



STATENS BARNEHUS
Et tverrfaglig kompetansehus

Oslo

Statens Barnehus Oslo Children's House Oslo

Cooperation and coordination

Tallin 19.02.15

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<http://www.statensbarnehus.no>



Background

- Unsatisfactory work in child abuse cases.
- Growing concern for the legal protection of abused children.
- Few reports and adjudications in the judicial system.
- Additional strain and trauma to abused children?
Save the Children's 2004 report
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) and the Europe Convention (2007).



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Statens Barnehus in Norway

- Nationwide – 10 Children’s Houses opened since 2008.
- Governmentally financed.
- It’s a collaborative project involving three departments:
 - The Ministry of Justice and the Police,
 - The Ministry of Health and Care Services
 - The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.



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Result

Action Plan Against Domestic Violence 2008 – 2011 “Turning Point”

Ministry of Justice and the Police

Children’s House – Statens Barnehus

- A nationwide service in all regions.
- Offer child-friendly and neutral locations.
- Providing a comprehensive service for victims of abuse.





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Reception and common room

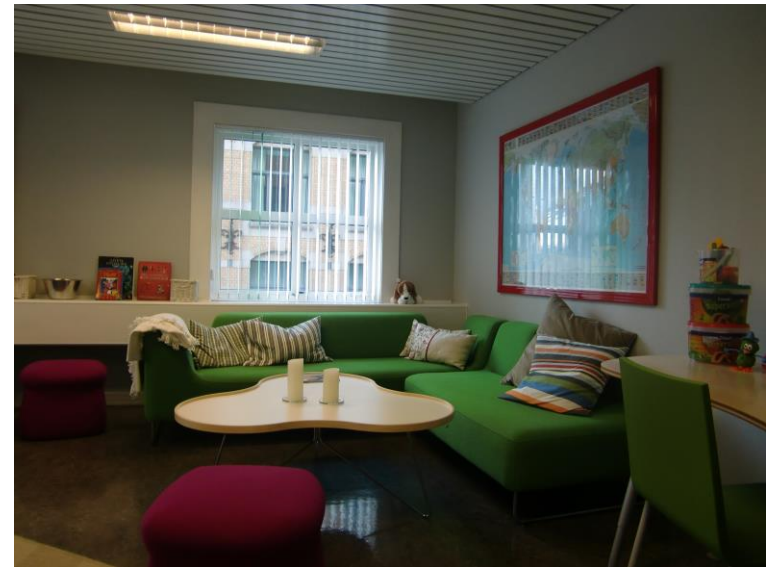




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Waiting rooms, Statens Barnehus Oslo





Mission

- Offer a full range of services through inter-agency and multidisciplinary collaboration.
- Facilitate and ensure optimal child protection by enhancing the quality of abuse investigations, prosecutions, and treatment services.
- Increasing professional expertise among those working with children exposed to violence and sexual abuse.



Six core activities

- Judge lead Forensic Interviews
- Treatment/Follow-up/Prevention
- Medical examinations
- Advice/Guidance
- Professional development
- Information/Education





- The staff is recruited from both child welfare, health and police and they are well educated and experienced.
- Statens barnehus in Norway focus equally on sexual abuse and psychical violence/ children exposed to psychological violence.
- Legal or Child protective perspective? Focus on establishing safe routines and cooperation which work independent of criminal standard of evidence.

