

# ***CHILDREN FIRST***



## ***National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (1999)***

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# *Presentation Objectives*

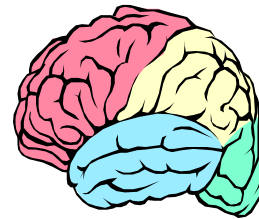


- **To provide a brief history of child abuse**
- **To overview the Children First document and associated legal framework**
- **To clarify reporting responsibilities at individual and agency level**
- **To explore the life of a case, including assessment of risk in child protection and welfare**
- **To reflect on the importance of multi-disciplinary, inter-agency work in child protection and welfare**



*When I hear child abuse... ..*

*I think... ..?*



*I feel... ..?*



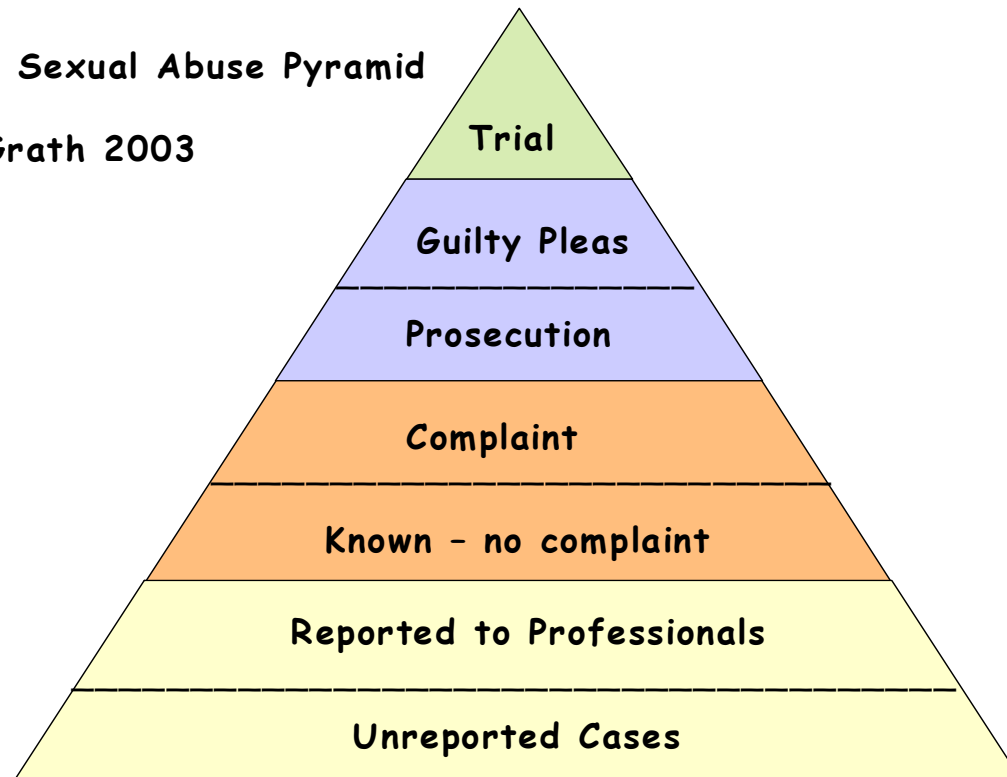


- While there are no accurate statistics on the numbers of children who have been victims of physical sexual or emotional abuse...
- 8,269 child abuse cases were reported in 2002
- 3,085 were confirmed
- 778 were deemed unfounded



## Child Sexual Abuse Pyramid

Mc Grath 2003





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# *A Brief History of Child Abuse and Neglect*

‘child abuse is not a new phenomenon, nor is public or state concern about it.....’



