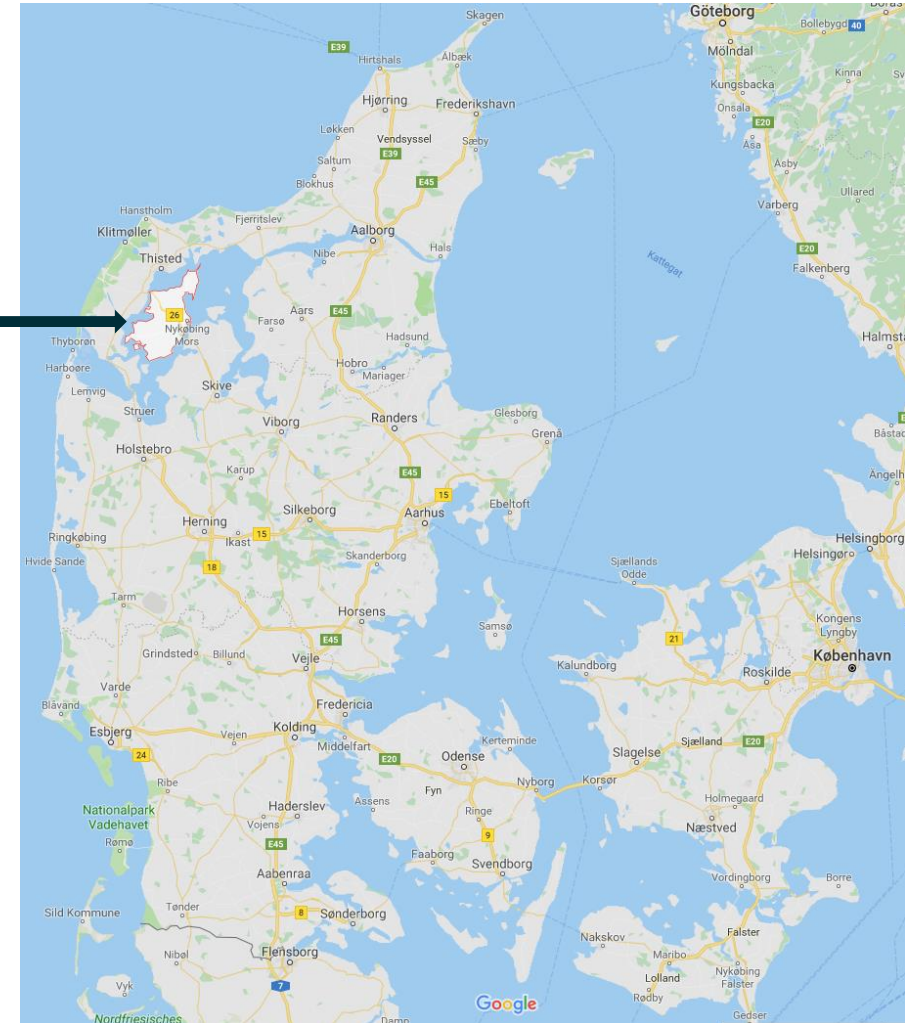


Tanja Miller and Trine Lolk Haslam,  
Children and Youth at Risk and Inequalities in Life Opportunities,  
UCN

