

Dear Child Welfare worker,

this survey is part of a four-country study of decision making in child welfare systems in Norway, Finland, England and the U.S. Child welfare workers in all four countries are presented with the same questions and sample case studies. We are interested in understanding what factors you consider in decision-making, as well as what your practice experiences have been. This survey should take less than 4 minutes to answer for some, and around 8-12 minutes to answer for others.

Your identity will be hidden.

Read more about confidentiality and hidden identity [here](#). (Opens in a new window.)

**1) \* Are you at present a child welfare worker who has responsibility for preparing cases for care order proceedings as part of your work at a child welfare agency?**

Yes No



**This box is shown in preview only.**

The following criteria must be fulfilled for this question to be shown:

- (
  - If Are you at present a child welfare worker who has responsibility for preparing cases for care order proceedings as part of your work at a child welfare agency? *equals* Yes
- )

**We are interested in learning about your considerations and preparations for care orders at your workplace. We are presenting you with an excerpt from a case that we would like you to imagine is on your case load. The case description is followed by a series of questions:**

You are working with a boy – Alex - who is 5 years old and whose family has received in-home services over a period of time. The case includes parental substance abuse, previous domestic violence, and general neglect. The circumstances of the case have deteriorated recently to such an extent that you are concerned that the boy's risk of harm is high. You are starting preparations for care order proceedings with a view to removing Alex from his parents, and you have an interview with the parents to inform them about this. The parents are opposing a removal of Alex.

**2) WHAT WOULD BE YOUR MAJOR AIM(S) IN THIS INTERVIEW WITH THE PARENTS? Please consider each of the statements on a scale from 1=not important to 5=very important. If it is not applicable (NA) in your system, tick off NA.**

- |  |           |   |   |   |           |    |
|--|-----------|---|---|---|-----------|----|
|  | Not       |   |   |   | Very      |    |
|  | important |   |   |   | important | NA |
|  | 1         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |    |
- a. Establish the facts and circumstances of the case – “what really happened”
  - b. Inform the parents about why you are starting care order preparations
  - c. Find out if the parents have any needs that you can help with
  - d. Make sure the parents are included as participants in relevant decision-making processes
  - e. Ask for parental preferences about potential future placement of the child
  - f. Make sure parental views about the needs of the child are heard
  - g. Confirm that the parents understand that care order preparations are in process
  - h. Advise the parents to seek independent advice from a lawyer



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- )

### 3) Would you consider conducting a family group conference in this case?

Yes No I don't know

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- )

### 4) As the key worker in this case, would you talk with the 5-year old Alex?

Not likely

Yes, early in the process

Yes, at some point during the process  
Yes, IF a decision about going to court has been made.



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The following criteria must be fulfilled for this question to be shown:

- (
  - If Are you at present a child welfare worker who has responsibility for preparing cases for care order proceedings as part of your work at a child welfare agency? *equals* Yes
- )
- and (
  - If As the key worker in this case, would you talk with the 5-year old Alex? *equals* Yes, early in the process
  - or
  - If As the key worker in this case, would you talk with the 5-year old Alex? *equals* Yes, IF a decision about going to court has been made.
  - or
  - If As the key worker in this case, would you talk with the 5-year old Alex? *equals* Yes, at some point during the process
- )

**5) WHAT WOULD BE YOUR MAJOR AIM(S) IN TALKING WITH 5-YEAR OLD ALEX? Please consider each of the statements on a scale from 1=not important to 5=very important. If it is not applicable (NA) in your system, tick off NA.**

	Not important	2	3	4	Very important	NA
	1				5	
a. Establish the facts and circumstances of the case - "what really happened"						
b. Inform the 5 year old about why you are starting care order preparations						
c. Find out his wishes and feelings about the situation						
d. Find out if he has any needs you can help him with						
e. Confirm that the 5-year old understands that a care order preparation is in process						
f. Make sure he is included as a participant in relevant decision-making processes						
g. Ask his preferences about his potential future placement						



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- (
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- )

**6) IF the boy in the case were age 11, would you talk with him?**

Not likely Yes, early in the process Yes, at some point during the process Yes, IF a decision about going to court has been made



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- (
  - If Are you at present a child welfare worker who has responsibility for preparing cases for care order proceedings as part of your work at a child welfare agency? *equals* Yes
- )
- and (
  - If IF the boy in the case were age 11, would you talk with him? *equals* Yes, at some point during the process
  - or
  - If IF the boy in the case were age 11, would you talk with him? *equals* Yes, early in the process
  - or
  - If IF the boy in the case were age 11, would you talk with him? *equals* Yes, IF a decision about going to court has been made
- )

**7) WHAT WOULD BE YOUR MAJOR AIM(S) IN TALKING WITH AN 11-YEAR OLD? Please consider each of the statements on a scale from 1=not important to 5=very important. If it is not applicable (NA) in your system, tick off NA.**

Not important					Very important	
1	2	3	4	5	NA	

- a. Establish the facts and circumstances of the case - "what really happened"
- b. Inform the 11 year old about why you are starting care order preparations
- c. Find out his wishes and feelings about the situation
- d. Find out if he has any needs you can help him with
- e. Confirm that the 11 year old understands that a care order preparation is in process
- f. Make sure he is included as a participant in relevant decision-making processes
- g. Ask his preferences about his potential

future placement



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- )

**8) Given the circumstances at your workplace, would you have sufficient time in the case of 5-year old Alex to undertake all the preparation work to your satisfaction?**

Yes No I don't know

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- )

**9) In the case of 5-year-old Alex, APPROXIMATELY how long would you spend on the following processes (based on your experience with similar cases):**

- a. From the time you informed the parents that it may be necessary to remove Alex until a decision is made whether an application to court should be sent?
- b. From the time the decision about sending an application to court is made until the application is sent to the court?

