

# **Joining up services for Scotland's children and families**

Bill Alexander  
Director of Health and Social Care  
Highland Council

# Joining up services for Scotland's children and families

- Real lives
- Joined children and family services
- Integrated children and family services
- It's about empathy and intuition





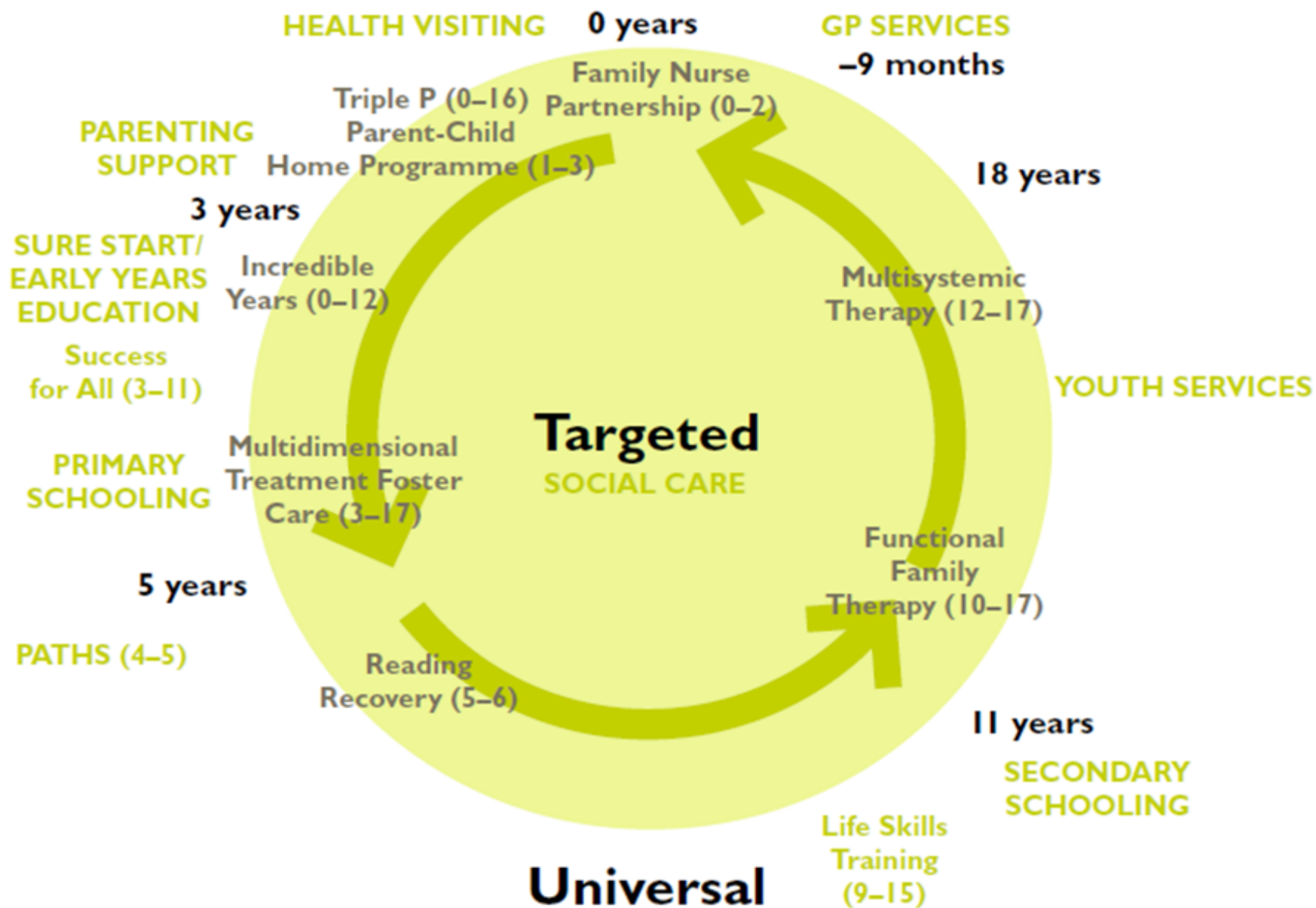
# Early intervention

## - Graham Allen MP

“We need to examine the causes—like looking at Baby P’ s mother and father and how they were raised - not just the symptoms.