# Families and children at risk

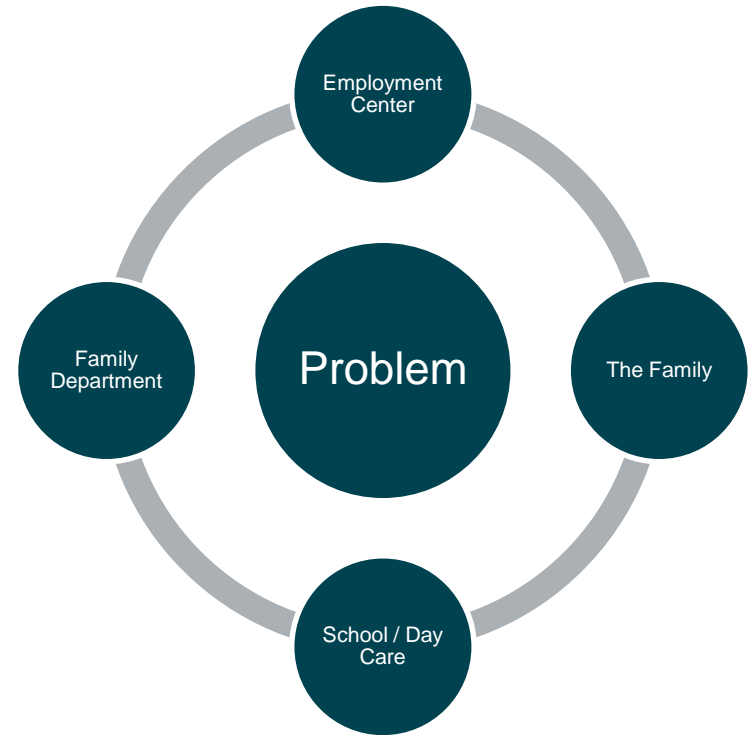
# Background

- *Well-being of the family – Well-being of the child (Familiens trivsel – Barnets trivsel)*
- Project in a rural area in Denmark, characterized by a high percentage of families at risk
- A three year project including approximately 50-60 families
- Our research follows the project all three years



# Aim of the Project

- That the families experience being supported and gain a greater sense of empowerment and self-determination.
- That all initiatives affecting the families are coordinated have coherent goals.
- Only initiatives which are relevant for the individual family are provided, with no superfluous activities.

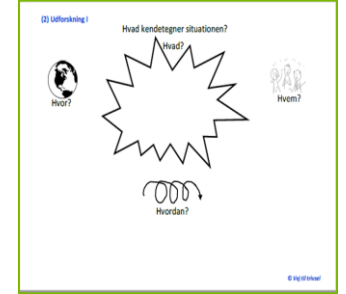
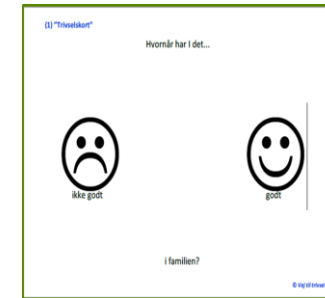


# Project

- Create a coordination group to support the families by coordinating initiatives which affect them.
- The families are included in the process of describing challenges and consequently developing a plan of action.
- Time-limited initiative.
- The families must have a case in two different municipal administrations.

# Collected data in the project

- 23 parents participating in a “Well-being Workshop” (in Danish ‘Trivselsværksted’)
  - A workshop using creative methods designed to make people talk about topics such as: what troubles them, when they feel good and what they need in order to reach their dreams and goals for their family.
- 8 semi-structured interviews with parents
- 4 photo-elicited interviews with children
- 2 semi-structured interviews with professionals



# Preliminary findings

## Positive findings so far

- The coordinators are experienced as having a positive influence regarding the well-being of the family: Safety net, reduce stress, build trust towards the municipality, more efficient case handling, support by listening/empathy/having time
- Some of the families experience more self empowerment and self-determination
- All the families experience being listened to and having influence over their own case
  
- BUT.....

# CHALLENGE 1

How to ensure honesty in interviews with vulnerable adults?

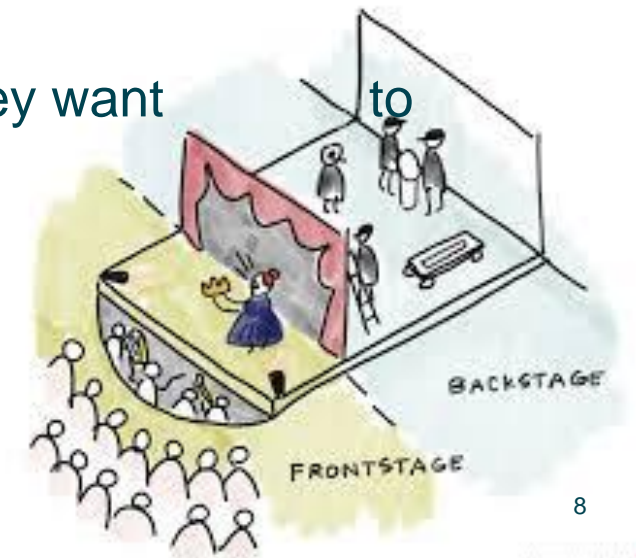
- We know social clients develop an ability to adapt to any situation and have lot a practice saying what they think the social worker wants to hear (Mik-Meyer, 2014)
- We know research is often considered similar to a social intervention by citizen's and therefore the information is heavily biased