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- )

**10) A final question about the Alex case: At your current workplace, would there be significant obstacles to prepare this case to your satisfaction? If yes, please describe the two most significant obstacles:**



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- )

**11) Who authorizes your decision whether to apply for a care order? Select only those that apply.**

- No one
- Co-worker
- Supervisor
- Senior manager
- Agency lawyer
- Independent source
- Interdisciplinary team
- Parents of the child
- Child
- Other

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- )

**12) Who would THOROUGHLY assess/evaluate the quality of your work and decision making in care order preparations? Select only those that apply:**

- No one
- Co-worker
- Supervisor
- Senior manager
- Agency lawyer
- Independent source
- Interdisciplinary team
- Parents of the child
- Child
- Other



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- )

13) Based on your experience in the last 12 months, how confident do you feel in the QUALITY of:

	<b>Highly confident</b>	<b>Neither confident nor sceptical</b>	<b>Very sceptical</b>
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a. The decisions you make on cases about seeking care orders in the court?

b. The decision your colleagues make on cases about seeking care orders in the court?

c. The decisions your managers make on cases about seeking care orders in the court?

d. The legal advice that the parents have received in cases about care orders?

e. The support and advice the child(ren) have received in cases about care orders?



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- )

14) The following are statements regarding the use of independent experts (professionals that are not working in your office, but that are qualified to asses a child/family) in the decision making processes about seeking care orders. Please rate current practice at your workplace.

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
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a. The use of independent experts gives us an important second opinion

b. In our agency we use independent experts too much in the care order

**decision making process**

**c. The use of independent experts is helpful in that it gives us extra time to make decisions about care orders**

**d. The use of independent experts makes our care order case stronger in court**

**e. We only use independent experts in decision making regarding care orders when we need expertise we do not have within our own staff**

**f. The use of independent experts delays decision making regarding care orders**

**g. The use of independent experts elicits a child focus in the child removal decision making process**

**h. The use of independent experts usually ends up confirming what we already know**



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**15) Does your workplace have an informational pamphlet, brochure, or similar document about the care order process:**

	Yes	No	I don't know
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**a. That you can give to the parent(s)?**

**b. That you can give to the children?**



**Please imagine that a principal at a school contacts your agency for a consultation about the following case:**

Jon (11) and Mira (9) are living with their parents. Both mother and father have learning difficulties and mental health problems. The school is very concerned about the situation, and a psychologist has examined the children. She has concluded that Jon and Mira have serious problems with learning and they lack social skills.



They are clearly lagging behind their peers, and this is confirmed by their test scores. The psychologist has stated that this is due to lack of stimuli and help from the parents, and the children need a lot of help and support. Further, the psychologist stated that the children lack basic social skills, especially Mira (9). The parents are socially withdrawn and cannot teach and show their children how to behave towards friends and other adults. The psychologist concludes that Mira and Jon are at significant risk of becoming as socially withdrawn as their parents.

**16) Based on the limited information about these two children, please consider these five statements:**

- |   | <b>Strongly<br/>agree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Neither<br/>disagree<br/>nor<br/>agree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Strongly<br/>disagree</b> |
|---|---------------------------|--------------|---|-----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>1. It is my professional opinion that it is likely that Mira and Jon are being neglected by their parents</b>                              |                           |              |   |                 |                              |
| <b>2. It is my professional opinion that without help now it is not likely that Jon and Mira will lead a well-functioning life as adults.</b> |                           |              |   |                 |                              |
| <b>3. It is my professional opinion that without help now it is not likely that Jon and Mira will be able to gain employment as adults</b>    |                           |              |   |                 |                              |
| <b>4. In this situation my workplace would provide services for Jon and Mira</b>  |                           |              |   |                 |                              |
| <b>5. In this situation my workplace would consider preparations for care order</b>   |                           |              |   |                 |                              |



**Background and demographic questions.**

**17) Gender**

Male Female

**18) Are you a manager / supervisor / team manager at your workplace?**

Yes No

**19) How many years have you been employed in your present job?**

Less than 1 year 1-4 years 5-9 years 10-14 years 15+ years

**20) How many years have you worked as a child welfare worker?**

Less than 1 year 1-4 years 5-9 years 10-14 years 15+ years

**21) Age**

Under 25 25-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 65+

**22) What is your education? (Tick off those that apply)**

- BA or BSc in Social Work/Child Welfare
- BA or BSc in other discipline
- MA or MSc in Social Work/Child Welfare
- MA or MSc in other discipline
- PHD in Social Work/Child Welfare
- PHD in other discipline
- Other

**23) Approximate work place size measured by number of child welfare workers in full time positions:**

Select answer

**24) What is your caseload today measured by number of children?**

Select answer

**25) Approximate care order preparations (number of children) that you have been involved in as the key worker the last 12 months:**

Select answer

**26) Finally, please identify the three most important changes that you believe could improve the decision making process relating to care order processes at your work place?**

**27) Please use this space for any additional comments about decision making regarding care order practice as well as any comments regarding this survey form.**