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Remember:

- Professional Curiosity is fundamental to good safeguarding practice
- Be interested in the people you are working with and fully explore circumstances rather than making assumptions.
- Check out the information you receive and weigh up details from a range of sources – triangulate information.
- Focus on the need, voice and 'lived' experience of the person.
- Be brave and be prepared to have difficult conversations.

What are we talking about?

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Professional Curiosity, or 'respectful uncertainty' (as described by Lord Laming (2003) in the Victoria Climbié inquiry) – is the capacity to explore and understand what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value. It is about us **critically evaluating** the information we receive and maintaining an open mind. It is about Looking, Listening, Asking and Checking things out to be able to explore alternative, multiple perspectives on any given situation

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Further Information and Guidance

- Check out this short film from Waltham Forest Safeguarding Partnership Board: [Bitesize Guide: Professional Curiosity on Vimeo](#)
- Read this article from Research in Practice for Adults: <https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/adults/news-views/2020/december/the-importance-of-professional-curiosity-in-safeguarding-adults/>

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Why does it matter?

We all need to be aware of our safeguarding responsibilities when working with adults, children and wider family units, in the course of our work. This requires us to be curious and inquisitive about peoples' circumstances and events so we can effectively identify vulnerabilities and potential or actual risks of harm

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Professional Curiosity

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What should we do?

We need to be brave and prepare to have those difficult or awkward conversations about the issues that may be affecting peoples' lives. We need to seek independent confirmation from others in order to weigh up peoples' accounts – especially where there appear to be discrepancies. Be aware of your own values and check your decision making practice is non-judgemental and anti-discriminatory

Ongoing Support

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Reflective practice and regular supervision are ways to support professional curiosity and support us in taking non-judgemental and holistic approaches. Be willing to research, ask questions and seek specialist advice wherever needed. Be your own 'devil's advocate' in considering alternative actions & explanations

How can we do it?

LOOK: does anything make you feel uneasy? Are there indications of abuse/neglect? Does what I see match with what I am being told? Am I seeing the bigger picture?
LISTEN: Do I need to clarify anything? Is someone finding it hard to tell me something?
ASK: What direct questions might I need to ask? Remember TED – Tell me, Explain & Describe.
CHECK: What else do I need to know? Who else do I need to talk to?

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