

# **Biases and stereotypes exercise**

# Biases

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## EXERCISE

Imagine a safeguarding professional who believes that a particular cultural group is less likely to seek help from services.

When interacting with clients from this group, they unconsciously looks for signs that confirm this belief, such as clients being hesitant or not following through with appointments.

As a result, the professional may overlook or misinterpret signs that the clients want help but face barriers such as language difficulties or mistrust of authorities.

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# Biases exercise

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Identify the bias:** How does confirmation bias manifest in this scenario?
- **Impact:** What are the potential consequences of this bias on the children and family and the quality of service they receive?
- **Challenge the bias:** What steps can the safeguarding professional take to recognise and overcome their confirmation bias?
- **Alternative perspectives:** How can the safeguarding professional ensure they are considering alternative explanations for the clients' behaviour?
- **Improving Practice:** What strategies can be implemented to reduce the impact of confirmation bias in their work?

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# Biases

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**Confirmation bias:** The tendency to search for, interpret information to confirm your preconceptions.

- Can you identify where these biases originate from?
- How do you think these biases impact your interactions with others?
- What steps can you take to recognise and address your biases when working with other cultures?
- What difference would this make?

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## STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME CONFIRMATION BIAS

- **Seek diverse perspectives:** Actively seek out and consider information and viewpoints that challenge your existing beliefs.
- **Reflective practice:** Regularly reflect on your decisions and interactions to identify any biases that may have influenced them.
- **Training and education:** Participate in cultural competence training to increase awareness of biases and learn strategies to mitigate them.
- **Feedback mechanisms:** Encourage feedback from colleagues and clients to gain insights into how biases may be affecting your practice.

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# Biases and stereotypes

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## SELF REFLECTION

- **Awareness:** What biases or stereotypes do I hold, consciously or unconsciously? How did I develop these beliefs?
- **Impact:** How might my biases and stereotypes affect my interactions with others?
- **Challenge:** What steps can I take to challenge and overcome my biases and stereotypes?
- **Learning:** How can I educate myself about different cultures to reduce my biases and stereotypes?
- **Understanding bias:** How do biases and stereotypes manifest in the workplace or practice?
- **Impact on decision making:** How might biases and stereotypes influence my decision making processes? What is the impact on referrals, access to services and assessments?
- **Inclusion:** What strategies can be implemented to create a more inclusive and culturally competent approach to safeguarding?

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# Stereotypes

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**Stereotyping:** Making generalised assumptions about individuals based on their cultural group. This can lead to unfair treatment and misunderstandings.

- Can you recall a time when you judged someone based on a stereotype?
- What was the outcome?
- What actions could you take to prevent stereotyping other cultures?
- What difference would this make?

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# Stereotypes

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- **Stereotyping:** Making generalised assumptions about individuals based on their cultural group. This can lead to unfair treatment and misunderstandings.
- **Ethnic and racial stereotypes:** Assumptions about behaviour, abilities or characteristics based on someone's ethnicity or race.
- **Gender stereotypes:** Preconceived notions about the roles and abilities of men and women.
- **Age stereotypes:** Generalisations about people based on their age, such as assuming older individuals are less capable with technology.
- **Religious stereotypes:** Misconceptions about people based on their religious beliefs or practices.
- **Socioeconomic stereotypes:** Judgments about individuals based on their economic status or occupation.

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