

Nick Frost episode final edit

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SPEAKERS

Donna Ohdedar



Donna Ohdedar 00:00

Welcome to the safeguarding and domestic abuse sector, for professionals working in the world of safeguarding and domestic abuse. And for anyone who believes in harnessing the power of sector led learning and improvement, the conversation unfolds week by week, season by season. In this space, expect to hear me talk about this work, which has the ability to change lives, alongside having powerful conversations with those who are taking action, and can inspire us on our learning and improvement journey. This is the safeguarding and domestic abuse sector. And today's episode, I am joined by Nick Frost, emeritus professor of Leeds Beckett University and ex LSCB chair, we will discuss a topic that will concern you in every review you undertake, whether you are highlighting where this is being done well, or whether you're considering where this can be improved? Shall we start talking about this topic that hits us in all of our reviews? And shall we get Nick to introduce yourself?



01:18

Yeah. Hi, I'm Nick Frost, recently retired as Professor of Social Work at Leeds Beckett University. I've done just about 20 years in practice, and just about 20 years in academia all in the child welfare field, which you may have to apologise to some of the audience but I've worked across the field in various capacities over the last 10 to 12 years, I've been chair of three local safeguarding children boards on one of the new partnerships. So today, I'll probably be drawing on a lot of that experience. And I've written a few books that are relevant today. And I may get a chance to put them later on. So thank you, Donna, for the introduction.



Donna Ohdedar 01:59

Shall we start with what silo working, isn't it? What causes it? What's its effects? What is silo working?



02:06

Yeah, I can speak to that really sign all workings embedded in the whole system, because as societies developed, we've become more and more specialists. So you know, all the professionals that will be presented today, social workers, police officers, psychologists, health workers, etc. So that we all build those silos. Think about psychology, for example, how many specialist fields there are evening in that generic profession. So silos, I think the origins has to do with farming and the way that farmers store things in different columns, so wheat and maize or whatever, so they don't get mixed up. So obviously, that's beneficial. But silo working means that we may not always be communicating properly may not understand each other. Sometimes that's ideological to do with values to do with ideas to do with professional training, sometimes it's organisation or to do with communication to do with IT systems are all things we can explore. Through the afternoon. Thanks, Donna.



Donna Ohdedar 03:09

So, in my experience, what can happen in a review, when we identify silo working is an issue is that one reaction is we just stand back? Or, you know, this is a big culture change issue? You know, it just needs a whole restructure. I mean, how on earth else could we overcome it? Can it be broken down into smaller pieces than that? Yeah,



03:33

I'm sure it can. In fact, we did have the culture change, didn't we, and you can be accused of being either nostalgic or backwards looking. But I don't think this point is most of the audience probably remember, every child matters. And I think that did break down silo working. And it was almost a joke at conferences and events that everyone in the room if they were youth workers, teachers, police officers, social workers, whoever could chance that the five outcomes that were under Every Child Matters, and that's trivialising it. But I did think it drew us together across the profession. So you can speak someone from a different profession from yours and related to enjoying and achieving or keeping safe while staying healthy. So I do think that in a way, it wasn't structural, there were stretches that reflected it. Just having that shared ideology that showed sets of values, I think, really, really made a difference. And unfortunately, one of the advantages of being retired now is I can perhaps be more controversial than occurred when I was chairing a safeguarding board, for example. So for me, it was a very sad day. I happened to be there actually, when they dismantled the department for schools, children and families and they used to use a cartoon representation of children and families and it was there on the day that it was taken down. So it was both real and symbolic the day that was that was dismantled. So I think we'll talk about it through the through the session, but coming together around values around training around activity, I think we can start to rebuild some of that, which I do look backwards on, to be honest, this golden era from probably 2004 to about 2000. And time.



Donna Ohdedar 05:17

Okay. Right. There's quite a lot in there. I'll keep moving forward through what we plan to say. It was quite a lot to pull through from that. And maybe we'll bring it through when we're in communities of practice neck rather than the cross. Yeah, yeah

communities of practice neck rather than the cross. Yeah, yeah.



05:31

So more about that. Yeah.



