



Supporting Students to Manage Risk

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Student and ASYE Anxiety around Risk



- Anxiety within Students and ASYE to be viewed as positive.
- Anxiety means that risk is kept in mind not minimised or avoided.
- Our role is to manage the anxiety within supervision.
- A paternal/ maternal womb of safety to reflect and manage those experiencing anxiety (Mustoe 2016)

Identifying risk



- Risk is dynamic/ multi faceted.
- Risk can never be fully eliminated.
- Assessment of risk/s will be integral to achieving an outcome.
- Identifying risk carries a duty to do something about it.
- Specific to the circumstances/ context of the individual.
- Defensible (not defensive) decisions are based on clear reasoning.

(McNamara & Morgan 2013)



Ways to support Students Managing Risk

Look at the source of the information around risk. Where does it originate from....

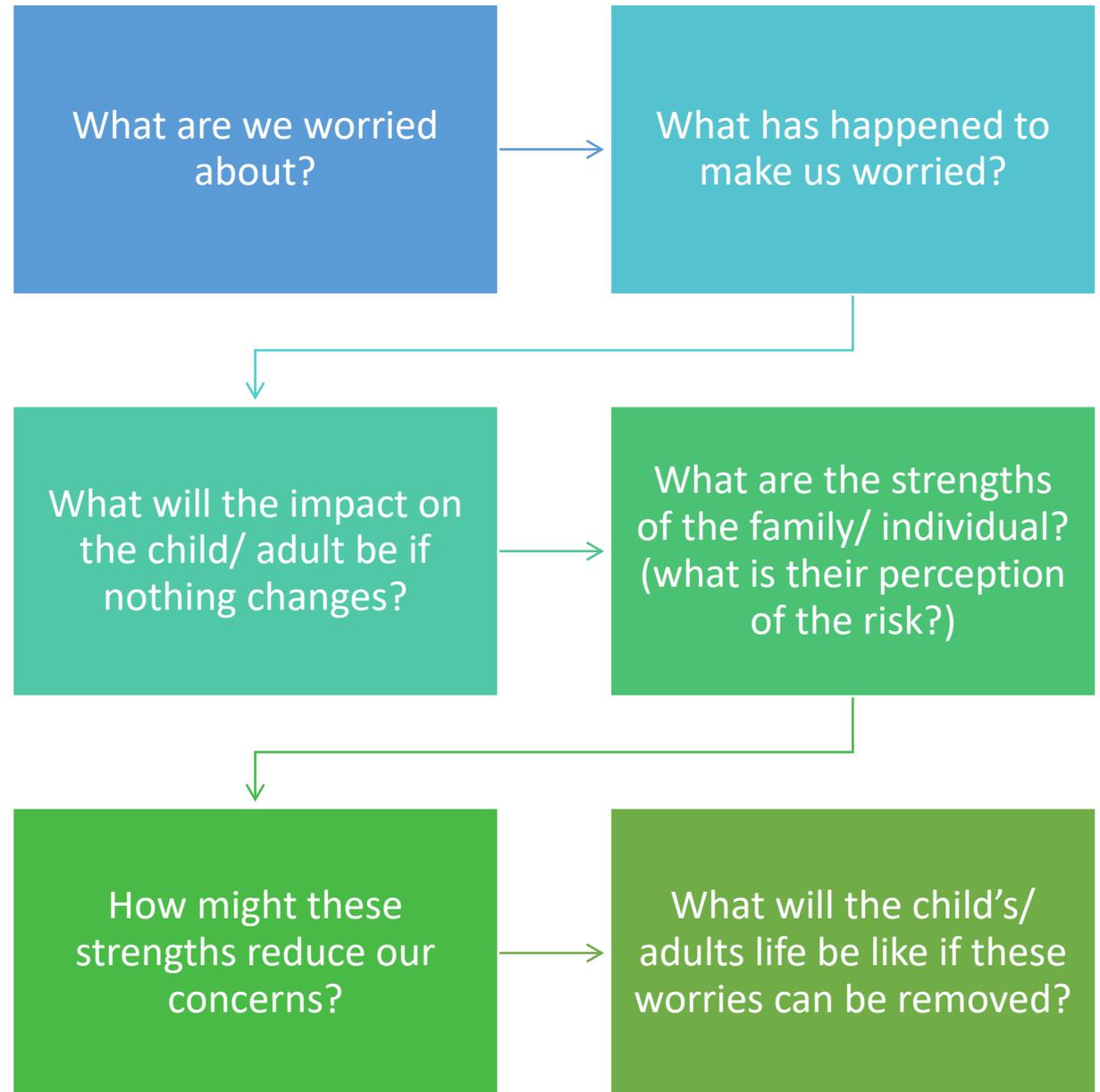
Third party heresy, professional opinion (what perspective? Risk averse?)

