



Ensuring a child-friendly environment - Children's Houses in Denmark

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SOCIALSTYRELSEN - SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT

Agenda

- 1. Introduction to the Coordinated Measures-initiative**
- 2. Childrens' Houses – A project under the National Board of Social Services**
- 3. Assuring a child friendly environment in children's houses during interviews**



Coordinated measures to protect children against abuse



- Introduction to the initiative

The initiative consists of both legislation and initiatives to support the implementation of the new legislation.

- Budget: 268 mio. dkk. (36 million euros)

4 main themes in the initiative

- Children must always be listened to and protected when suspicion of abuse occurs
- The authorities must assess all notifications concerning children at risk within 24 hours and the subsequent follow-up work is to be strengthened
- Detection of children who fail to thrive or are abused must be strengthened and early intervention is required
- A strengthened focus on prevention and interdisciplinary intervention is required

Childrens' Houses

- a project under the National Board of Social Services



Childrens' Houses - the content

Legislation:

- Obligates the municipalities to use the houses in cases of abuse and violence against children or when in doubt.

The aim of the Children's Houses:

- A coordinated and gentle interdisciplinary effort concerning
 - assessment,
 - investigation
 - examination
 - crisis intervention.



Children's houses

Child friendly environment

The Children's Houses Act:

The environment in the Children's Houses, including sub-units, must be child friendly and thus ensuring that the child/young person experiences the surroundings as safe as possible



Child friendly environment

The video interview procedure

- The video interview must be conducted as soon as possible to spare the child from being interviewed while the social case is ongoing
- The video interview is conducted to spare the child from telling their story multiple times and witness in court



Child friendly environment Before the interview

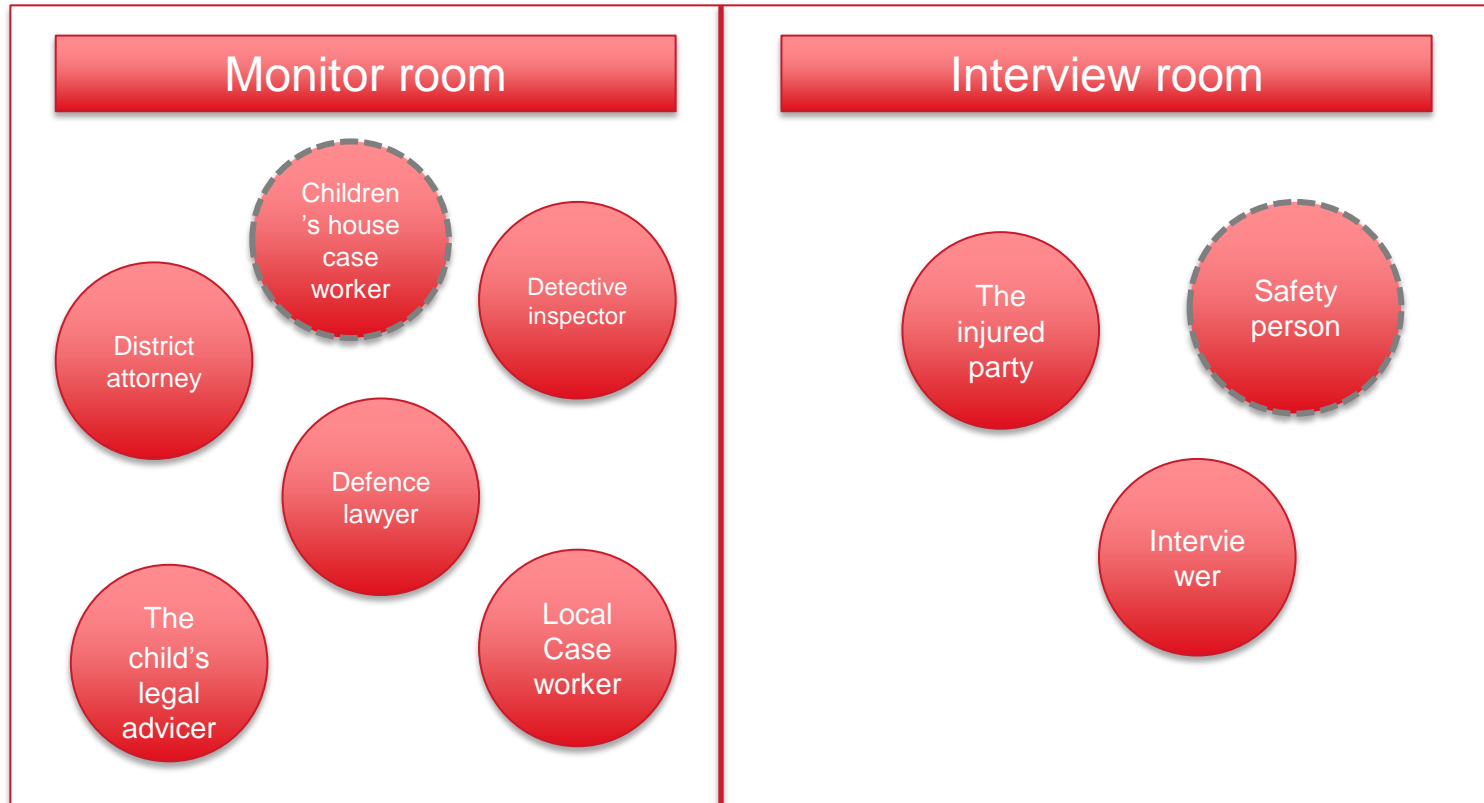


The child is visited by the investigator conducting the interview at home or at another location where the child feels safe – Creating a safe space

"I visited an 11 year old boy at home. After he was shown a picture of the interview room he said with relief "It looks good- I thought that the interview would be held in a dark room".

- Danish policeman

Child friendly environment During the interview



Child friendly environment After the interview

Conversation with the child
and carers about the child's
experience of the interview



The Danish Children's houses

Experiences and challenges

- The assembly of professionals in children's houses satisfy the purpose of a child centered approach and a child friendly environment

"The establishment of children's houses, including consultation meetings, is the best thing that has happened to children and young people in Denmark for many years."

- Danish policeman