Donna Ohdedar 05:32

One of the I say one of the overarching reasons that brought me from Chief Officer our way into becoming an independent reviewer was that I saw leaders constantly having to juggle priorities. And I think that if we can generate learning that supports the leaders to kind of sift through the priorities, and, you know, generate the change that we want them to, you've got to think and the best way to do that. So what what have you seen, what have you experienced that works really well, when we're generating learning for leaders?



06:08

Okay, I've come up with a typology, and there is some research, but this is more impressionistic. Because I know a lot of people in the room, they will recognise some of the characteristics, I'm obviously not going to mention names. But I saw three types of effective leaders, the salt Jaiden face that Donna puts in some of the documentation has been just stunning. So they can lead across boundaries, across schools, Youth Work Children's Services, in our case, but it would apply saying the private sector as well. So we're looking at Boundary Spanning leaders, and I saw three models, if you like that I thought were very effective. And as I say, people will probably recognise some of them. One was authoritarian, which wasn't my style, but a very strong leader, very firm in what they believe they, the particular personnel, I've got in mind had to stare. And we're all even as chair of the safeguarding board, I was scared of that stare when it came, if you said some things that they didn't perhaps agree with. So but a very strong leader in a very difficult area, who was able to push things forward through force of personality. So I call that authoritarian. I'm thinking of another leader, again, that people in the room will know this person, if they know me, a very consultative leader, a great listener, very, very strong listener, very strong on partnership, very strong on consultation. And again, I find that very inspiring that that person was very open to ideas, very open to listening very often very able to take people on board and move forward with them. And then the third one that you might call a model. So we've got authoritarian consultative, and the third one is visionary. And this was in a particular authority that had struggled quite considerably, got a new leader, who was a total visionary, who inspired people who are very transparent values, and those values motivated people. And that vision really developed the service and took it forward. So in other words, I don't think there's any one model, I don't think there's a magic model, but I've seen authoritative leadership work. I've seen consultative leadership work. And I've seen inspirational leadership work. There is a concept from the Harvard Business School called the incomplete leader. They argue that no leader can have everything that no leader can be a people person and as a statistics person and a vision person, so they need to build around them a team that has all those elements. So that incompletely the idea, I think, is very, very valuable. So different sorts of leadership, and individual leaders recognising that they can't do everything. So they build a leadership team.

And here we're talking about boundary spanning so they have to generate respect. So from teachers, from youth workers, from police officers from social workers, it's very hard to do, but I have seen people do that and deliver quite effectively. So we

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Donna Ohdedar 09:17

come across one of these three types of leader and we want to support them to manage change, what's good about a review that can kind of press the right buttons with those leaders, Nick.



09:30

Yeah, I think to start from start from the multidisciplinary perspective. So in a way I think, we tend to start from the wrong place because everything if we start with children start with being child centred, or adult centred, if you're in that field and think about the points of view of the child and they all live holistic lives, they don't live life in different pockets. You know, the health effects the schooling, the schooling of affects the family life, their family life affects their leisure life. So they don't live in silos, children, they live holistic lines. So I would always start from that holistic experience. And whatever we do professionally is always related to another profession. So I'm a social worker by background. So if I take that example, but it would apply to others, if you're in court, you're working with solicitors, with barristers with judges, if you're working with the care system, you're working with foster carers, you're working with residential care staff, you're working with health staff, if you're in the youth justice field, you're working with the courts and police and probation. So I can't think of anything that is actually silos. So we should always start from that multidisciplinary perspective. And I think that applies to reviews as well, everything is multidisciplinary. And the review, you know, any sort of review can start from that perspective. If I just reflect backwards a little and the hurt, we've moved on from this the awful era where social workers seem to be blamed for everything if you go back to Maria Cauldwell, and then to Jasmine back third. And then Baby P being probably the most awful case, was probably a reflection of Sayla thinking that other social workers to blame. But of course, they're always related to other professionals. So I would always start with a multidisciplinary mindset. If that is clear to people, thank you,

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Donna Ohdedar 11:29

I am still quite kind of strong on wanting to bring through this idea of how the community comes together. And I think we'll still bring that through under communities of practice. But let's just think first, before we do that, about the training that we you know, we're coming from the place that we agree that we're not siloed. But we do each come from a professional background. So we are safeguarding professionals might enter our working lives. And this is realistic with absolutely no firm foundation in understanding multi agency working, we need that to stronger place to come from neck or to what extent is perfect professional training equipping us?