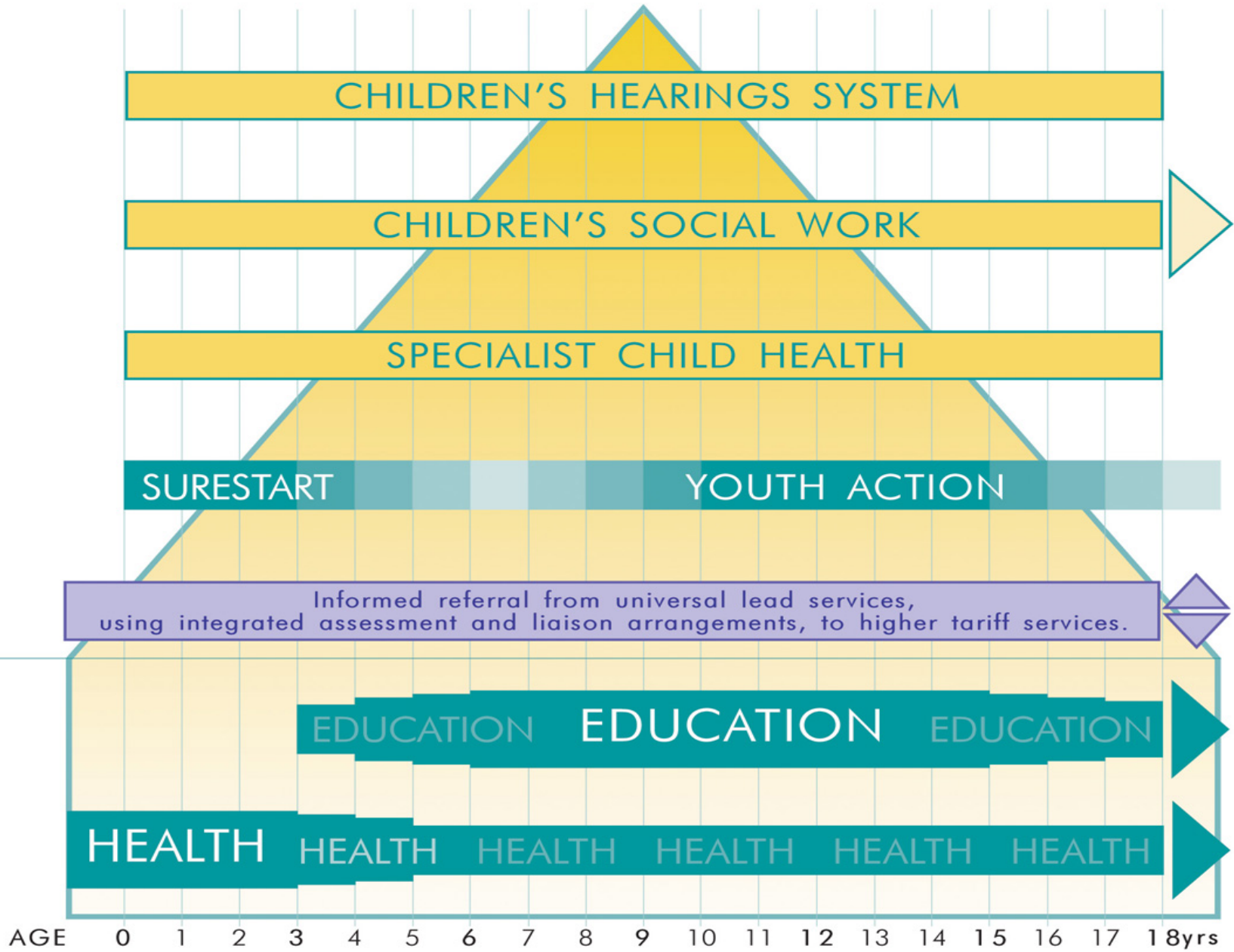
Unfortunately, we had better be ready for Babies Q R S T U V W X Y and Z, unless we are prepared to put more effort and money into early intervention.”