Observation(Snap shot?)

Previous or historical assessment (is this information still valid now?)

Support Students to take a holistic view or helicopter view rather than dynamics and situational drama.

Key Questions



Ways of managing Risk

- Support Students to focus on the actual Risk by using a Harm Matrix...

T	Duration	First incident	Worst incident	Last incident
Behaviour	How long has everyone been worried?	When were we first worried?	What was worst event?	What happened during last incident?
Severity	How bad did it get?	How worried was everyone?	When at worst what happened?	How bad was the last time?
Impact	What was impact on the person?	When this happened what was the impact?	What was the impact of the worst event?	What was the impact of the last time?

	Identified Risks	Adult's Own View	Factors Increasing Risk (to include imminence of risk occurring)	Factors Decreasing Risk (protective factors/Adult's strengths/Adult's network/resources to manage risk)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				

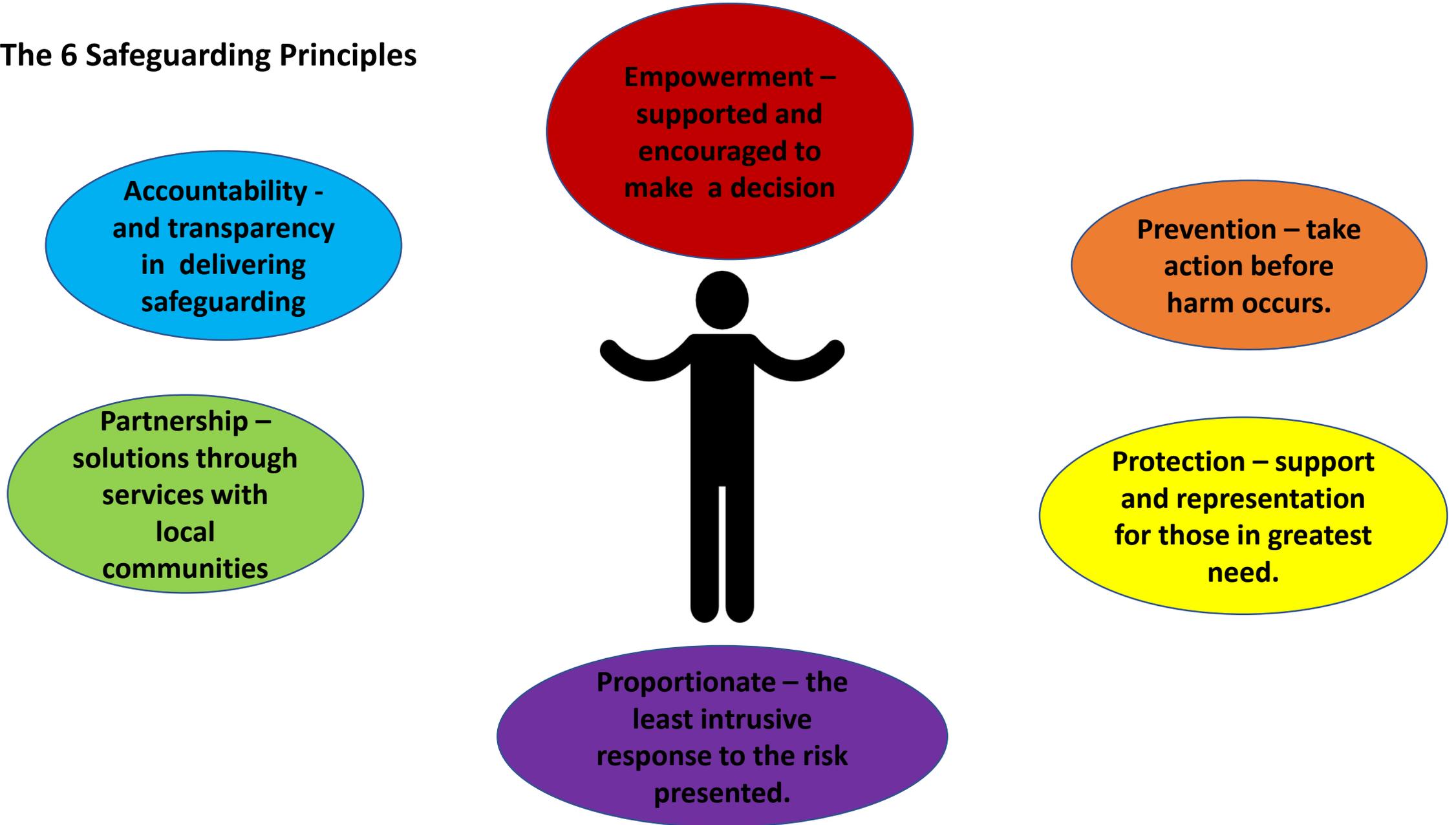
Risk Management Tool

Taken from DBPSAB Multi Agency Risk Assessment Management (MARM) guidance:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/information-for-professionals/dorset-safeguarding-adults-board/dorset-safeguarding-adults-board-pdfs/multi-agency-risk-management-marm-guidance.pdf>

