

FUTURE EMOTIONAL HARM THE STATISTICS

Andy Bilson

Emeritus Professor of Social Work

University of Central Lancashire



WHAT I WILL TALK ABOUT

1. A brief discussion on my previous research which looked at involvement with children's social care from birth to 5th birthday of 2 groups of children whose 5th birthday was in the 2017 and the 2012 fiscal years.
2. An analysis of trends in the reasons given for children who were placed on child protection plans drawn from national statistics

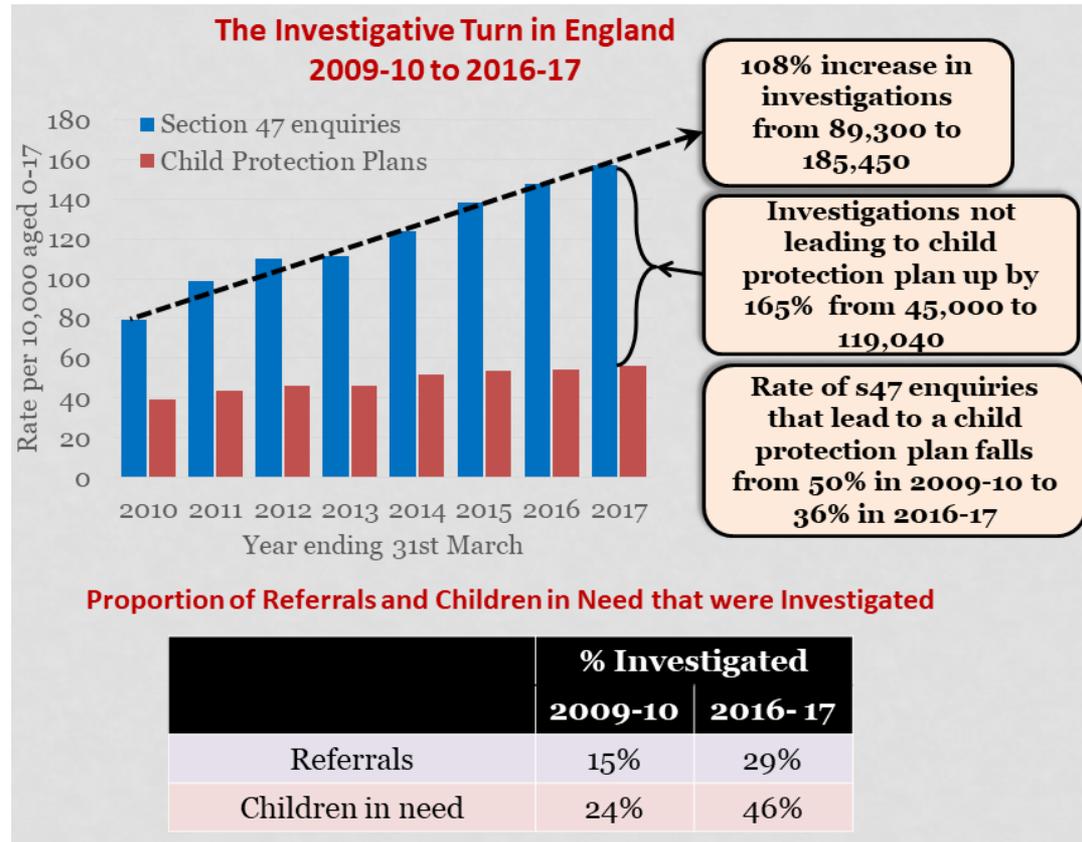


MY PREVIOUS RESEARCH FINDINGS

In English speaking countries internationally there has been an **investigative turn** with large increases in investigations caused by increases in findings of neglect and emotional harm.

In England **investigations have doubled since 2010** & in 2017 167,670 children, **1.4% - 1 in 70** of those aged 0-17 were investigated

See graph & <http://bilson.org.uk> for more details



MY PREVIOUS RESEARCH FINDINGS

My study of social work involvement from birth to 5th birthday of 2 groups with 5th birthday in 2012 and 2017 fiscal years. Key findings:

- Number of children s47 investigated before age 5 **rose by 50%**
1 in every 16 children investigated before 5th birthday in 2017
- Number children with 1st CPP for emotional harm **increased 64%** to 1.11% of all children - **1 in every 90 children in 2017**
- Local Authorities with largest increase in adoption also had:
 - largest increase (90%) in s47 investigations to 7.78%
 - Largest increase in child protection plans (52%) particularly for **neglect and emotional harm (114%)**