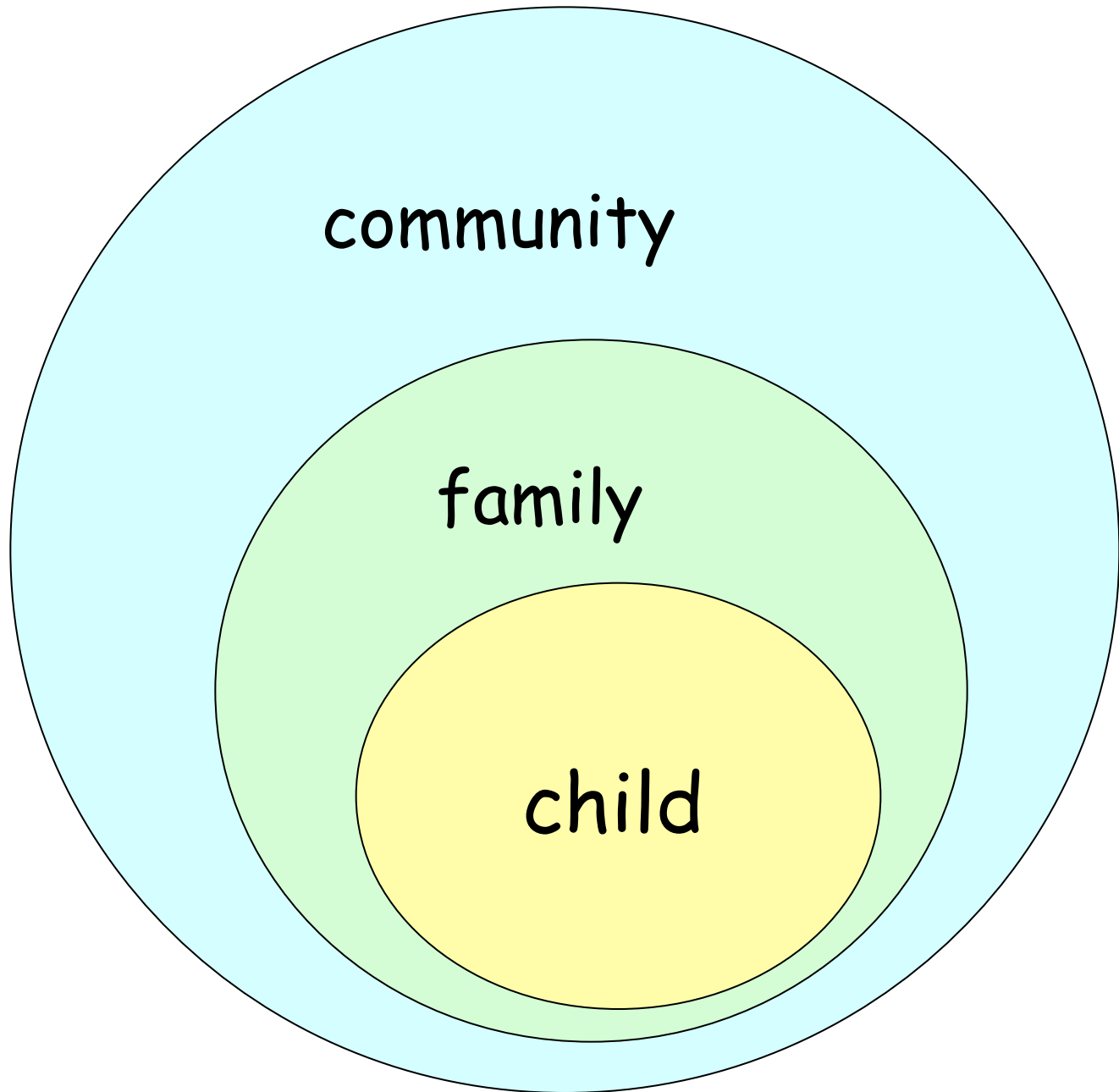
Figure 6.1: Effective intervention examples by age