	Proposed action to minimise risk	By whom
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

The 6 Safeguarding Principles



**Accountability -
and transparency
in delivering
safeguarding**

**Empowerment –
supported and
encouraged to
make a decision**

**Prevention – take
action before
harm occurs.**

**Protection – support
and representation
for those in greatest
need.**

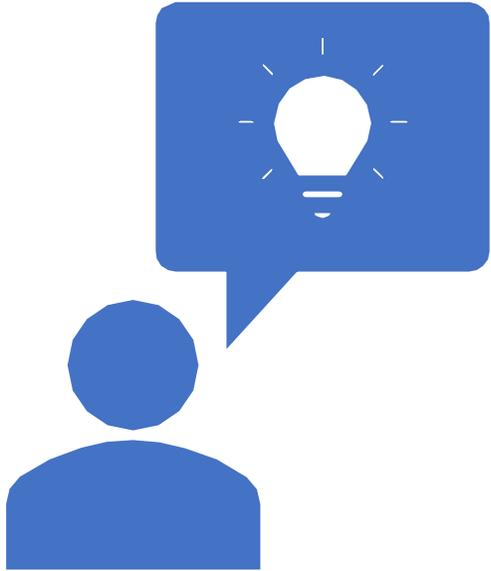
**Proportionate – the
least intrusive
response to the risk
presented.**

**Partnership –
solutions through
services with
local
communities**

The Protection Imperative

‘protection imperative’ describes the desire of professionals to make decisions based upon a perceived duty to protect.

This can feel very confusing for students as there will be different views, perception and understanding of risk in Children’s and Adults Services.



Judge Munby

“What good is it making someone safer if it merely makes them miserable?”

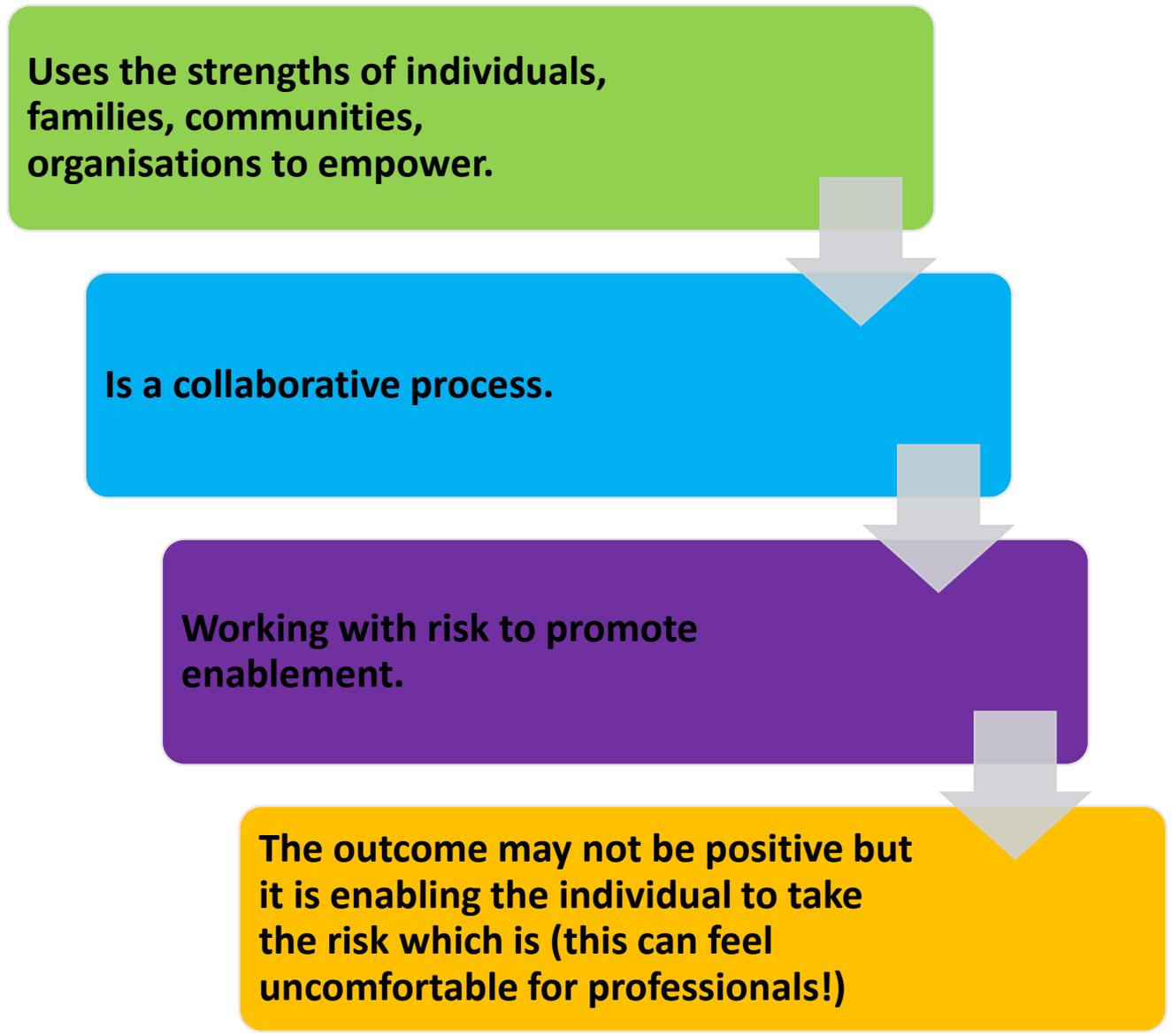
“A great judge once said, “all life is an experiment,” adding that “every year if not every day we have to wager our salvation upon some prophecy based upon imperfect knowledge” **(see Holmes J in Abrams v United States (1919) 250 US 616 at pages 624, 630).**

