

Protecting children.

Describe the main theoretical models of child abuse. (1D)

Medical model, sociological model, psychological model, feminist model and contextual model are all theories relating to abuse. Although there are many different types of child abuse and many different reasons why it may occur, most cases have been willed down to fit into one of the five main theories named above.

Medical mode is when the reason for abused is classed as a disease or an illness. Kempe and Kempe were the inspiration for this theory when they described it as battered child syndrome which was linked to Bowlby's theory on attachment.

Bowlby came to the conclusion that children who failed to form this bond with their mother in the first three years of the child's life would have problems in later life bonding with people and trusting people. He also described a child with a lack of bonding to be an affectionless psychopath, which he described to be someone who shows lack of guilt when done something wrong has difficulties showing emotion to things around them or someone with behaviour problems. Another affect of not having an attachment in this critical period as it was also known in Bowlby's eyes was development retardation which meant the child may grow up with learning difficulties or slower intellectual skills. So if the main caregiver failed to have a strong bond when they were young then they may find it difficult to form a bond with the child. It is a vicious cycle that goes round and round.

This type of abuse is shown in the case study in some ways. This is because the mother of the children had failed to form a bond with her mother, and there for she is struggling to form a bond with her children. Will these children grow up failing to form a bond or a strong relationship with their children because of this? Bowlby would have described Kerry, the mother as an affectionless psychopath.

Sociological model is all about the environment that the child is being brought up in and around. Areas of social deprivation are often linked with abuse which has been proven in some research that has been carried out. Children need to be safe and grow up in healthy environments for them to get a good start in life and grow up healthy. Some people react to how they were treated when they were growing up. In other words if a

child is abused or neglected then there is a higher chance that when they grow up they will forward this behaviour on to the children in their care. This is because this is what they are used to and they may think that it is normal was to treat children if they have seen no different. Another reason may be they feel that they have to suffer through it all and so should their children. It is not always this case however, some abused children grown up with the determination to treat the children with the love and kindness that they never received themselves.

The case study states that the children are living in a high rise block of flats with faulty wiring, damp, and a lack of hygiene. The children are constantly around alcohol, drugs and known criminals. This is definitely not an appropriate environment for the children to be around and this is why I feel it fits in to this area of abuse.

Psychological model is based around the family and its relationship status. It involves one particular member of the family being scapegoated by the rest of the family and getting the blame for all the problems that arise in the family.

This type of abuse can be linked with the case study because the older child *Katie* gets blamed for a lot of the things that go wrong in the flat especially linked with her brother. *Her* brother is only a baby and if he cries then *Katie* gets in to trouble. She is given the responsibility to take care of the baby even though she is only 3 years old herself.

The theory described as the feminist model is about the different sexes and the power and force in which the male figure has. This theory links mainly with sexual abuse.

I think this slightly linked in with the case study but not as much as some of the other types of abuse. The way I think this could be connected to the case study is when the father is verbally abusing the mother and child. Also *Katie* sustained an injury during an argument between her parents and it is being investigated. This links with the male showing power and force.

The contextual model - this model is broken up into four contexts.

The exceptional context this is when the needs of the child are normally met but because of something may prevent them for caring for the child, as they normally would, such as stress this could lead to child abuse or neglect.

The rigid context is when the parents of the child are very strict and controlling which may make the child appear to be fearful of their parents and making them angry or annoyed in anyway. The parents normally have high expectations of the child and are intolerant and focus on the negative, meaning they give little praise to the child and always push for more meaning that total accomplishment is never possible for the child.

The deviant context, when either one or both of the parents abuse their power in a negative way, this is usually due to a mental illness for example Munchausen by proxy syndrome.

Like mentioned above this could be linked with the father verbally abusing the children and the father physically hitting Katie.

The chaotic context is when the discipline within the family is inconsistent and there is a lack of boundaries, this means the child will not know what acceptable behaviour is and what is not. This is because one day they will do something and it will be accepted by the parent/carer but another day they will do the same thing and get punished for it. Care of the children is often erratic and sometimes older children are given adult responsibility.

This links with the case study as John the father has too high expectations of Katie as she is given too much responsibility with looking after the baby when she isn't really old enough to even look after herself.

All in all according to the case study Katie and Shaun are suffering from all 5 of the above mentioned models of abuse. This is not a good way for children to be brought up and it is a good job that the social services are discussing the welfare of the children and hopefully they will be moved into a more child friendly setting where they will receive all the care and comfort they need.