CHILDREN IN NEED - LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

ALL CHILDREN





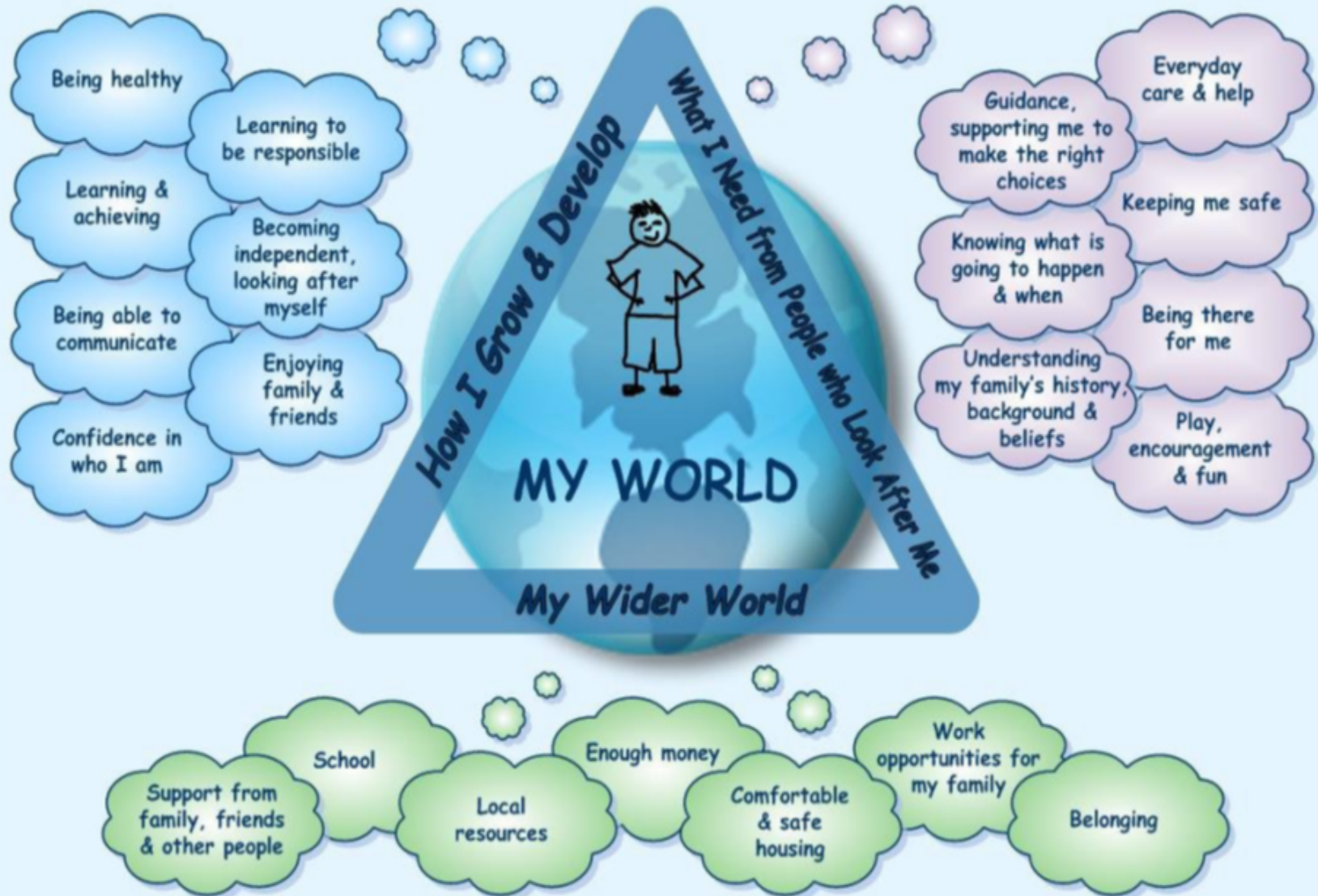
community

family

child



# My World Triangle



# What I need from the People who Look After Me

## Everyday Care & Help

This is about the ability to nurture which includes day-to-day physical and emotional care, food, clothing and housing. Enabling healthcare and educational opportunities. Meeting the child's changing needs over time, encouraging growth of responsibility and independence. Being able to respond appropriately to a child's likes and dislikes. Support in meeting parenting tasks and help with carers' own needs.

