

*LASTA: Child protection screening model in Finland
(Ensuring Information Sharing and Multidisciplinary Cooperation)*

<u>Organisation(s):</u>	The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare	
<u>Country:</u>	Finland	
<u>Contact:</u>	policy@esn-eu.org (we will function as an intermediary between you and interested organisations who want to learn more about the practice)	
<u>Theme:</u> Choose at least one option	☐ Ageing & Care ☐ Asylum & Migration ☐ Young People ☒ Support for Children & Families ☐ Community Care ☒ Integrated Care & Support ☐ Co-Production ☐ Disability ☐ Housing & Homelessness ☐ Artificial Intelligence ☐ Digitalisation ☐ Quality Care	☐ Labour Market Inclusion ☐ Social Inclusion ☐ Technology ☐ Workforce and Leadership ☐ Social Benefits ☐ EU Funding ☐ Social Services' Resilience ☐ Mental Health ☐ Person-Centred Care ☒ Research & Use of Evidence ☐ Management & Planning ☐ Other, please specify:
<u>Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights:</u> <i>Which principles does your practice cover? Check the 20 principles here.</i>	☐ 1. Education, training, life-long learning ☐ 2. Gender equality ☐ 3. Equal opportunities ☐ 4. Active support to employment ☐ 5. Secure and adaptable employment ☐ 6. Fair Wages ☐ 7. Transparent employment conditions ☐ 8. Social dialogue ☐ 9. Work-life balance ☐ 10. Healthy, safe work environment	☒ 11. Childcare and child support ☒ 12. Social protection ☐ 13. Unemployment benefits ☐ 14. Minimum income ☐ 15. Old age income and pensions ☐ 16. Health care ☐ 17. Inclusion of people with disabilities ☐ 18. Long-term care ☐ 19. Housing and assistance to homeless ☐ 20. Access to essential services
<u>Current status of the practice:</u>	☐ Concept and Design Phase ☐ Testing or pilot phase ☐ Temporary practice that has terminated ☐ Temporary practice that is ongoing and has a termination date ☒ Established and ongoing practice ☐ Scaling Up and Transformation Phase ☐ Other (please specify):	
<u>Summary:</u> <i>Please summarise the practice in maximum 3 sentences. This will be the</i>	The LASTA screening model ensures effective information sharing and multidisciplinary collaboration between authorities in situations where a child is suspected to be a victim of physical abuse or sexual offences. By using the LASTA screening model, a child's situation can be clarified more quickly in an investigation process, which serves the best interests of the child. In addition, the	

<i>disclaimer of your project on our website. Example here.</i>	screening model strengthens risk evaluation both in child protection services and police and supports coordination of investigation and child protection processes in a child-friendly way.
<u>Context/ Social issues addressed</u> <i>Please explain the problem you attempt to solve with your practice.</i>	In research and practice, it is evident that multi-professional and inter-agency collaboration are key elements in work against child abuse. Simultaneously, we know how challenging it can be to get many busy professionals together to reflect the situation of an individual child in a situation where there is suspected child abuse. The LASTA screening model is a concrete risk evaluation tool which combines relevant background information from police, child protection and health care services in order to make an evaluation of the child's protection and comprehensive investigative needs. At the same time, it is a structure that enables professionals to reflect on the child's situation when it seems unclear and professionals have difficulties in deciding how to proceed. In addition to grassroot inter-agency collaboration, the continuous development work of the LASTA screening model requires collaboration across sectors both at the nation and local level of public administration e.g. between the National Police Board and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare.
<u>Objectives:</u> <i>Please provide a maximum of three objectives in bullet points.</i>	1. To ensure multi-disciplinary collaboration in situations involving child abuse suspicion. 2. To reduce the delays of investigation in cases of suspected child abuse. 3. Strengthening evaluation of risk of violence.
<u>Activities:</u> <i>Please describe the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 400 words).</i>	LASTA-screening model (also known as a process model for investigating crimes against children) has been developed in the Finnish Barnahus-project. The model includes a screening form which has been developed through a long-term multidisciplinary process with the support of researchers, experts and the professionals using the form in their daily work. In addition to the screening form, an essential part of the screening model is the <i>screening meeting</i> which can be arranged when a child's situation seems especially challenging and it's evaluated that a multi-professional discussion could open new ideas for how to proceed. Often, the cases that proceed to the screening meetings include the following elements: Repeated reports concerning the same family, complex problems, a serious custody or separation dispute related to a criminal suspicion and cases in which it must be carefully considered whether initiating a criminal investigation is in the best interest of the child or whether the child would be best helped by child protection support or intervention. In practice, the screening form is completed at the request of the police. From Barnahus-project, a police-expert has been making guidelines for screening practice, trained police took part in a wide range of supportive activities. In addition, Barnahus-project has had resources from the prosecutor office to provide training for prosecutors. A designated professional—referred to as the LASTA coordinator—is responsible for compiling background information to the screening form. This person reviews the child's health records and obtains relevant information from child welfare registries or requests the data from the wellbeing services county. The national coordination of the Barnahus project has established a network for LASTA coordinators, which meets regularly. The aim of the network meeting is to support the work of LASTA coordination and stay updated on successes and challenges.

	Barnahus project is coordinated nationally but the most significant work is done in the local level Barnahus-project work. The project workers have been communicating about the LASTA screening model for all relevant stakeholders. For example, in Northern Finland the child protection social workers experiences and viewpoints of the screening model have been constantly followed by a feedback survey.
Outcomes: <i>Please explain what the results were/are so far and how you evaluated this (i.e. statistics, a study, or feedback)</i>	One challenge concerning the LASTA screening model has been to get the police and Barnahus-units to use it in an united way throughout the whole Finland. In research conducted in 2023, Fadjukov and partners found that although different versions of the screening model are still in use, the LASTA model accelerates the pre-trial investigation process. Reference: Fadjukov et al. (2023): "The Lasta Screening Model as a Tool for Investigating Suspected Violence Against Children" (published in Valto)
<u>Funding Source</u>	EU Funds: ESF+ ☐ INTERREG ☐ ERDF ☐ ERASMUS ☐ RRF ☐ other ☐ ☒ National Government Funds ☐ Regional Government Funds ☐ Local Government Funds ☐ Private Sponsorship / Public-Private Partnership ☐ Financial contribution of People using Services ☐ Other, please define:
<u>Links to supporting documents:</u> <i>e.g. project website or report of the practice, articles</i>	https://barnahus.fi/en/
<u>Comments and tips</u> <i>i.e. for people willing to implement your Practice in their service</i>	You can contact us and we can plan how you could implement this in your work. You can test the process to collect data in social services.