12:15

Yeah, obviously, there's a wide range of professions and it will differ considerably. But you

Yeah, obviously, there's a wide range of professions and it will differ considerably. But you know, multidisciplinary working, joined up working would appear in most courses. And I've spoken at courses more on like conferences up and down the country where there have been say social work, but social work students teaching students who've worked students, counselling students all in the same room, and that literally did one in an airline, big hangar somewhere with 1000s of students in it. So I think universities are bringing people together at that university level, but still feels a little bit like an add on. So it is embedded in that professional, professional training level. And we all build an identity as a social worker, a police officer, teacher, whatever. And it's right that we're proud of those identities. I'm proud of my social work identity. But equally, we need to appreciate the points of view of other professions. So what we did at my last University was bring together people sort of thing that would happen on partnership, training in practice, bring people together and case studies and share different perspectives and different views, or think in terms of thinking about reviews and serious case, reviews as they were, I was always a bit reluctant about training recommendations, because it's sort of pretty banal, and pretty obvious, you know, we should have more training on whatever the issue was neglect, or physical abuse or whatever, more interested, really in workforce development. So a broader sense than training. So workforce development might be, for example, if we needed to evaluate something, then say, bring three or four different professionals together to do the evaluation. So they're actually working together, day to day just not coming together for half a day. And perhaps not ever seeing each, each other ever again. Colocation we'll talk about later on. And I've seen fantastic colocation teams with perhaps four or five professionals in the same room. And I think that makes all the difference, just that you'll obviously know about it. But you know, the discussion over the coffee matters as much as the formal case discussions. So colocation, locality working as well. And I think this is something if you're working in a mesh that covers a whole city, then it's very hard to do multidisciplinary working, because you're not you're not going to know 200 GPs or 150 different schools. It's just impossible. So the more locality working we have, obviously very difficult in in a time of austerity, but the more locals you working with the better and again, if I can get because I've recently Retired, I'm looking back on things that this wasn't my idea at all. But my second job in effects was the idea of the local politician. And he just called me into his office one day and said, you moving office, you moving into this house in the middle of one of the most difficult states. And there was myself as a social worker, Citizens Advice, bureaux worker, school social worker, a youth worker, someone who was a cleaner caretaker was much faster to Team somewhere. Because we work in a small locality, we knew the local schools, we knew the local head teachers, I could still name to the state their local health visitors, or you could generate change really rapidly. I mean, to take a sort of practical example. I was registered with the school to drive mini buses. So if we're having a group event, I forgot to the head teacher and said, Oh, can we use the mini bus next Tuesday. So you know that locality working really mattered in terms of getting to know people and driving change forward? I know that could sound romantic. But I think we could do still that do that locality working in particularly problematic locations. So why have you been training more looking at workforce development that's more embedded in everyday professional life rather than something you got to two or three times? Yeah,

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Donna Ohdedar 16:13

I'm happy you said that. Because we are on the very, very real, the very practical of what happened when you were all in that team together, I mean, in wonderful unique position quite regularly. Because the model I use means that I sit in a room quite regularly with people who've never seen all the pieces of the jigsaw put together before, and just going to voice

some really kind of day in day out practitioner voice kind of messages we hear. So we might say, we might hear well, that agencies got completely different processes and structures to us, or a different culture, or we haven't got this shared vocabulary. So the way that has been shared with me, didn't have true meaning for me, or, you know, GPS, for instance, we feel much more bound by confidentiality, the way that you know, our profession is organised and others seem to be able to feel free to do so we've got to we've got all these barriers that are very practical. Many frontline staff will say, they don't really feel 100% clear about the specific role that every agency has. So it's great when we back in our professional training to say we're going to do this thing called multi agency working. And then perhaps when we get into the workplace itself, there's all these complications that we never knew about that that would mean. So I also am worried about adding training, training training. Is this something in the way that we onboard our staff? Is there something in a way that, you know, how do we bring people into something that's a bit more complex than it sounds? It's a hard one, isn't it? It's not a question. Yeah. You don't want it to be.



