

Early Childhood Interventions and Child Protection. Supportive Materials

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Summary

Background

Since “Frühe Hilfen” (early childhood interventions network) is a voluntary programme to support families, suspicion of a possible threat to the child's welfare is not very common in family support. Nevertheless, the subject is of great importance, since securing the child protection is a primary objective of early childhood interventions. It is very important for the family supporters to have comprehensive professional knowledge and expertise on this subject. The NZFH.at has therefore been asked to provide support in the form of a specialist document on child protection with specific references to possible risks to the child welfare during pregnancy and in infancy and early childhood.

Methods

The present paper has been prepared on the basis of an analysis and preparation of relevant literature and materials relevant to the topic. Draft versions were agreed with the project committees (in particular the advisory board, coordination board and steering group) and revised in accordance with feedback received.

Results/Findings

The present paper provides an overview of indications of a possible risk to the welfare of children and also recommendations on how to proceed in the event of a justified suspicion of child endangerment. The indications of a possible child endangerment have been classified according to the phases of pregnancy, infancy and early childhood, as there are some relevant differences here. The appendix contains checklists etc. which can be helpful in everyday practice.

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Discussion/Conclusion/Recommendations

Knowledge about indications of possible child endangerment is an important professional basis for family support. Child and youth welfare services are exclusively responsible for risk assessment. In the interests of child protection, the regional child and youth welfare institution should therefore always be part of the early childhood interventions network, so that, among other things, cooperation can be carried out quickly and efficiently in the event of a possible child endangerment.

Keywords

Early childhood interventions, child protection, child endangerment