# Goffman – frontstage

Frontstage: includes expected and socially accepted behavior and protects the participant from losing face in a conversation thus supporting continuous dialog

- Both sides of the conversation must work actively with the frontage dialogues by reading each others body language, mimicry, tone of voice and the over all expression
- The client (and the researcher) help each other complete the interview by disregarding emotional content in order to be able to continue the interview
- The client is engaged presenting their image and works on the image they want present to the world

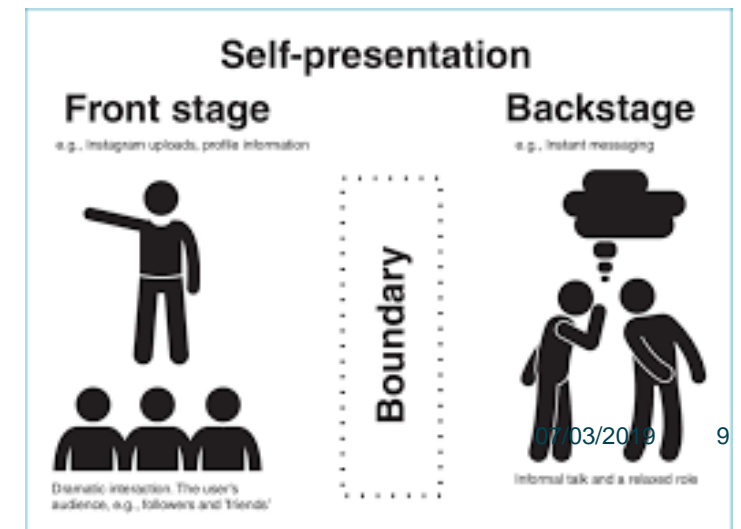




# Goffman – backstage

Backstage is private and personal – family and friends

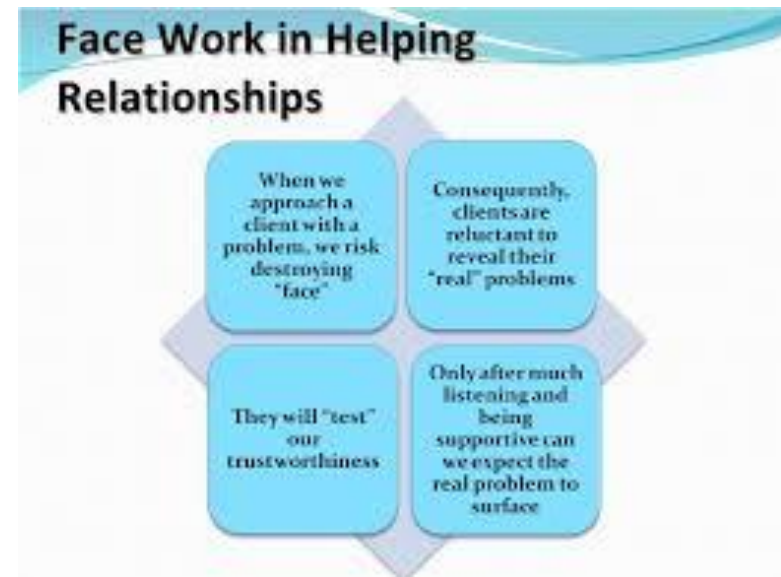
- Informal and not politically correct – shouting, dirty, language, gathering strength to go out in the world – practice stages roles, skills and so on
- The boundary can be muddy – For example: when the respondent speaks badly of a social worker, reflection on how to perform in the interview and trying to make agreements under the table would give too much information concerning private matters



# Challenge 2

How to ensure ethical behavior and what it means in practice?

- Honesty provides trust – and perhaps relationship
- Honesty provides a new conception of research that is completely different from intervention
- The balance between frontstage and backstage – how to do it in a ethical manner?



# Questions to discuss

- How to ensure honesty in interviews with vulnerable adults – and children?
- How to ensure ethical behavior and what it means in practice?
- The balance between frontstage and backstage – how to do it in an ethical manner?
- What is the validity of our findings?



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