18:00

There's a really good point in the chart, the one that begins, I see it as a huge jigsaw puzzle. And I think that's absolutely accurate. I think the talk more specifically about reviews, and I've experienced, so the commissioner of reviews, and then people will remember quite controversial review Hamsa Khan in 2013. That was I was chairman of the safeguarding board and I fronted the media response then. And it was very a well was headline news for two or three days. And it reflecting on the process of doing the review, we knew it was going to be high profile. So involved all the communication teams, for example, from health and police and the local authority involved senior managers in reflecting on their own practice and their own policies. So I think the review process should be seen as very dynamic. Donna knows more about this than I do have, obviously, a very dynamic and as a learning process, not as a bureaucratic process we've got to do, we've got to do this, this review. So I did find all the reviews, serious case reviews, or whatever very much as learning experiences and very multidisciplinary. There's one in Leeds that you can see on the Leeds adult adults site, I think it is called Jake and they did run it as a absolutely multidisciplinary review. It had elements of a child practice review and an adult a saw and didn't invest economy side review. So there are examples that are as multidisciplinary as you can imagine. But the only matter and you all know this if they bring about change, and I do think most reviews I was involved in did bring about real organisational change. Thank you.



Donna Ohdedar 19:46

Okay, so the opportunities to come together, we've highlighted one and we wish we wish these reviews didn't arise but people do come together and see the jigsaw puzzle in a review. That's one space or you know, part chips put on some great multi agency training, don't they? And as you say, there's the over the coffee over a coffee conversation, you've actually met that person who you've been making a referral to. Is this where we bring in the communities of practice model, Nick, you know, there's there are spaces that were already meeting up in. And we don't need perhaps we don't need to create new spaces to have that sense of community, perhaps we just make better use of the ones that we've already got.






20:28

Yeah. Well, this will probably be my longest answer if that's okay. I'm joined on this book called communities of practice. And it's not about our work at all. It's actually about health insurance. But that's irrelevant. He actually now works with big firms with Microsoft and Ford and everything. Very complicated, 300 page book. But I've found it's the only theory that I use day to day in practice. So if you could give me a few minutes, I will expand on that. So it's very complicated. But to summarise, it has three bullet points, a community of practice has three elements to it. And I'll talk about each one briefly. One is a joint enterprise. So what are we trying to do? So that word, what are we trying to achieve? So hopefully, in our field, that should be fairly straightforward in practice, to promote the welfare of the child say, in a review, to find out it one has done is concept why what was going on in this situation? And how can we learn? How can we learn from it? So what is our join chain surprised may sound a bit obvious and a bit for now. But it's worth spending time on that. And when I've worked with multidisciplinary teams, we've spent a time looking at what's our joint enterprise? So it was it became a bit discredited. But that idea of mission statement, what would you put over your, the office, the office entrance, if a user wanted to know what was this team about? So what's your joint enterprise, it's worth spending time looking at that, and agreeing, I'll talk about conflicts later on, because maybe it can't all be agreed. And then the second key concepts have looked at joint enterprise. The second one is mutual engagement. So that means actually doing things together, not just talking about them, not just thinking about them, but doing things together. And that's why I talked about workforce development earlier on. So maybe professionals joining together in a research project working together in the same building, perhaps going on a joint visit to another area where there's good practice, obvious one will be joined home visits, so you're actually working together. And that spins off, as we've said, into the informal search. So I can think if I look at my friends that I see socially, now, a lot of them came from some of the roles I've described in the past. So you know, you build very good working relationships that can become long term friendships, which can benefit the service users. The third one is a little bit more complicated as we look to joint enterprise. Do you know what you're trying to do? We know about mutual engagement actually working together. And the third one is shared repertoire. So that is the way we speak to each other things like cultures, slightly more slowly, things like we'll probably move on to later IT systems forms that we share, etc. So you shared repertoire is your way of speaking your way of being. And we know sort of jokes about you can identify the social workers by the dress or the police officer by the dress, but they're very important cultural signifiers. So what can you develop a shared repertoire of how we're working together? I'll give you an example at my expense, a minor example, but a significant one. I was meeting a police officer in a certain time. And we said right, we'll meet at one o'clock at the station. So it got to about 10 past one. And around him. He was stood outside the police station, I was stood outside the train station. So we both use the word station in a different way. We didn't have that shared repertoire. Obviously, that's a trivial example to one level, but it applies to, you know, all the jargon we use at work, for example. And I was always a bit shy as a young social worker, particularly with medics probably if they if they quoted a medical condition. I didn't know what it was. But we have to make sure that we're speaking in languages and using cultural forms that other professionals can understand as well. And those of you that are review authors may be able to see that may be able to think, well, they're professionals. We're working on different models here. It was the same their lack of communication, lack of team working to use today's jargon a lack of a community of practice. So we have seen those lessons and the difficult to learn from just one last comment. I did use that community of practice model in my when I was chairing safeguarding partnerships. And so if I look to mutual engagement, for example, I would this technique where your helicopter so you move out of your chair, and you you rise above the rise above the room, and you look down at what's going on. So let's say for example, that this is a literal example, I thought the


