**LEARNING BRIEF:**

**April audits**

This briefing looks at the findings from the April analysis audits and is based around the guidance from Research in Practice in terms of what good looks like in analysis.

We will know if analysis is strong in a piece of work because it will be clear about its **AIMS** and purpose. It will be written specifically about that family and their individual needs will be explicit.

**CONTEXT** can be achieved by using the ‘so-what’ approach (say a statement, back it up). For example, if parents care is labelled ‘good enough’ what does this mean? What does this look like? What has been observed to draw that conclusion? Context can also be given more about a family when workers consider adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and how these impact on the family.

Analysis

A good **STYLE** to use in analysis would be one that it is clear, and perhaps laid out in sections, demonstrating how the worker has got from one trail of thought to another. For example actions at the end of a report should directly link to strengths and worries within the main body. Analysis should not necessarily be saved for an individual box at the end, more so it should be a continual process that flows throughout.

Strong analysis would evidence the workers **EXPERTISE** by them exploring different hypotheses and possible explanations for behaviours. For example if a parent’s drug use has increased or decreased suddenly-why may this be? And what are the possible reasons that they starting using drugs in the first place? This curiosity and inquisitiveness would show the expertise of the worker. To strengthen the analysis further the worker would use **EVIDENCE** to support their hypotheses. This may be research or learning from serious case reviews, or it may be observations they have made of the family or information they have received from other professionals. A worker needs to provide evidence in order to confidently say ‘this is what I think and this is why I think it’.

The **VIEWS** of others can be used to strengthen analysis when trying to provide evidence for decisions. Views of others are also crucial to demonstrate the impact on a child and this can be in the form of observations others have made or the child saying how they feel.



So how are we doing? What did the audits say?

What’s working well?

The purpose and **aims** of work is consistently made clear by workers.

In a large number of audits the workers were clearly evidencing the **views** of others, including the child, family members and other professionals.

Most auditors said that the work they viewed was jargon free and written in a **style** that the families would be able to understand.

One auditor commented that in all cases the workers offered scaling and rationale for their scaling which was useful as it provided the **evidence** for their thinking.

What are we worried about?

Auditors comment on forms and SoS templates not helping with analysis because there are not always obvious boxes to put it in. It is useful to remember however that analysis should flow throughout a document-it doesn’t necessarily need a specific box. It is about the worker being confident in their statements and being able to consistently write ‘this is what I think and this is why I think it’.

Only a small amount of auditors found workers making reference to research to help to **evidence** their thinking.

Workers are not consistently making use of chronologies or considering family history, (including ACES), sufficiently in order to provide **context** to their analysis. Where chronologies were found, they seemed to be more based on actions taken as opposed to impact of significant events.

There was consistently a lack of hypothesising by workers which means a lack of evidence of their professional **expertise**. This also led to a lack of contingency planning.

Some auditors felt that there was too much narrative within documents and it was not all relevant to the key issues. This **style** was found to be confusing and poorly structured.

Some auditors found a lack of consideration around the impact of events on children and possible future impacts.

Not all auditors provided sufficient analysis within their audits. For example some said ‘SoS used’ but have not gone on to say how this helped (or didn’t) in terms of providing analysis. Others said statements such as ‘good analysis’ in parts but have not described what this looked like, what made it good? There is not enough evidence to suggest that all auditors know what good looks like in terms of analysis. Some listed what the worker had or hadn’t done-i.e. ‘child seen alone, pro-forma used, visit recorded, analysis used’ but there is then no explanation of how this contributed to the overall analysis.

Next steps…..

* Staff to be reminded of the ‘analysis and critical thinking training’ (click here: [L and D website](https://learning.southglos.gov.uk/courses/bookings/default.asp?ds=1&keyword=analysis))
* Audits to be shared with individual workers and learning shared within teams
* Further good practice workshop to be held around analysis
* Good practice guidance to be circulated to all staff (below):

[Analysis and Critical Thinking handbook](file:///K%3A%5CDeep%20Dive%20and%20themed%20Audits%5CLearning%20briefs%5CAttachments%20to%20learning%20briefs%5CAnalysis%20and%20critical%20thinking%20handbook.pdf)

[Analysis and Critical Thinking-RiP research](file:///K%3A%5CDeep%20Dive%20and%20themed%20Audits%5CLearning%20briefs%5CAttachments%20to%20learning%20briefs%5CAnalysis%20and%20Critical%20Thinking-RiP%20research.pdf)