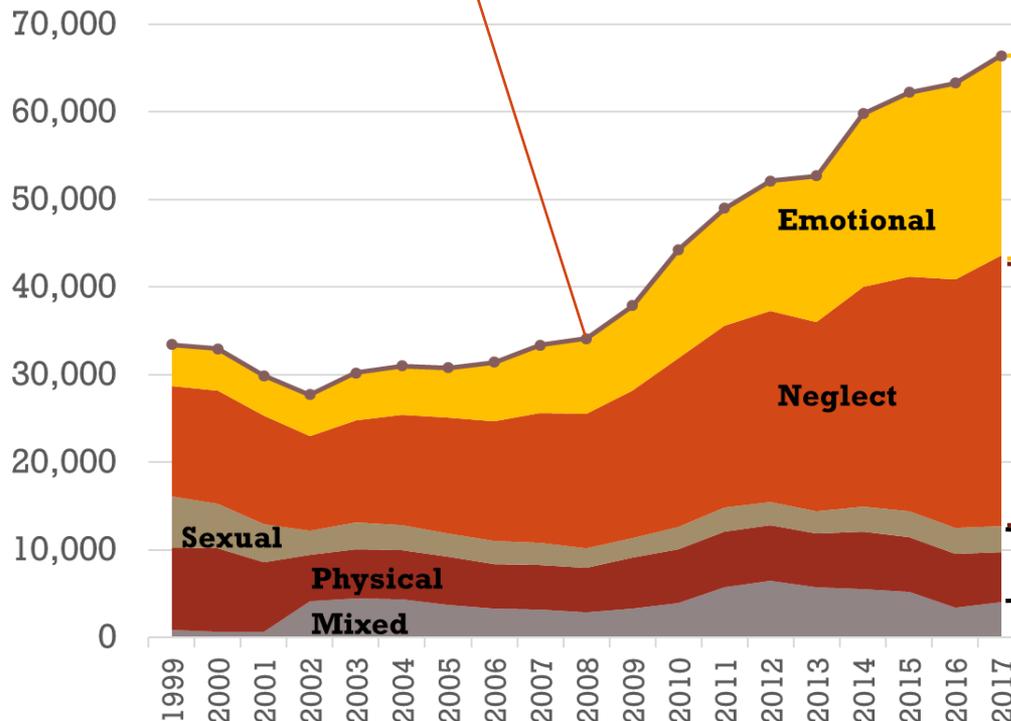


TRENDS USING NATIONAL STATISTICS

CATEGORY OF ABUSE IN NEW CHILD PROTECTION PLANS 1991 TO 2017

Sharp increases in
child protection plans
from 2008

Change 2008-2017
+32,410 +95%



Change 2008-2017
Emotional +14,130 +164%

Change 2008-2017
Neglect +14,100 +103%

Change 2008-2017
Sexual +600 +26%
Physical +750 +15%



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES 2011 TO 2017

Out of 149 Local Authorities with data:



Emotional harm
fell or increased
less than 10%



Emotional harm
increased by
10% to 99%



Emotional harm
increased by
more than 100%



CHANGES IN RATE / 10,000 AGED 0-17

New CPPs for Emotional Harm			
	2011	2017	Change
60 Local Authorities	7	25	+255%
47 Local Authorities	12	18	+47%
42 Local Authorities	17	14	-17%

Figures are rates /10,000 aged under 18 from 2011 to 2017



**60 LAs
3.5 times
increase**



**42 LAs
fall by
a sixth**



CHANGES IN RATE / 10,000 AGED 0-17

All New Child Protection Plans			
	2011	2017	Change
60 Local Authorities	39	64	+64%
47 Local Authorities	46	56	+24%
42 Local Authorities	46	46	+1%

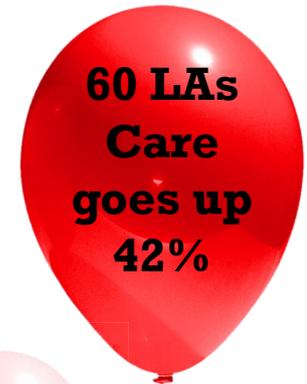
Figures are rates /10,000 aged under 18 from 2011 to 2017



CHANGES IN RATE / 10,000 AGED 0-17

Became looked after because of abuse		
	2011	2017
60 Local Authorities	13	18
47 Local Authorities	14	15
42 Local Authorities	12	14

Figures are rates /10,000 aged under 18 from 2011 to 2017



STEP CHANGE

In 20 local authorities with largest increases in findings of emotional harm there was a sudden increase in the numbers rather than a gradual increase.

In 15 there was a clear step change and in the other 5 the step change was less clear but this was still not a gradual increase.



This sudden increase means it's very unlikely that reason for increase is a change in amount of emotional harm



WHAT HAS CAUSED THESE DIFFERENCES

- Is it changes in how children are harmed by parent? 
 - **Very unlikely to be sudden epidemics in certain local authorities**
- Is it changes in the population of children? 
 - **No these figures take this into account**
- Is it deprivation ? 
 - **No statistically significant difference in levels of deprivation in 3 groups but 42 where emotional harm findings fell had slightly less children in the most deprived 1/5 of communities**
- Is it children's social care performance? 
 - **No statistical significant difference but 60 LAs with highest findings had slightly more rated by Ofsted as 'requires improvement'**
- Is it, as Nigel Parton suggests, a change from a family preservation to a child rescue response?
 - **Most likely explanation** 