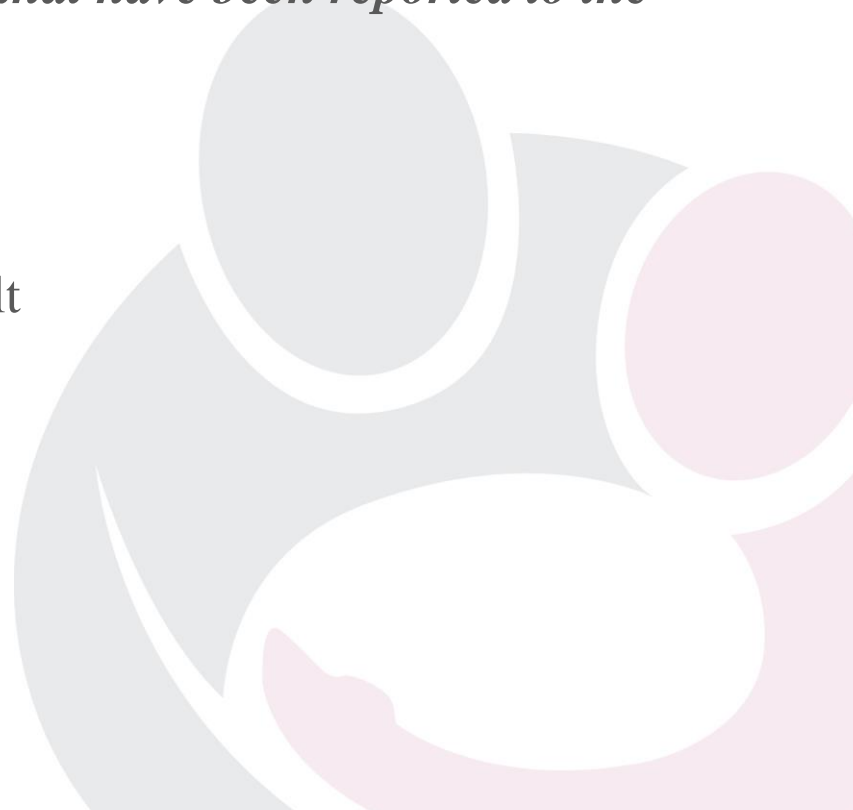


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Target group

- Children and adolescents up to 18 years old
- Adults with developmental disabilities
- *Individuals potentially exposed to: (cases that have been reported to the police, as part of investigation)*
 - Sexual abuse
 - Violence and assault
 - Witness to violence or sexual abuse/assault
 - Sexual mutilation
 - Forced marriages





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Statens Barnehus Oslo

- The Children's House in Oslo was opened 1st of September 2009.
- Since then, approximately 3500 children and adolescents have been to judge lead forensic interviews here. (870 in 2014.)
- More than 750 children have received medical examinations.
- The Children's House in Oslo is organised under the supervision of the Chief of Police in Oslo, anchored in the department of Justice.
- The Children's House Oslo covers 6 police districts and 13 District Courts.
- The population basis is 1,5 million people.
- Today the Children's House Oslo has 22. man-year with the following competency:
 - Executive director, psychologist specialists, clinical social workers / child welfare workers, family therapists, psychiatric nursing, technical / ICT, administration/ environmental tasks.
- Ullevål University Hospital: 60 % position (doctor and nurse two half days per week To be expanded during 2014.



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Children's House professionals

- **Give guidance and advice to the police** in advance, during and after the judge lead forensic interview.
- Meet with children (and their guardians) and ensure they feel safe when they come to the Children's House
- Participate in the meeting and discussion before and in breaks, as well as be present during forensic interviews
- **Assess treatment requirements**, either short term at the Children's House or long term in Child Guidance Clinics
- Takes care of the children and adolescents in breaks during the interview
- **Provides guidance and advice to the child's caretakers.**

Oslo figures

2011 - 535 forensic interviews

(whereby 26 of these were police interrogations)

Violence: 309

Sexual abuse: 220

2012 – 627 forensic interviews

(whereby 39 of these were police interrogations)

Violence: 373 (witness to violence 158)

Sexual abuse: 272

2013 – 685 forensic interviews

(whereby 45 of these were police interrogations)

Violence: 438

Sexual abuse: 234

Other cases: 34

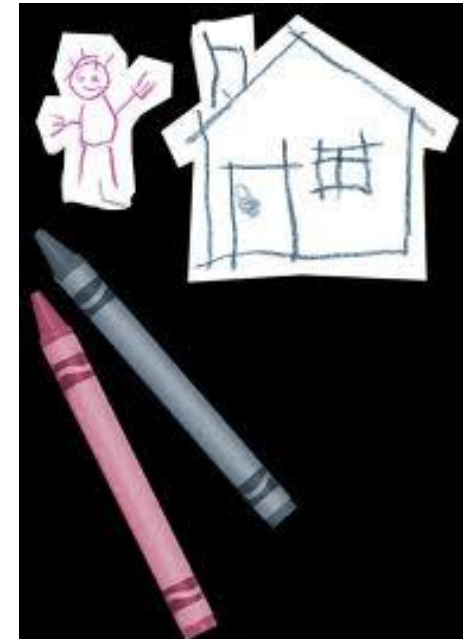
2014 – 870 forensic interviews

(whereby 52 of these were police interrogations)