## Being There for Me

Love, emotional warmth, attentiveness and engagement. Who are the people who can be relied on to recognise and respond to the child's/young person's emotional needs? Who are the people with whom the child has a particular bond? Are there issues of attachment? Who is of particular significance? Who does the child trust? Is there sufficient emotional security and responsiveness in the child's current caring environment? What is the level of stability and quality of relationships between siblings, other members of the household? Do issues between parents impact on their ability to parent? Are there issues within a family history that impinge on the family's ability to care?

## Guidance, Supporting me to make the Right Choices

Values, guidance and boundaries. Making clear to the child/young person what is expected and why. Are household roles and rules of behaviour appropriate to the age and understanding of the child/young person? Are sanctions constructive and consistent? Are responses to behaviour appropriate, modelling behaviour that represents autonomous, responsible adult expectations. Is the child/young person treated with consideration and respect, encouraged to take social responsibility within a safe and protective environment? Are there any specific aspects which may need intervention?

## Understanding my Family's Background & Beliefs

Family and cultural history; issues of spirituality and faith. Do the child's/young person's significant carers foster an understanding of their own and the child's background – their family and extended family relationships and their origins. Is their racial, ethnic and cultural heritage given due prominence? Do those around the child/young person respect and value diversity? How well does the child understand the different relationships for example with step relationships, different partnerships etc.?

## Keeping Me Safe

Keeping the child safe within the home and exercising appropriate guidance and protection outside. Practical care through home safety such as fire-guards and stair gates, hygiene. Protecting from physical, social and emotional dangers such as bullying, anxieties about friendships. Is the care-giver able to protect the child consistently and effectively? Seeking help with and solutions to domestic problems such as mental health needs, violence, offending behaviour. Taking a responsible interest in child's friends and associates, use of internet, exposure to situations where sexual exploitation or substance misuse may present risks, staying out late or staying away from home. Are there identifiable risk factors? Is the young person being encouraged to become knowledgeable about risks and confident about keeping safe?

## Play, Encouragement, Fun

Stimulation and encouragement to learn and to enjoy life, responsiveness to the child or young person's unique needs and abilities. Who spends time with the child/young person, communicating, interacting, responding to the child's curiosity, providing an educationally rich environment? Is the child's/young person's progress encouraged by sensitive responses to interests and achievements, involvement in school activities? Is there someone to act as the child's/young person's mentor and champion?

## Knowing What is going to happen & When

Is the child's/young person's life stable and predictable? Are routines and expectations appropriate and helpful to age and stage of development? Are the child's/young person's needs given priority within an environment that expects mutual consideration. Who are the family members and others important to the child/young person? Is there stability and consistency within the household? Can the people who look after her or him be relied on to be open and honest about family and household relationships, about wider influences, needs, decisions and to involve the child/young person in matters which affect him or her. Transition issues must be fully explored for the child or young person during times of change.

# Many positive outcome indicators

- Higher levels of early intervention, with more children
- Fewer children being referred for compulsory measures
- Lower rates of looked after children than elsewhere
- Lower numbers of children being identified as at risk of significant harm, and fewer being re-registered within one year
- Fewer children smoking, using alcohol and drugs
- Continued low persistent offending rates

- High demands on universal early years health services
- Looked after children with poor health and educational outcomes
- We struggle to prepare our looked after children for work or further education
- Takes too long for looked after children into permanence
- Transition is scary for young people and their families
- Adult services do not have GIRFEC tools
- Organisational silos get in the way of seamless services

- Focus on adult/children service issues – CAPSM
- Transitions management
- Preventive spend
  - £2m on early years and deprivation
- Service Integration