# *The Challenge Continues.....*

‘Preserving the independence of the family and the rights of parents has always had to be balanced against the welfare of children and their right to be protected by those who carry out child protection work’

# CHILDREN FIRST (1999)



**AIM**

**ETHOS**

**LEGAL BASIS**

**PRINCIPLES OF  
BEST PRACTICE**

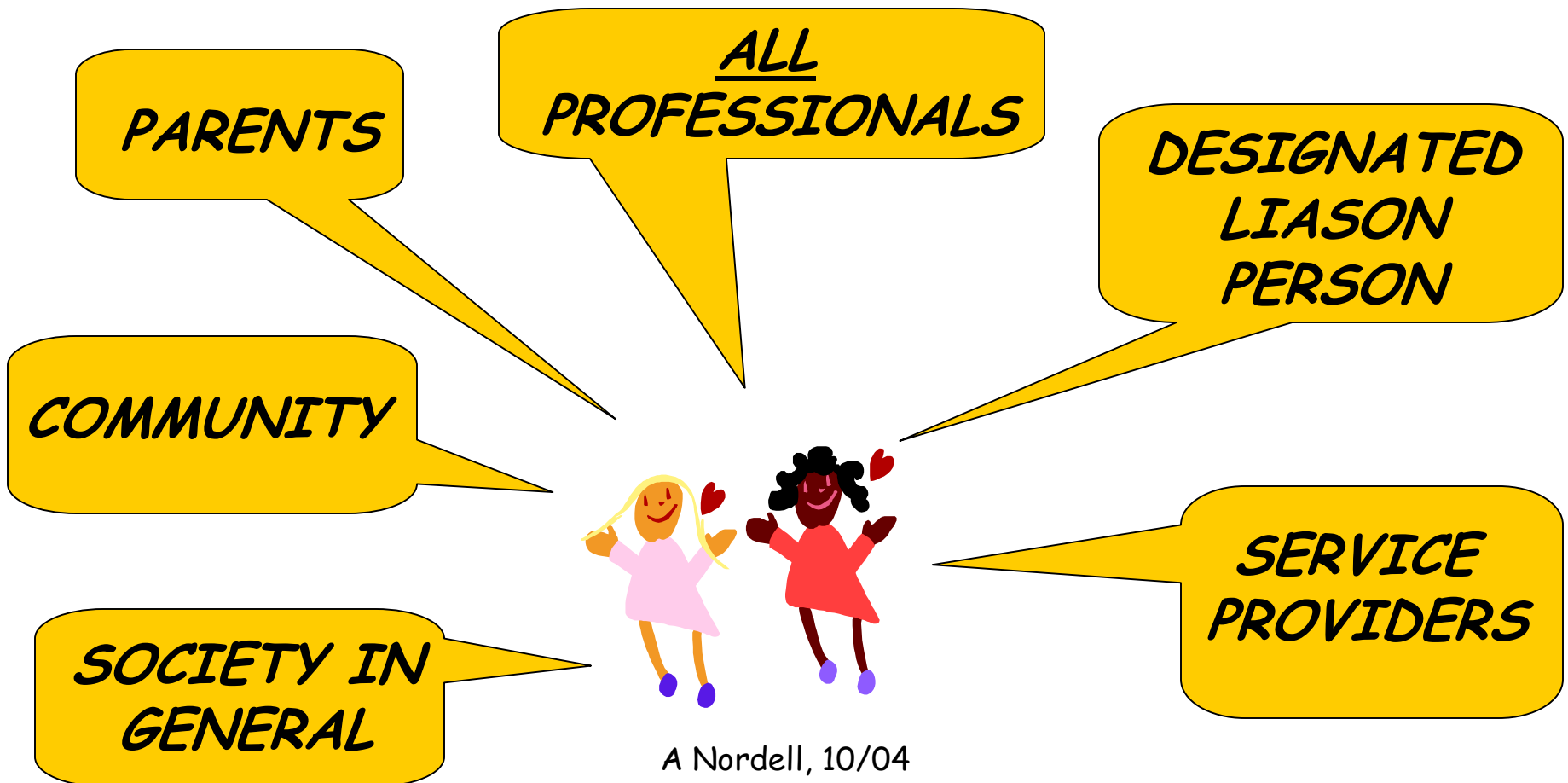


# *Reasonable Grounds for Concern*



- **Specific indication from the child that she/he was abused**
- **An account by a person who saw the child being abused**
- **Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent both with abuse and is unlikely to be caused another way**
- **An injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse**
- **Consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect**

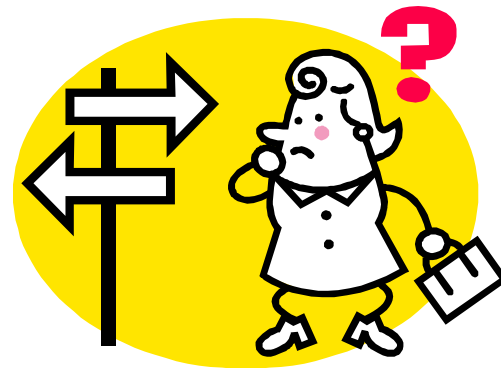
# Who is Responsible??



