



One-minute guide for middle leaders: Introducing the one-minute guides for middle leaders

Introduction

As middle leaders, your contribution to developing a positive supervision culture and support for practice supervisors is crucial. You have the important, often tricky, task of balancing the values, policies and aspirations of your organisations with the needs, anxieties and abilities of frontline managers and the practitioners they supervise.

When we developed the PSDP website, we also included six briefings for senior managers, which link with each of the six sections of the site. These briefings highlight key messages for senior leaders and focus on how practice supervisors can be supported to work more effectively in relation to each topic area. The briefings (approximately four pages each, with handy bullet points and summary information), will be a useful tool for you as a middle leader, both in considering how you manage others but also in supporting your colleagues and in questioning and challenging senior managers in order to bring about change for the benefit of children and families.

This document introduces six one-minute guides which link with each of the briefings to help you explore how you can translate the ideas and principles into practice in your role as a middle leader. We suggest you read the relevant briefing for senior managers first before looking at the one-minute guide.

They don't need to be read together or in order, and you may find that you dip in and out, depending on the area of practice you are focussed on at a certain point in time.

The author of the one-minute guides has worked as a practitioner and practice supervisor across a variety of settings and has experience of the Principal Child and Family Social Worker role.

Combining the performance management elements of your role and the expectations of senior leaders with a need to offer a reflective space in which practice supervisors can thrive and develop, as well as considering your own development needs, requires you to look:



We hope that the one-minute guides will support you in this task.

Common themes in each briefing



Look out for these themes in the briefings and one-minute guides, and take some time to consider how you respond to need in these areas.

In addition, my own experience has taught me that the 'middle leader' position, incredibly busy and sitting at the junction of frontline practice and strategic direction, can be a lonely and isolated one with scarce opportunities to see peers, seek support, observe and learn from others or share ideas and frustrations. Finding (indeed *making*) the time to do so, can have almost immediate positive effects on resilience and, as a result, practice and performance, meaning that the time invested, difficult though it can be to find, provides a very quick reward.

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