioning.
- ▶ To consider possible scenarios and how to spot possible '**disguised compliance**'.

Definition

- ▶ **Disguised compliance'** involves a parent or carer giving the appearance of co-operating with child welfare agencies to avoid raising suspicions, to allay professional concerns and ultimately to diffuse professional intervention. (NSPCC)

Disguised Compliance

Victoria Climbe



2000

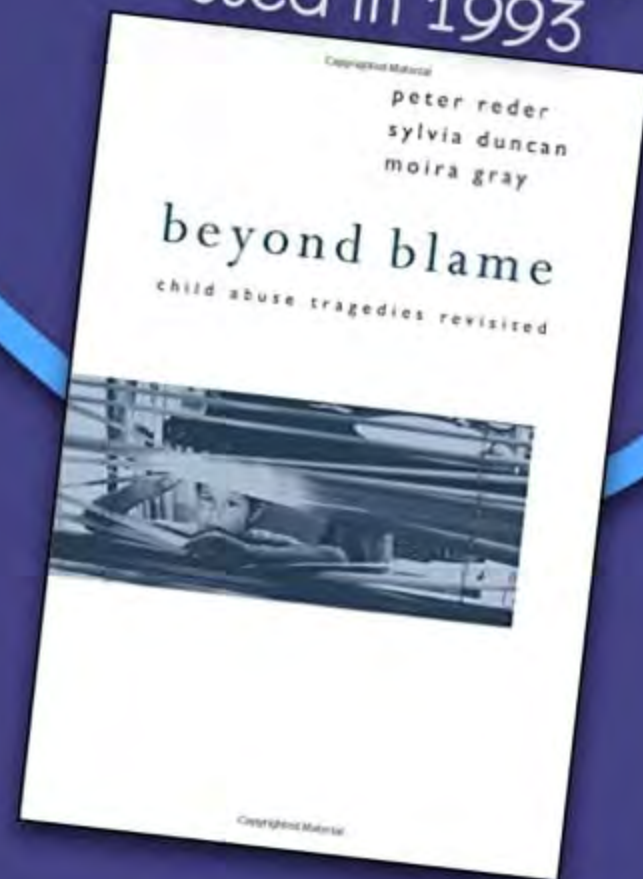
Baby 'P'



2007



Phrase was first used in 1993



Parents who appear to cooperate to avoid professionals getting too close or asking too many questions.

Coercive and controlling behaviours

- ▶ **Activity**
- ▶ **In groups discuss what you mean by coercive and controlling behaviour. Be prepared to share at least 3 examples**



Respectful uncertainty

- ▶ The concept of “**respectful uncertainty**” should lie at the heart of the relationship between the practitioner and the family. It does not require practitioners constantly to interrogate their clients, but it does involve the critical evaluation of information that they are given.

Professional curiosity

- ▶ **Professional curiosity** is a combination of looking, listening, asking direct questions, checking out and reflecting on information received. It means not taking a single source of information and accepting it at face value. It means testing out your **professional** assumptions about different types of families.

Applying professional curiosity

- ▶ Question own assumptions
- ▶ Recognise your feelings
- ▶ Be willing to have uncomfortable conversations
- ▶ Address professional anxieties
- ▶ Remain open-minded
- ▶ Accept professional scepticism as healthy
- ▶ Ensure you can recognise Disguised Compliance
- ▶ Understand coercive behaviours and risk factors
- ▶ Importance of reflective practice & supervision.

Staying alert

- ▶ **Looking**
- ▶ **Listening**
- ▶ **Asking**



Responding to resistance to change

- ▶ Assess the evidence
- ▶ Consult other professionals
- ▶ Revisit the causes of concern
- ▶ Assess seriousness
- ▶ Coordinate and communicate with other key professionals
- ▶ Risk assess
- ▶ Ensure parents understand what is expected of them.

If in doubt, check it out.

- ▶ Other professionals involved?
- ▶ Are explanations consistent or do they change overtime / depending on who you are talking to?
- ▶ Action taken so far?
- ▶ What else should be done?



- **See past the obvious**
- **Look further, see more**
- **Think wider, look for the signs.**



Effective questioning

- ▶ **How**
- ▶ **What**
- ▶ **Why**
- ▶ **When**
- ▶ **Who**

Effective questioning involves using **questions** to open conversations, inspire deeper intellectual thought, and promote interaction.

Effective questions focus on eliciting the process, i.e. the 'how' and 'why,' in a response, as opposed to answers which just detail 'what'.

Activity - Case study 1

- ▶ Ben is a 4 year-old boy. He lives with his mum Angela. Angela frequently goes out in the evening leaving Ben locked in a large cupboard under the stairs. She gives Ben a blanket and a pillow so he can go to sleep.



Activity - Case Study 2

- ▶ Jess (14) and Michael (3) live with their mum and her boyfriend. Both mum and her boyfriend are regular heroin users and deal from the flat to support their habit. Michael has signs of bruising on his back and Jess has what appears to be a cigarette burn on her arm. Both seem undernourished and are dirty.
- ▶ How might mum show signs of disguised compliance?



Activity - Case Study 3

- ▶ Nicky is a 9 year-old girl. Nicky's mum suffers from agoraphobia. Nicky's mum walks her to school everyday and gets very anxious when walking home alone. Nicky worries all day at school about her mum getting home safely on her own.



Activity – examples of disguised compliance.

- ▶ **In groups, discuss how parents/ carers might display disguised compliance.**



Principles to deal with Disguised Compliance:

- ▶ **Focus on the lived experiences of the child**
- ▶ **Coordinate / communicate with other key professionals**
- ▶ **Focus on changes in family dynamic**
- ▶ **Promote open and trusting relationships**
- ▶ **If in doubt, check it out.**

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