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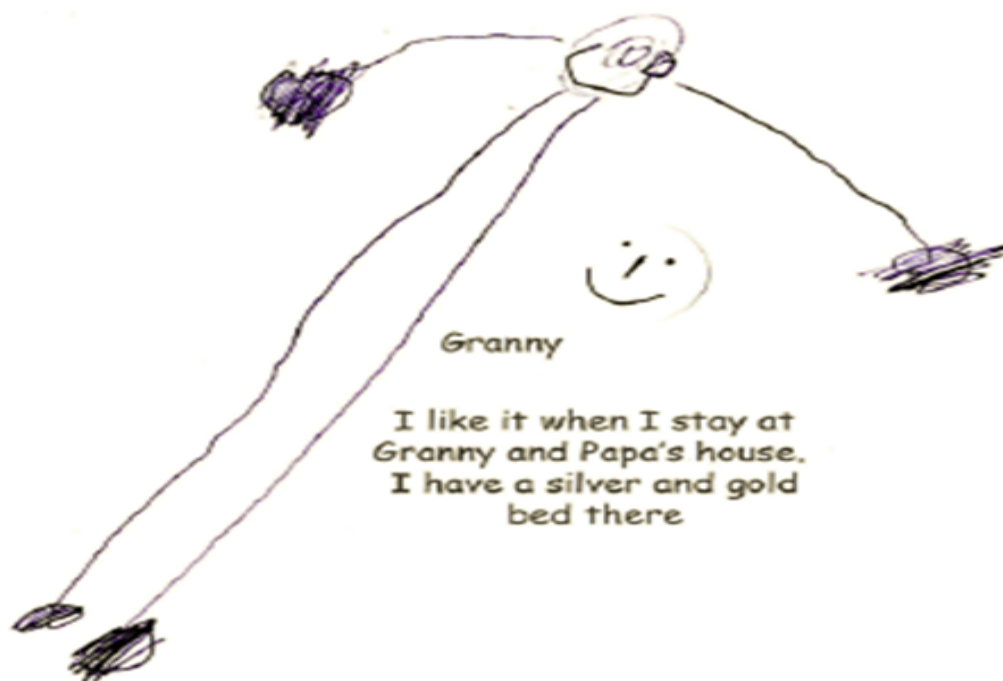
**Health & Social Care – Children's Services  
Highland Council**



## Highland Children's Forum

Representing Children and Young People in need in Highland  
Listening to children; speaking with policy makers

**“It is not about money or resources.  
It is about empathy and intuition”**



**Getting it Right for Every Child  
Consultation with  
Children and Families  
Report April 2010**

# Recommendations from families

- Listen well and have empathy
- Don't jump to conclusions
- Explain
- Don't use jargon
- Provide information
- Prepare families for meetings
- Advocacy for parents in child protection
- Organise meetings to suit family
- Consider the needs of siblings
- Develop understanding of child's needs
- Use strategies when they are agreed
- Provide some consistency



# Recipe for Young Parenthood

## Views from Young Parents 2011



Celia Baxter  
Highland Children's Forum  
2012

## Recipe for parenthood

Young parents at the consultation event discussed what they believed was needed to be a good parent.

### Key ingredients\*

Love in large quantities

Routine- a structure for the day - kept even if away from home

Security (from love and routine) and safety

### Other important ingredients in varying quantities\*

Good diet - freshly prepared

Attention - one to one with child from time to time

Tidiness and cleanliness in reasonable measure

Space for toys and messy corner for paint etc

Chances to explore safely

Different things to do

Play mates for child

Set good example both for children to copy and learn skills but also to pick up attitude

Support network for parents

Adult company for adults

Plus

Pinch of discipline as needed and treats to taste

### Method\*

Love - have fun and laughter.

Play - Take time to play. Add variety of play opportunities - play dough, cooking, sand, slide, swings, bikes, castles, horses, baby walker - check out play@home for other ideas. Repeat often - gain confidence as you practice

Sift adult attitudes - don't pass on your 'isms'

Discipline needs to be consistent between carers - if child misbehaving try distraction first - naughty step only occasionally as last option

Include dads at every stage

Involve wider family and friends

Go outside to play - rough and tumble and chasing

Check play parks for needles and other dangers

Mix with adult company - need to talk and laugh together - have friendships - make sure only one of you takes a drink so other one there for child

Support from agencies may or may not be helpful.

Avoid labels and any sort of prejudice