Teledialogue

Helping social workers establish relevance in diverse data

www.teledialog.au.dk
Context

- Municipality of Herning
  - Children and prevention (social services)
- Developing and implementing knowledge based interventions in practice
  - Better *match* between children and social intervention
- Establishing a *relevant* knowledge base
Matching child and intervention

Diagnosis and §50 investigation → Matching & Plan of action

Biannual follow-ups

Interventions

Health visitor
School
PPR
Family
Professionals
Child

Psychiatrics
Child and family
Visitation committee
Research and evaluations
Big Data?

● A case about *lots of* data
  ○ Social services departments are collecting lots of data to inform the *matching* of children and intervention

● A case about *navigating* diverse data
  ○ Social workers operate with highly diverse data
    ■ statistics <-> psychological assessments <-> incident reporting <-> statements from pedagogues...

● A case about establishing *relevance in practice*
  ○ Data provides *specific* and *partial* insights
1. General data
   a. Evidence based programs
   b. Benchmarking, mixed methods, case-studies, job-swap, literature
   c. Ongoing evaluations and monitoring (qualitative & quantitative)

2. Data on specific children
   a. Statements from place of placements
   b. Reports from professional adults
   c. Statements from family and relatives
   d. Notes, minutes, evaluations..

3. ‘Ethnographic’ data and children’s own interpretation
   a. Biannual physical visits (personrettede tilsyn)
   b. Dialogue via telephone, email, sms
The challenge # 1

- The available data provides **specific** and **partial** insights
  - They form *oligoptica* rather than *panoptica*
  - The ‘right’ matching and intervention is not a data-given
    - *Data informs rather than concludes*

- Each dataset is a ‘**perspective**’
  - There are **frictions**: parents <> pedagogues <> child <> parents <> statistics <> politics <> psychologists <> social theories
    - Facts / data do not exist independently from methods, theory, purpose...

*From oligoptica, sturdy but extremely narrow views of the (connected) whole are made possible—as long as connections hold..*

- Bruno Latour
The challenge # 2

- Who holds the *right* to conclude?
  - Social workers hold the formal ‘right’ to conclude
  - Children hold valuable data on their own situation
    - Children should inform conclusions

- Frequent changes in social workers
  - Loss of *tacit* / *ethnographic* knowledge
  - Undermines trust and disruptive for dialogue

- Social workers are under great workload
  - The ‘right’ to interpret is often delegated to others
What is Teledialogue?

- Platform for dialogue between social workers and placed children
  - Videoconferencing, sms, chat...
- Purpose
  - To include children’s perspective in casework
  - To improve the relation between social workers and children, to build trust
  - To strengthen the knowledge foundation of social work
Teledialogue in Herning

● Teledialogue is part of a strategic effort to increase knowledge based social practice
  ○ Evidence based programs for interventions
  ○ The Sweden programme and teledialogue for matching
    ■ Putting social workers ‘back in charge’

● The Sweden programme
  ○ Frequent follow-ups and more dialogue with children and their family
    ■ Reduction of number of children associated with each social workers
  ○ To establish a better knowledge foundation for social work