legal representative on the board hadn't spoken for two or three meetings wasn't really engaged. So I deliberately asked them to present something on a piece of legislation that was new at the time. So the next meeting, they laid on the presentation, and they were sent to stage. So that community practice idea can be very practical, completely implemented relatively.

 Donna Ohdedar 26:08

I'm very happy with the long answer. Because I, what I almost wish, you know, that mission statement. So it's almost as if you've got the lone practitioner sitting there, who doesn't realise that person, person over here, person over here, person over here, does have the same kind of mission and aims as you it's almost as if we need to be displaying our mission statement. It needs to be more visible across partnerships, and partnerships with a place that can do this. I can't say like, almost spotlight make visible, some of this complexity, and it sounds like it. Like nobody wants to be condescending. But you know, this, this really is essential stuff. And it's more than training. I agree. It's more than training.

 26:55

Absolutely, yeah. Yeah.

 Donna Ohdedar 26:57

We'll we'll pull some of these through. Is there anything anybody would really we've definitely got all of these points to bring through to the q&a, which is coming. But is there anything I've just homed in on mission statement, we've got this shared repertoire. And we've spoken a little bit about long gone, the language they're using across there isn't particularly familiar. So anything else that's really practical that this communities of practice model is bringing through for you that's hitting you in your review or your day to day working? So everyone know what I mean? This is an important point. What is workforce development? We spoken about a research project a joint visit, about Rabatt. Pierre Pierre working peer support, Nick, does that come in this? Yeah.

 27:44

Oh, yeah. So absolutely. I was just reading Julia Vinci's comments, which is relevant to this, if people can get a chance to look at it, and about the mission statements around child welfare promoting the best interests of the child come, but it can bring people together. And peer support is absolutely crucial in that undervote learning. Well, I'll give another example, which was child sexual exploitation, when it was an emerging concept, really, perhaps around 2008. And after that, and really, we were very old, very, it's funny to think that we're all very ignorant states, and people who are really value for example, we'll call it we'll use the phrase child prostitution, which we would never use now. But we were all learning at the time. Yeah. So for Pierre matching a social worker with a youth worker with a social worker around that learning is absolutely crucial. And I felt the two learning. leading professionals actually, in that period, were the youth workers who will literally going out at 11 at night and sick sitting on park

benches and talking to young people, and the police officers who were in the frontline of, you know, finding how taxi firms and hotels were being used. So we need to learn. It's hard for, say, a social worker or a teacher to know that stuff. So you need that peer support and peer development.

