

## Exercise

1. In small groups, read the Henderson/Miller/Taylor family case study and individual family members' stories and discuss the following:

- **Do you have concerns about the children? If so, write these down.**
- **From your notes, 'quick think' all the words that might be considered as professional 'jargon' when sharing concerns about children with their parents/carers.**

In the large group compile a 'whole group' list. Try to clarify what the words/terms mean within the group.

Below are examples of how words, commonly used in child welfare discussions with parents were understood by a group of service users:

**Voluntary agencies:** people with no experience, volunteers

**Maintain:** mixed up with maintenance, money paid for children in divorce settlements

**Sensitive:** tender and sore

**Agencies:** second hand clothes shops

**Common:** cheap and nasty

**Eligibility:** a good marriage catch

**Allocation process:** being offered housing

**Gender:** most did not know this word

**Criteria:** most did not know this word

**Advocacy:** some thought this word meant that if they did not agree with the assessment they would have to go to court.

(Social Services Inspectorate 1991, p20)

2. As the whole group, undertake a 'quick think' about what questions the parents in the Henderson/Miller family are likely to ask.

In small groups consider how you might respond clearly and honestly to these questions avoiding the use of jargon.

further

The language of services

**E46**<sub>1</sub>