**HANDOUT: Practice scenario 1**

**The people**:

You: You are a practitioner at a young carers’ project

Child: Maisie Burns, a 10-year-old who recently began attending the project

Parent/Carer: Mari Burns, a single mother who has multiple sclerosis and is confined to a wheelchair

**The situation**

Maisie presents as an unhappy, anxious child.

The referral to the young carers’ project came from school six weeks ago. School had referred Maisie as she is isolated and not allowed to take anyone home or visit friends. The head teacher had described Maisie’s mother as domineering and controlling, and she expects Maisie to be at her ‘beck and call’ when she is not at school.

Staff at the project have noticed that she is constantly worried about what her mother will think and keeps asking the time the mini-bus will be coming to take her home, saying if she is not back when her mother expects her she’ll be in trouble.

Last week she spilt a minimal amount of paint on her dress and was in tears, and in your view disproportionately distressed. She was trembling in fear saying that her mother will be angry, keep her in her room and stop her coming to the centre.

This past weekend Maisie was meant to attend a day camp. When you went to collect her on Saturday morning, she came to the door and said she was unable to come because she’d not finished the washing. She told you there was an additional load as her mother had wet the bed. Her mother had said she could not go unless the washing was completed.

You tried to speak to Ms Burns to see if it would be possible to negotiate for Maisie to attend, but Ms Burns was adamant the agreement was Maisie would complete the washing before she could go. She said she did not see why Maisie needed to attend the project at all.

You informed Ms Burns that you were worried about Maisie and thought a referral to social services could assist and ensure Ms Burns and Maisie’s needs were met. At this point Ms Burns became very aggressive and asked you to leave, indicating under no circumstances would she permit a referral to social services.

**Is this a child at risk?**

**What are your concerns? What evidence are they based upon?**

**Would you make a safeguarding report (referral)? Why/Why not?**

**If making a report, what information would you include?**

**HANDOUT: Practice scenario 2**

**The people**:

You: You work in social services, taking safeguarding reports

Child: Suzanne Smith, age six, only child

Parent/Carer: Nerys Smith, mother, recently single

**The situation**

This week, you have received three separate referrals about Suzanne Smith:

Referral 1 is from a doctor

Mum came to see me saying she had depression. Medication administered (Citalopram 20mg). Child with her – not very responsive to her and evident lack of warmth.

Referral 2 is from a neighbour (who works in a local day care centre)

I have concerns in relation to Suzanne. Her mother hardly goes out of the house anymore and Suzanne is never seen outside playing, not even in their garden. I sometimes see her sitting on the windowsill of the living room looking out and she looks very sad.

The father used to live with them but moved out about three months ago, I’m not sure where he lives now but I have not seen him visiting Suzanne. She does go to the local school but doesn’t seem to have any friends to walk to and from school with.

Referral 3 is from a school’s safeguarding lead

I am concerned about Suzanne who is aged six. She is often late and comes to school without having any breakfast. The school has had concerns for a couple of months and has invited Suzanne’s mother in on three occasions for a meeting, but she has not turned up each time. We have also sent a letter offering to make a referral to the preventions service, but this was not responded to.

Today, Suzanne told me that her mother is often in bed and she sometimes goes without dinner unless there is bread in the house and she then makes herself a sandwich. Suzanne also said that she has started to walk to school alone because she doesn’t want her friends to ask to come into her house because it’s dirty and cold.

We phoned Suzanne’s mother before making this report and she gave consent to us reporting this information to you. She offered no explanation other than she was having a difficult time since her partner left her and she was now on medication for depression.

**What do you think about each report? What are the pros/cons of each one?  
How well do they follow the guidelines for what should be included in a report?**

**Taken individually, what kind of response do you think each would get and why?  
Taken collectively, what kind of response do you think should happen and why?**