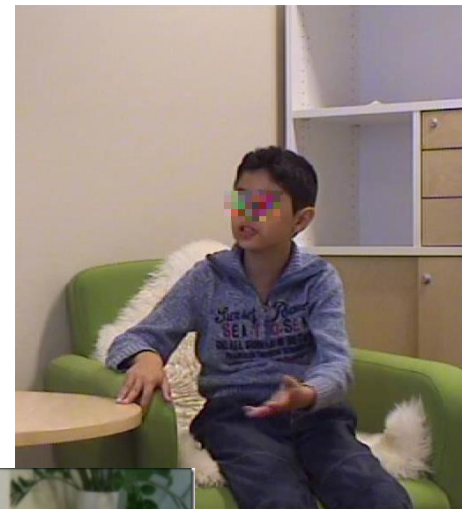
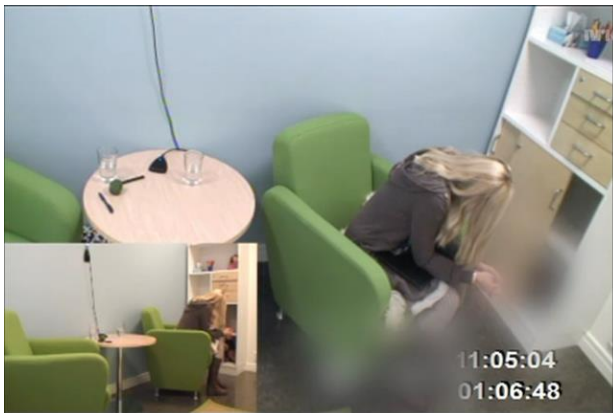
Violence: 513

Sexual abuse: 269

Other cases: 36



Forensic interviewing.....





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Feedback from forensic interviewers

- The partnership provides a better prepared and more focused interviewing. Can focus on establishing good contact, safe environment and receive an unaffected and reliable explanation by the child.
- The fact that the child is cared for after the interview, make it possible for interviewers to follow the child's explanation in detail. This in turn strengthens the child's credibility - prevents the need for repeated questioning.
- Facilitates for longer breaks to discuss the interview with other actors, safeguards contradiction (the child being cared for by the Children's House employees in the break)
- Great advantage of knowledge sharing/joint seminars. We make each other good.
- Safeguards the child's interests.

