WELCOME TO THE LAUNCH OF
IT'S ALL ABOUT THE W's

- What
- Why
- Where
- Who
- Working With
What is witchcraft labelling

- Witchcraft labelling is a process by which children or other vulnerable people experience physical, emotional and sexual abuse as a result of being scapegoated as responsible for misfortunes and difficulties which occur in a family or within close networks. Witchcraft labelling of children results in neglectful and harmful parenting particularly when allegations of witchcraft have been corroborated by a highly regarded person or persons within the community.

- (Tedam & Adjoa (2017:109))
Why does it happen

Deeply held (cultural, religious) beliefs about the existence of witchcraft and who can be classified a ‘witch’

Inexplicable events (largely misfortune- ill health, financial difficulties, unemployment, disability, infertility, bereavement etc) In the UK- Immigration and settlement difficulties

Scapegoating
Who has been affected?
Who has been affected?

- Victoria Climbie.
- Child B x 2
- Kristy Bamu
- Khyra Ishaq
- Awura Adjoa (narrative contained in the W word)

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Where does it occur

- In many communities, countries and faith groups.
- Sri-Lanka, Papua New Guinea, Nigeria, Ghana, DRC, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, UK, USA (etc)
Who is at risk?

Children with a ‘difference’
- Children with disabilities (physical or learning disabilities) or challenging behaviours
- Children who have nightmares
- Children who sleepwalk
- Children who bed-wet
- Albinos or children with other skin/pigmentation related conditions (Research from Tanzania)

- Children living away from home (private fostering)
- Children living with a step parent or relatives
- Children whose parents have been labelled as witches
- Children with Precocious children and left handed children.
- Children who are living within a polygamous setting
Working With Witchcraft Labelling

1. Understand the relevant theoretical frameworks
   - Family systems theory
   - Attachment theory
   - Stigma & labelling theory
   - Maslows hierarchy of needs
WORKING WITH WITCHCRAFT LABELLING

2. Apply your professional standards in Social Work - PCF 9 domains (p87-90)

3. Understand the KSS for Child & Family Social work (p92)
WORKING WITH WITCHCRAFT LABELLING

4) Have a clear working definition for witchcraft labelling (p 109)

5) Draw on relevant assessment frameworks (p 111)
WORKING WITH WITCHCRAFT
LABELLING

6) Work in a culturally sensitive way incorporating anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice during your intervention
Welcome to the launch of

The Word
Witchcraft labelling and child safeguarding in social work practice
Prospera Tedam & Awura Adjoa

Dr P Tedam 17.10.17
“Confess you must”: Power, culture and witchcraft labelling
Power within families

Experts in family systems define power in terms of who is able to influence others to get their way in the family, and who is able to block others from getting their way.
Types of power

*Expert power* (derived from the specific knowledge held or acquired or in this case assumed to have)

Pastor
Reward power

Is the ability to influence others by providing physical and psychological benefits to those who comply with one's wishes (and sanctions if not)

Awura Adjoa- prevented from doing house chores, moved to live with her step-grandmother, had separate cooking utensils
Coercive power

Parental discipline, threats, aggression, conflict, and competition

Eg- Awura Adjoa being sent to live with her step-grandmother
Conclusion

The W word seeks to:

Move issues relating to this form of abuse from the *marginal* to the *mainstream*
References

Thank you for listening