The fact is that **all life involves risk**, and the young, the elderly and the vulnerable, are exposed to additional risks and to risks they are less well equipped than others to cope with. But just as wise parents resist the temptation to keep their children metaphorically wrapped up in cotton wool, so too **we must avoid the temptation always to put the physical health and safety of the elderly and the vulnerable before everything else.** Often it will be appropriate to do so, but not always. Physical health and safety can sometimes be bought at too high a price in happiness and emotional welfare. The **emphasis must be on sensible risk appraisal, not striving to avoid all risk, whatever the price,** but instead seeking a proper **balance** and being willing to tolerate manageable or acceptable risks as the price appropriately to be paid in order to achieve some other good – in particular to achieve the vital good of the elderly or vulnerable person’s happiness. What good is it making someone safer if it merely makes them miserable?”

Local Authority X v MM & Anor (No.1) (2007)

Risk Enablement/ Positive Risk Taking – A Cultural Shift

Uses the strengths of individuals, families, communities, organisations to empower.



Is a collaborative process.

Working with risk to promote enablement.

The outcome may not be positive but it is enabling the individual to take the risk which is (this can feel uncomfortable for professionals!)

Types of attitude to Risk Management with Students.

Micro Management.....

It is impossible to have the time to do this!

It does not enable students to learn and develop.

You are not encouraging independence.

Students may become reliant on you to spot mistakes.

You won't be able to take a holistic view and may get drawn into case dynamics.

Types of attitude to Risk Management with Students

Light Touch.....

Assumes Student has similar style to you, but students are not you, Can you be confident in how they view risk?

Opportunities to share their undertenancies and explore different solutions may be missed

You may not offer enough support especially as students are new to the profession

Can you be Confident in Students meeting agency and knowledge and skills standards

Do students view a laissez-faire as disinterest in their supervision?



Types of attitude to Risk Management with Students

- As always balance is the key...
- Enough autonomy in placement to enable development of independence and to show competence but sufficient oversight to ensure the student is supported effectively.
- High risk incidences are avoided to reduce need for escalation.

Positive Risk Taking



Communication is adapted to individuals



Decisions are balanced



Reasoning is demonstrated



Decision regularly reviewed



Practitioners are reflective



Practitioners are legally literate

Final thoughts.....



Think about language – clear, uncomplicated, no jargon.



Consider sources of information student is using.



Appropriately challenge students to think outside of the box



Consider bringing 'tools' to provoke discussion and thoughts.



Use a strengths based and collaborative approach with students.



Think about your style/ attitude to risk management (micro/ light touch)



Decisions are balanced and reviewed regularly.

References -

- Mustoe, M (2016) *Managing Risk in Social Work, Community Care Inform*
- Morgan S (2013) *Risk decision-making: Working with risk and implementing positive risk-taking*. Brighton: Pavilion Publishing.
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