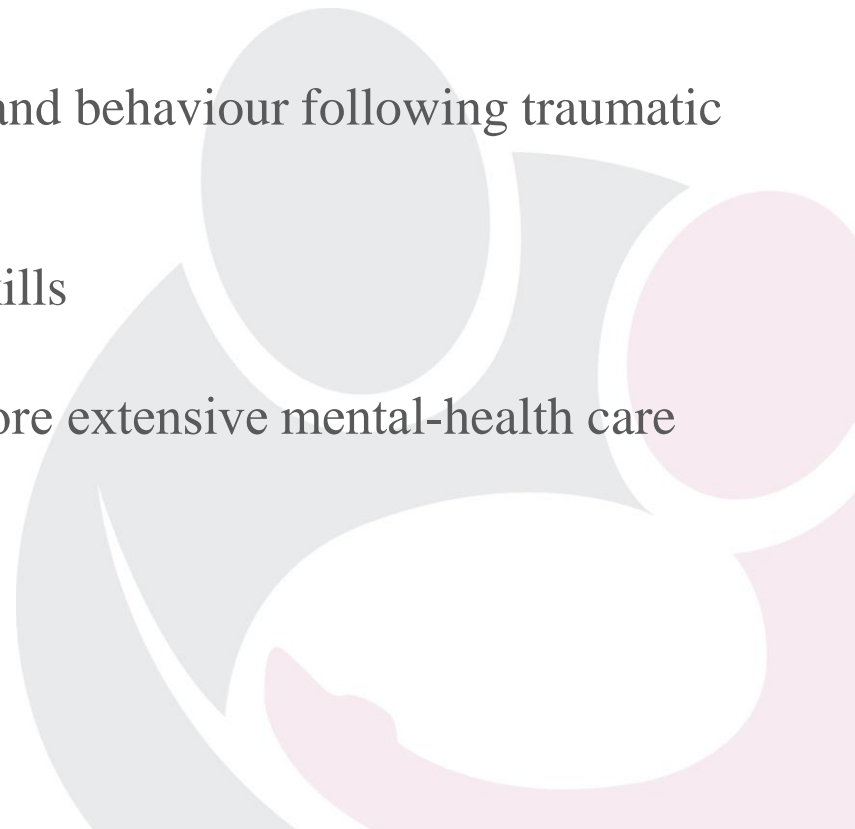


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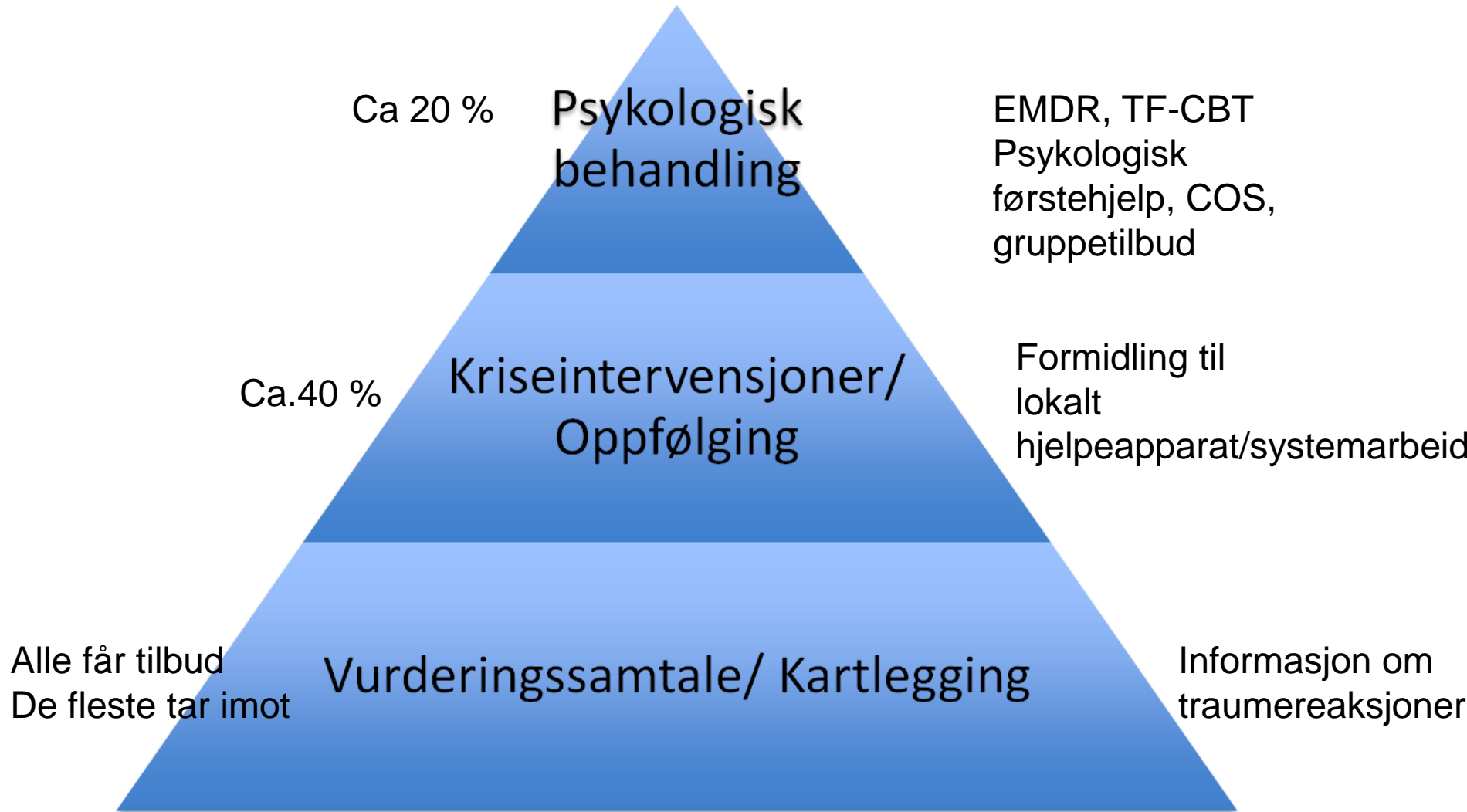
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Follow-up and treatment

- Roughly half the cases received some form of ongoing follow-up support or treatment after the initial session.
- Providing information on normal stress reactions and how to best handle these
- Working with difficult feelings, thoughts and behaviour following traumatic experiences
- Providing help and advice on parenting skills
- Evaluate individual children's need for more extensive mental-health care



Behandlingstilbud ved Barnehuset





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Profile of the children

- 8/10 children are subject to measures by the Child Welfare.
- Some are patients within mental health care.
- Marginalised and vulnerable groups.
- Traumatized
- Broken relations
- The reported incident is often just the top of the iceberg.
- Incidents of violence and abuse are underreported and under communicated.

Medical examination room

Medical examinations in Children's House Oslo:

- 77 in 2011
- 127 in 2012
- 137 in 2013





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The Medical examination

- Performed at the same location
- Offered both in cases of domestic violence and sex crimes.
- Children tend to tell more during the examination, information which later can be used in follow-up forensic interviews.
- Scarring and marks from violence are documented, (also from old injuries). Important as supportive evidence, strengthens the credibility of the child.
- Offers a general health examination in cases of suspected neglect
- Reveals similar scarring and injuries on siblings
- The child feels looked after

“My teeth are shaking and I don’t
want to talk about it”

Figure made by boy age 8 – witness to murder