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Donna Ohdedar 29:11

Okay, I'm gonna run through some slides to tell you about, cut two different ways to work with me. So you may well know that silk has been used in over 200 cases since 2009. And every single one of them is focused on learning in an open way. So it's the first time that people see how these pieces of the jigsaw fit together. And it's a powerful moment. And it is that opportunity to come together as a community. There's two ways that you might want to get involved. The first one is that you might want to join subscore many, many people here have done that. And it's so good to see your faces because it's been a long time for some people. You do this. If you can devote 18 weeks we say It's an hour and a half a week. And you want to embed the model into your own independent practice, or you want to embed it in your within your organisation. Option two is momentum. And we with momentum, we only meet live four times a year, we've got a WhatsApp group, but we only meet like four times a year. So it's less of a time commitment in a in a chunk. It's really only if you are already trained, already experienced. And it's experiential learning. So we bring a review into it, and we mastermind on that review. If it's still school, that might be for you. These are the six codes that we work to. And the ones I'd highlight here, when we talking about this kind of issue in reviews, would be the action learning, because it's when we all sit around a table in a simulated learning event and learn more about how the other agencies work. And also the system's code, because we really start to understand why which is loses point of frustration. The same things are arising every time and I think we can kind of I think it's where we can let ourselves off the hook. So and what for the fact that yes, of course, we will be learning the same lessons, because the systems have become increasingly complex. And it kind of shines a light on that. So yeah, we are creating the conditions within self school to improve into professional dialogue for sure. So if your your partnership wants to offer the methodology itself, this is the next step for you. And, you know, it might be that you're just there to upgrade your reviews, it might be that you want to have this certification, and you want to use the methodology. And yeah, it's, you would want to be involved in reviews. Absolutely. So you can use what's in the link now, which is the eligibility form to have yourself assessed. For that, if you want to join, you're going to have orientation phase, then you're going to have the six core modules. And then you'll be in a group with me and weekly, we will engage about all of the material. If you decide to join subscore, we're going to offer a guide. And this guide offers you a check this so that you've got solutions, focus questions to convert this issue into positive action planning, that's going to illuminate all of these factors for you about what's what's the barrier to interprofessional dialogue. So even if you're not ready to join in April, and you want to join this September cohort, it might be worth you. considering an investment under the current price plan, you can make in monthly payments, or you can make a single payment. Okay. Second option, then, is that if you're already trained or experienced, you might want to join option to next, which is momentum. And again, the next slide is you're going to receive mentoring in your reviews, all the templates and these masterminds or the four meetups a year, where we learn from experience in our reviews in there as well, you can undertake your Appreciative Inquiry certification, the bottom of that page there, there is a comment from somebody who's in there now about this kind of family feeling and common purpose that we have in momentum is the investment needed from a mentor. Some people just pay once a month, and some people pay the three to five up front, the time investment is this is less obviously, most people remain. We've got over a 90%

retention rate in this membership. And it's normally only if people are no longer involved in the work. They don't stay. Because it's just we just like to develop ourselves really in that way. And then finally, the all important guide is there for you if you decide to join momentum, as well.



34:08

few closing remarks. Yeah, yeah, I think it's been a really good session. And it's hard to watch people and cover the chat as well. But we seem to have the consensus, we all seem to be on the same page. We've built a community of practice today in an hour and a half. So that's very good. And there's lots of learning. So I think the major messages I've got is the community practice jargon phrase, but basically working creatively together. That That depends a lot on personal relationships. And that's challenged by hybrid working and we need a shared value base, which in my field, child welfare is promoting the best interests of the child and reviews can be a crucial part and have been a crucial part of contributing to that emerging culture. But the point is some excellent points been made in the chat and if you haven't had a chance to follow him it be worth scrolling by combos. Thank you very much.



Donna Ohdedar 35:01

Thank you, Nick. Thank you to everyone for some great comments. I'd love to see. Momentum is a community of practice. I would love to see some of you join up. It's been great to have all of your input and enthusiasm today, Nick, thank you so much. And yeah, we will write to you after we'll tell you about next books, and we'll tell you how you can listen to the podcast. Thanks. Thanks. Thanks, Nick. Thank you for listening. If this episode has been useful, or enlightening, please leave me a review on iTunes. I'm always open to feedback, and I will really appreciate your review