

Unocini, an ecological approach essay



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This paper will outline the ecological approach and the main components of the Unocini in relation to children in 'need'. It will also discuss how the two inter link and relate to one another.

' Ecological approaches to assessment are based on the premise that the development and behaviours of individuals can be fully understood only in the context of the environments in which they live'. (Brooks-Gunn et al 1993)need page number

An ecological model based on assessing the needs of children focuses on using a holistic approach. In this case the main aspects to be considered are as follows; the child themselves, their families, friends, neighbours, their community and wider society. This is based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological system of human development. Uri Bronfenbrenner 1979 (Jack, 2003, p. 55) was the first to conceive an ' ecology of human development' that would consist of a nested arrangement of systems (meso system, exo system, macros system) with each system embedded within the one following it.' (Jack 2001) page number.

Bronfenbrenner's (1973) systems reflect the three domains of the ' framework for assessment of children in need and their families'. The three domains are; children's developmental needs, the capacity of their parents to respond appropriately to their needs and environmental factors. These factors all interlink into each other and have adverse effects on one another.

Unocini stands for ' understanding the needs of children in Northern Ireland'ref. It is an assessment tool used to assess children's needs; and it is used for children that fall into the ' children in need' maybe need to define

children in need? I found it in Jims notes category. The UNOCINI framework is designed so that all professionals working with a child can provide information on that individual child, ensuring that the information recorded is not duplicated and the child does not have to go through the same story a number of times to different professionals. Unocini is a 'live' document and can be added to if different issues arise, or new problems occurs were a new assessment is required.

The Unocini assessment tool consists of twelve domains, they cover all aspects of a child's life and what may influence or impact on a child's life, for example, the first domain is 'health and development'. This domain covers development of a child's physical skills for example, walking, running etc. It also examines whether or not the child is developing and reaching milestones.

Psychological development is included also, such as a child's ability to speak, count etc. Outside of the domains there is a threshold of needs model within this model there are three areas, Parent's/ carers capacity to meet children's need's, family and environmental factors and Child's needs ref?. To conclude, the aspects of the ecological model discussed above relate and 'fit in' to the purpose of the Unocini. These are both based on a holistic approach and take into consideration every aspect of a child's life, which can in any way impact or influence a child. All these aspects need to be looked at in order to be able to understand the child's needs and circumstances without oppressing or discriminating against them in anyway, to be able to provide and offer the best support and practice towards the child and their needs.