A Nordell, 10/04



# *WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I MAKE A REPORT??*



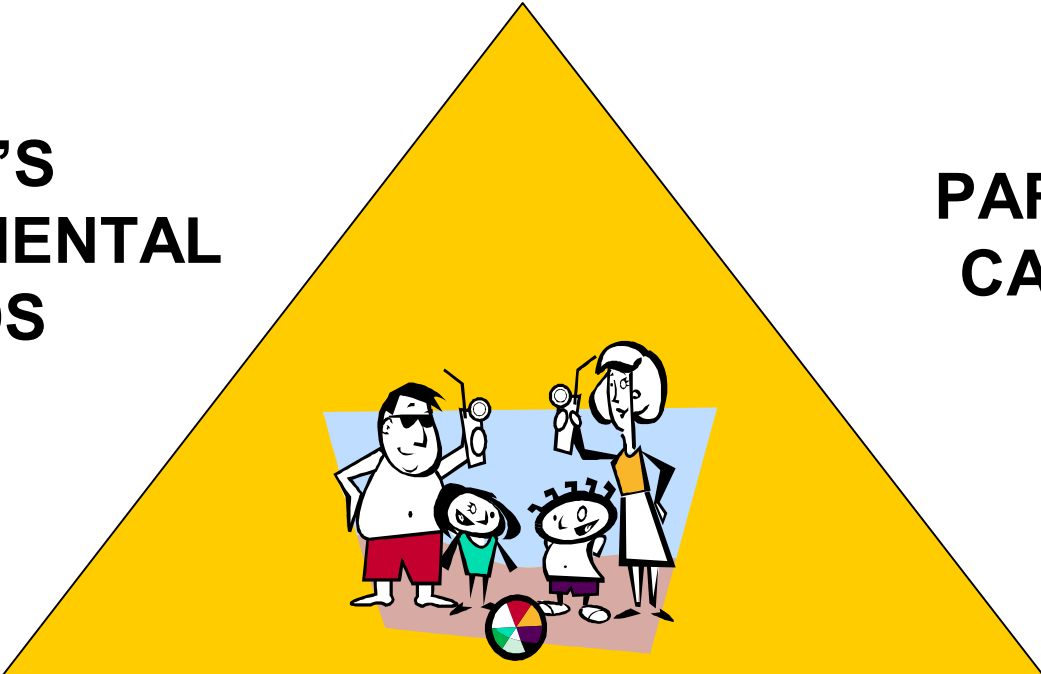
A Nordell, 10/04



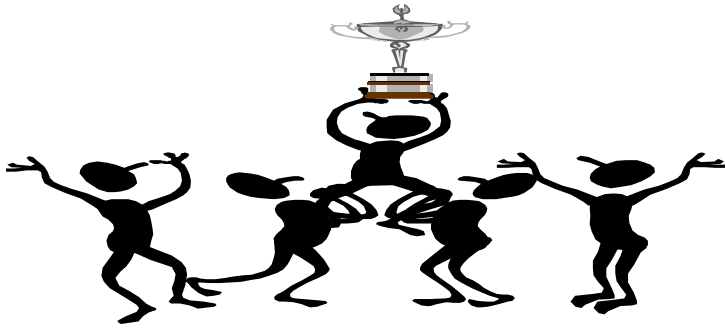
# *Risk Assessment*

**CHILD'S  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
NEEDS**

**PARENTING  
CAPACITY**



**FAMILY AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**



# WORKING TOGETHER

‘No one professional has all the skills, knowledge, or resources necessary to comprehensively meet all the requirements of an individual case. It is essential therefore that a co-ordinated response is made by all professionals involved with a child and his/her carers.’

A Nordell, 10/04

# ***WORKING TOGETHER***



“social, psychological and occupational dynamics can dominate practices to such an extent that they not only render the work less effective but, more seriously, frequently determine the process to the extent that the needs of the children involved are sequestered to second place”

Buckley 2000



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***CHILD PROTECTION IS***  
***EVERYONE'S BUSINESS***

***.....YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE***