

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, financial, health, legal and human rights, personnel, property and transport considerations

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE - IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 July 2010

IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE PARENTING STRATEGY

1. Introduction

The Education and Young People - Improvement and Scrutiny Committee was asked by the Strategic Director of Children and Younger Adults to undertake a review of the County Council's Parenting Strategy and the services provided to support parents and carers of children.

The fundamental purpose of the review was to determine the effectiveness of current programmes aimed at improving parenting skills. Improving parenting capabilities in order to reduce the number of children in need is a key priority of the Children and Younger Adults Department.

The scoping report for the review identified that parents and carers play a vital role in ensuring the well-being and upbringing of children and young people. As well as being a Government priority, parenting is a key priority for the County Council and its partners comprising the Children's Trust.

The Children Act 2004 first enshrined the five principles of Every Child Matters: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a contribution and achieving economic well-being. This and other legislation and guidance set out how local authorities and their partner organisations should commission services to deliver effective parent and family support. This includes the desirability of producing a parenting strategy to coordinate and join up support services and to prevent families falling through gaps in provision.

2. Terms of Reference of the Review

It was intended that the review would examine the effectiveness of the existing strategy and parenting support services provided by the County Council and its partners. It would look at how effectively partners work together in practice to provide parenting services and it would hope to identify

areas where services need to be improved or where new provision needs to be made.

A working group of Members of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee was established to undertake the review and develop outcomes and recommendations.

The working group Members are Cllrs George Wharmby (Chair), Pat Murray (Vice Chair) Gill Farrington, Juliette Blake, Jim Coyle, Alan Charles, Anne Western and Mr Barry Thacker (Governor representative).

Acknowledgements

The Review Working Group would like to thank the following for their assistance in producing this report;

Dr. Charles Beck - Speciality Registrar in Public Health – Derbys. County PCT
Vicki Price – Consultant – Public Health – Derbyshire County PCT

Bruce Buckley – Strategic Director – Children and Younger Adults (CAYA)
David Connor – Deputy Strategic Director – (CAYA)
Liz Best – Head of Services for Families – (CAYA)
Richard Corker – Derbyshire Children's Trust
Alison James – Parenting Programmes Co-ordinator
Sally Savage – Assistant Director – Commissioning – (DCC)
Rob Fletcher – FIP Manager (CAYA)

3. The National Context

Increasingly, the Government is placing more and more importance on working in partnership with parents, and on effective and responsible parenting in achieving the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

As well as the Every Child Matters initiative, in 2007 the Government produced a document called Every Parent Matters which set out for the first time in one place what the Government was doing to promote the development of services for parents, and parents' involvement in shaping services for themselves and their children.

The Childcare Act 2006 placed a duty on Local Authorities to provide a full range of information for all parents and prospective parents right up to their child's 20th birthday and the Respect Action Plan emphasised the importance of parenting when dealing with anti-social behaviour and in working with parents on prevention through early, intensive support for parents of children at risk of, or already engaged in, anti-social behaviour. It required Local Authorities to take a lead role in ensuring effective parenting support and that interventions are available at every level of need.

Being a Parent Today

The structure of families and the social context in which they live is changing rapidly. This means that parent support services need to be flexible in the way they are provided.

- More mothers are going out to work whilst more fathers are spending more time looking after their children
- Parents are having their children later in life and are having fewer children. Nationally, the conception rate for under 18s is declining
- More parents are caring for their elderly relatives as well as caring for their children and an increasing number of young adults live with their parents
- Parents of teenagers are increasingly saying they want more help
- There is more variety in family structure and relationships
- Increased ethnic diversity is reflected in more diverse patterns of family formation
- Children and young people have more opportunities than previous generations, and most take full advantage of them.
- However, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds are still more likely to experience a range of obstacles to success and are in danger of achieving less well than those who are better off.

4. Background to the Situation in Derbyshire*

A strategy for promoting effective parenting was accepted by the Derbyshire Children's Trust in November 2007 when it was agreed that a model of developing a coordinated service of parenting programmes across Derbyshire was approved.

At that point a variety of programmes was being delivered across the county.

The main programmes were;

- For universal take up, Living with Children (LWC) and Living with Teenagers (LWT) by Derbyshire County PCT occurred mainly in the NE of the county with some delivery in the south.
- For targeted and specialist take up Children and Younger Adults had been able to invest in Webster Stratton Incredible Years (WS) as part of a pathfinder Parenting Early Intervention Project (PEIP) funded by the Dept for Children, Schools and Families. These two programmes for parents of children aged 2-8 and for children aged 8-13 were coordinated by the PEIP project manager.

Other programmes with a more specific purpose were not included in the development of the strategy for logistical reasons, although these continue at some levels locally in Districts. They cover more focussed needs such as helping parents support their children in early learning, work with individuals subject to domestic violence, work with parents of children who are very obese etc.

The progress made on these programmes was detailed in a report to the Children's Trust Board in March 2010.

The report stated that good progress has been made in the delivery of these main programmes. The PCT Coordinator and the CAYA Parenting Coordinator work closely together to ensure that programme delivery of LWC, LWT and WS at district level is complementary.

Together they were developing other initiatives such as facilitator support and group-work training so that quality and standards are at a similar level. Promotional work and information methods to maximise the accessibility of the programmes were being developed via 'taster sessions' for staff, and the development of a promotional video for staff and families. The programme details were being disseminated widely as well as via Call Derbyshire.

Common evaluation tools and processes had been used for both programmes which has reinforced the success areas – raising of self esteem in parents and having an impact on children's behaviour as reported by parents.

* information taken from report to Children's Trust Board meeting, Thursday 18 March 2010 "The Commissioning of Parenting Programmes"

The model of mixed delivery (two, or occasionally three, facilitators from different agencies) at district level had continued with success. There are over 90 staff within Derbyshire who can deliver WS programmes and over 150 who are trained to deliver LWC and LWT.

At least 30 WS programmes of 12+ weeks duration have been delivered annually at district level for the last two years and 45 LWC and LWT programmes (6-8 weeks duration) are available to parents in NE districts in Derbyshire and LWC also in the south of the county.

The ability to maintain delivery has been achieved by developing an expectation that staff receive training in return for a commitment by them and their managers to facilitate a programme at least once annually.

Sustained parental attendance has always been good and in WS programmes is now averaging 85%. Over 200 parents have participated in WS programmes since Sept 2007 and over 600 have taken part in LWC and LWT in the past two years.

Self application and referral pathways are established, with increased emphasis in WS programmes on targeting parents with higher levels of need. This has occurred by a combination of more workers being aware of the programme's availability and potential, as well as concentrating delivery in deprived areas.

While LWC and LWT are accepted as universal programmes they continue to receive referrals for parents with higher needs.

The future

It was anticipated that it would be possible to maintain Webster Stratton delivery at 30-40 courses per year and that the Living With Children programme can continue to be delivered across the county instead of just in the North East. Discussions were taking place to explore how to continue this and to also extend the Living With Teenagers more widely.

Some gaps in provision have been identified by a Parenting Programme Commissioning Group. Such gaps include the provision of evidence based programmes for parents of older teenagers within families with complex needs, especially aimed at helping to avoid substance misuse and offending behaviour by these children or young people.

Such families are likely to be known and be of concern to the Youth Offending Teams, Safeguarding Services and Safer Neighbourhood and Community Safety related services. While the current programmes are delivered to some parents who will be known to these services, they do not provide for parents of older teenagers or those who are resistant to acknowledging their part in their young person's situation. A model which offers work with young people in parallel to work with the parents and concludes sessions with joint work would help such parents.

Such a programme (Strengthening Families 10-14) was trialled in January 2010 and there is sufficient funding held within the Drug and Alcohol Team to invest in future training during 2010/11. This programme's evaluation by the National Academy for Parenting Practitioners (NAPP) shows strong outcomes for preventing offending and substance misuse among young people.

Another programme being considered (STOP) shows similar robust evaluation in terms of outcomes with parents and teenagers and is being explored by the coordinators as a possibility for parents of older teenagers.

It would be helpful to extend commissioning to at least one of these additional programmes and develop sufficient numbers of staff to deliver them.

Adding to the range of parenting programmes being delivered across the county requires agreement about who delivers these programmes and how such delivery is sustained. The Parenting Programme Commissioning Group has accepted that a wider range of the children's workforce should appropriately deliver parenting programmes as part of workers' core business on the basis of a firm commitment of one annual delivery. It would be helpful for this commitment to be considered and endorsed by SMT and the Children's Trust.

The benefits to staff have been identified with current facilitators as including an additional set of skills which can be usefully employed in one to one work with families or parents, improved networking by the practice of delivery with partners from other agencies at local level and increased efficiency from working with groups of parents from families who have substantial needs for support often previously provided on an individual basis.

Parenting Programmes and Children's Plan priorities

Children's Plan priorities are identified as;

- ***Reducing inequalities and responding to the economic downturn***
- ***Safeguarding children***
- ***Reduce alcohol harm***
- ***Improving services for disabled children***
- ***Reducing health inequalities***
- ***Reducing bullying***
- ***Narrow the gap in attainment, attendance etc. increase positive activities and reduce NEET***

Delivery of parenting programmes for parents of all age groups of children support the delivery of these priorities in the following ways;

- Parenting programmes assist parents in improving their relationships with their children, helping parents recognise and practice more successful and rewarding ways of setting appropriate boundaries for behaviour and healthy lifestyles.
- Most of the programmes are helpful and of relevance to parents who have disabled children

- All programmes assist children and young people build up their own protective factors some programmes focus on resisting substance misuse
- Recent research has indicated that children who bully have parents who are authoritarian (high criticism and low warmth) so that supporting parents to change their parenting style will support children from bullying and being bullied
- Parental influence is recognised as of most significance for children's education attainment and parenting programmes contribute to increased parental esteem and aspiration for themselves and their children.

The Children's Board trust was informed that the development of parenting programmes delivery has occurred successfully with the PCT and CAYA working well together to enhance coordinated delivery. Quality issues such as support to facilitators and supplementary training, and increasing awareness of parenting programmes has added to the accessibility of this service to parents and carers.

A gap in delivery for parents of older teenagers with more complex needs has been identified and programmes to meet this are being explored. An expansion of facilitators from a wider section of the children's workforce would be necessary to ensure that current and additional delivery is sustainable. The benefits outlined earlier would outweigh the tensions of what may appear to be an additional set of responsibilities against the more traditional individualised style of working.

Successful delivery of parenting programmes contributes significantly to meeting the priorities identified in the Children's Plan.

The Children's Trust Board accordingly agreed the expansion of parenting programmes and the delivery by the wider workforce.

This review seeks to support the Children's Trust Board's decision in this respect and this is reflected in Recommendation 8 of this report.

5. Consultation with Strategic Director – Children and Younger Adults

At the commencement of the review, an initial meeting was held with the Strategic Director, and Deputy Strategic Director, of Children and Younger Adults to enable Members of the review working group to ascertain why a review of the Parenting Strategy had initially been requested.

There are a number of parenting support services available in the county. Some are provided by the County Council and others are offered through other agencies such as the PCTs. All are aimed at supporting parents, particularly those whose families are involved in anti-social behaviour, criminal activities, substance misuse, failure to attend school or other issues which could lead to serious social, health or educational failings if left unchecked.

The scrutiny review had been suggested as a method of determining whether or not all the support services available were cohesive and if all those families in need of support were able to access the appropriate services.

The County Council was one of the first Authorities to take up Government funding for Family Intervention Projects (FIPs). FIPs work with the most challenging families and tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour, youth crime, school absenteeism, drug and alcohol addiction, domestic violence, poor mental health and inter-generation disadvantage. Families are supported by a dedicated “key-worker” who coordinates a multi-agency package of support and works directly with family members to help them overcome problems.

Families are referred to the FIP via a variety of agencies such as local Housing Associations, the Police, Anti-Social Behaviour Teams. Participation by a family or its individual members is not mandatory but most take part as they realise they face the threat of eviction from their homes as a result of their behaviour.

There is little doubt that, in Derbyshire, as has been found nationally, the success rates of FIPs are impressive and senior officers in the Children and Younger Adults Department consider it is crucial that the project in Derbyshire continues after the current Government funding ceases in March 2011. To support this, there needs to be some research into the outcomes for families who have been helped by the FIP to quantify potential savings to all partners.

The County Council’s partners, such as the Police, Housing Associations and PCTs should be persuaded of the long-term benefits of taking families out of the cycle of crime, anti-social behaviour, poor educational attainment and substance misuse and encouraged to help support the FIP financially – post March 2011.

There were other projects, apart from FIP, which were aimed at supporting parents. Predominant amongst these were the Webster Stratton “Incredible Years” Parenting Programme and other initiatives which were open to *all* parents such as “Living with Children” and “Living with Teenagers”. There

was a possible gap in this provision in that there were no schemes whereby parents were offered support in their own homes (ie. support to date tended to be course-based with parents being expected to learn and develop their skills and then put them into practice themselves in the family environment). It was considered that many parents would benefit from help in developing their parenting skills in their own homes, although this had inherent costly resource implications. It was noted that home-based family support was provided as outreach work by Children's Centres and this would aid the work of the FIP programme.

Again, there needed to be a more robust measurement of outcomes of these schemes, not least to measure their cost-effectiveness/savings on future budgets to confirm the need for their continuation. This evidence could then be submitted via the Derbyshire Partnership Forum to exhort the Council's partners to contribute to the future funding of the programmes.

Increased research capacity within the CAYA Department, and the development of financial models to calculate future savings, would help promote the need to continue successful parenting projects and programmes.

Recommendation 1.

The cost analysis system currently utilised by the DAAT team be offered to the Children and Younger Adults Department to calculate potential savings made to the County council and other agencies in running successful FIPs with local families

Recommendation 2.

Research be further developed within the Children and Younger Adults Department to develop financial models to calculate future savings and benefits to promote the use of parenting projects and programmes

6. Consultation with Head of Services for Families

The working group Members met with Liz Best, Head of Services for Families, Richard Corker of the Children's Trust and Alison James, Co-ordinator of the Parenting Programmes.

Liz explained her position in the Children and Younger Adults Department, as Head of Services for Families, and gave outline details of the numerous parts to her remit which included Childcare Services, an Inclusion Service for childcare provision to disabled children, Coordination of Parenting Services, Family Intervention Project Service and the ongoing development of Children's Centres via the Operational Manager for these services. These services span from the universal to intensive and targeted.

Her role also included the need to work across the Children's Trust to encourage and influence parenting support by other services.

The overarching brief of the Services for Families Division is to support parents in their parenting role, as a response to the research evidence which endorses how important parents are in influencing their children's development and outcomes. This importance has been recognised by Government and led to support to Local Authorities in early prevention.

Childcare and Children's Centres

Childcare and Early Learning are considered to be closely linked nowadays, with childcare settings of all types being accountable for ensuring early education of pre-school age children through play and socialising which aids the transition to more formal education.

The 2006 Childcare Act determined that all parents should have access to sufficient available childcare. The County Council has developed a Sufficiency Team to look at what provision is currently available, assess current and future needs of parents and employees and to identify gaps, or potential gaps in provision.

In Derbyshire there is a surfeit of childcare places in some parts of the county and a deficit in others. An area for development is the 8+ age group who tend to prefer after-school clubs and other activities to going to a childminder.

There are at present 42 Children's Centres in the county, established under the first 2 phases of the programme, with approximately a further 10 planned under phase 3.

Work was being undertaken by Children's Centres to encourage "hard to reach" families to access parenting services. It was sometimes difficult to identify and engage some families who needed the most help and sometimes they moved home into neighbouring areas governed by other Local Authorities, particularly Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire, which could lead to them losing contact with services designed to support their needs.

Family Intervention Projects (FIPs)

The previous Government was very keen on Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) whereby the relevant agencies, lead by the County Council's Family Intervention team, work directly with individuals in families which have been identified as having particular problems and needs. The current Governments recognises the desirability of having services to address the needs of families with "multiple problems". Derbyshire County Council has also invested from its own budget into the FIP. The project is currently working with over 50 families. The Derbyshire FIP originally began in Bolsover and Erewash as each project requires partnership with another agency such as a Housing Provider. The Housing Provider partners in these areas were keen to work with the FIP with families involved in Anti-Social Behaviour. Intervention work with such families helped reduce their anti-social behaviour and prevented the need for evictions by the Housing Provider.

The FIP was extended to the Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire and Amber Valley areas where partnerships with Housing Providers had been developed. It is now beginning to serve the west of the county, South Derbyshire, Derbyshire Dales and the High Peak.

A DVD of a mother explaining what had changed in her family was viewed by the working group Members and details of two actual case studies (protecting the families' anonymity) were provided to demonstrate the level of success achievable by the FIP programme.

It was understood that great demands were placed on staff working with the families in the FIP. It required special skills to engage with some of the families who were inclined to resist official intervention in their lives. The emotional pressures put on some staff were considerable and the Council was attempting to commission specific professional guidance to supplement the regular supervision support the staff receive from the team leaders.

Government funding of the FIP ceases in March 2011 which highlights the need to identify mainstream funding from local partners. The DCSF has produced documents which give a breakdown of the costs of letting families with problems continue without intervention (for example the cost of eviction and re-housing, policing anti-social behaviour and petty crime and potential future health costs associated with substance misuse). This information will help the County Council to seek funding from its partners (eg Police, PCTs, Housing Associations) by exhibiting potential savings on their own service costs.

Parenting Programmes

Derbyshire County Council was a pathfinder authority for Webster Stratton Incredible Years Parenting Programmes (WS) and currently delivers around 30 such programmes across the county. Other parenting programmes are lower key and available to *all* parents through schemes such as "Living with Children" and "Living with Teenagers" delivered via the PCT as a strategy

agreed by the Children's Trust to deliver parenting programmes in a coordinated and integrated way. Other programmes of a more specific nature are being explored by a current Parenting Programme Commissioning Group, to provide support to parents of older teenagers and those at risk of substance misuse and offending behaviour

Alison James, Parenting Coordinator, talked about the WS programmes within the Parenting Early intervention Project (PEIP) which has been led and financially supported by the DCSF over the past 2 years. These programmes have received excellent feedback from parents attending the course, and it was agreed that information on the evaluation would be provided to the working group.

These programmes occur over 12-14 weeks. From April 2008 to March 2009 281 parents had commenced the courses, with 240 maintaining full attendance which averages 85% full attendance. Attendance for the majority of parents was voluntary, through referral from support agencies, although a small number were obliged to attend as a result of Parenting Orders imposed by the Courts. It was noted that the County Council and its partners could make better use of Court imposed Parenting Orders to ensure parents in need of support are directed to the courses.

The end of funding from the DCSF was being anticipated, with the cost being calculated in order to negotiate contributions from other budget holders. The costs are kept as low as possible. Childcare and transport are seen as necessary expenditures to facilitate the 'right' families to attend.

Recommendation 3.

Initiatives to encourage "hard to reach" families to use parenting services through Children's Centres be further developed through methods such as "peer promotion" and outreach work.

Recommendation 4.

The value of Parenting Programmes currently being used by the County Council, such as "Webster Stratton – Incredible Years", be acknowledged and endeavours be made to source continued funding for these projects.

7. Consultation with Assistant Director, Commissioning

The review working group met with Sally Savage, Assistant Director – Commissioning. Sally is employed by Derbyshire County Council and her post was joint-funded by the county council and the Derbyshire County PCT. She is responsible for the commissioning of services on behalf of the PCT (children's and maternity services) and DCC (for example, Teenage Pregnancy service, disability services, substance misuse services and Healthy Schools services, Health Visitors and School Nurses)

Services are purchased from numerous sources, such as the PCTs in Derbyshire and Tameside and Glossop and the Mental Health Trust.

Using Midwifery Services as an example, Sally explained that it was vital to ensure that appropriate services were available to all mothers so that those with anticipated complications, whether through health issues or other circumstances, such as substance misuse, had access to the services which they required, as and when they were needed. Through planning the anticipated needs of all patients it was possible to commission the exact number and type of deliveries and associated services.

Standard services came with a fixed price and “complications” which demanded additional facilities or treatments added to costs so it is financially advantageous to ensure mothers have good pre-natal care and appropriate delivery services.

The commissioning methods used currently enabled the commissioning officers to assess the actual needs of service users and, using health services as an example again, allowed them to commission services accordingly thus, drastically reducing costs and waiting times for people wishing to access services. It also provides a tool to assess where, when and how patients wish to access services which, when considering preventative services, should impact on the take-up of such services.

Commissioning is undertaken against required outcomes where the outcomes are a very strong measure

Children's Centres

DCC provides a “core offer” for Children's Centres but local needs and conditions impact on what is provided at each centre.

A project has been undertaken recently to ascertain how Health Visitors could provide services in Children's Centres.

Variations in the use of services at different Centres depend on several things;

- the times a service is offered
- local transport links

- how a services is publicised (word of mouth promotion can take a while to make a service popular)

Some Members of the working group expressed concern that some Children's Centres were underused and this should be addressed as this could potentially be a waste of resources.

If there is evidence that a programme offered at one Children's Centre is working well it could be possible to "bulk buy" the service for other Centres which would bring down costs – although local needs would have to be taken into account. The biggest difficulty is getting "hard to reach" people in to use the services – and these are probably the most in need of services. One possibility in this respect was to use "community champions" who are local service users who would persuade others in their community to use the Centres.

Improvements are being made so that services are provided when and where they are needed. For example, the Teenage Pregnancy team are now targeting young people in their local areas on Friday and Saturday evenings to offer sexual health advice to youngsters who don't access these services at present. Initial contact is made using trained and accompanied young people to act as "peer" advisers as it is apparent that young people take more notice of their peers than adults working in an authoritative capacity.

Family Intervention Project

Although not greatly involved in commissioning services for the Family Intervention Project (FIP), Sally was very involved with measuring savings which the FIP could bring in to the numerous agencies involved compared to the cost and demand on resources if a family did not receive support through the FIP. For example, if a family had members who were involved in crime, substance misuse, school absenteeism and/or anti-social behaviour, the cost to society and the services they would require throughout their lives would be great. Drug and alcohol abuse would bring future costs to the health services, criminal activity would involve the Police, legal system and potentially prison authorities. Poor educational attainment could result in long term unemployment.

All these demands on services, which could have an impact for the whole length of a person's life, would have associated costs which would far outweigh the cost of supporting families and individuals through the FIP.

It was important to convince those partners who ultimately have to deal with individuals who could be helped by the FIP of the value of supporting the FIP now, to cut ongoing costs in future years.

Barry Thacker referred to a data analysis system used in the Community Safety Division which could calculate the costs attributable to an individual requiring services from various agencies – which could then be compared to the cost of providing support through the FIP. Data Analyst staff and the FIP

Manager were to liaise to develop the use of this system to demonstrate potential savings.

Currently, drugs and alcohol services tend to concentrate on the individual service user and don't look at the impact on others such as children or other dependants and family members. These should be taken into account when services are provided to individuals.

Recommendation 5.

The capacity and use of Children's Centres throughout the county be looked at separately to this review to identifying areas of success and good practice and to ascertain that localised needs are being provided for as effectively as possible.

Recommendation 6.

The impact of the misuse of drugs and alcohol on children, dependants and other family members be taken into account when services are offered, either through the DAAT or Health agencies, to ensure that dependants also have access to appropriate support.

8. The Derbyshire Family Intervention Project (FIP)

Throughout the review, Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) have been highlighted several times as a successful method of reducing anti-social behaviour, keeping families in their homes, encouraging children to remain in the education system, improving the employment prospects and providing improved health and wellbeing for members of FIP families.

FIPs are available to all families who are referred to the project with Anti-Social Behaviour problems who reside in the Bolsover, North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Amber Valley or Erewash Districts.

To be eligible for inclusion in a FIP, families must have children aged between 0 – 17 (up to 18th birthday) and must fulfil one or more of the following criteria;

1. the family is at risk of eviction due to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
2. one or more individuals in the family are currently subject to enforcement actions for ASB
3. the family is excluded from mainstream (ie. independent accommodation via the private sector, registered social landlords or local authorities), with a previous history of homelessness due to ASB
4. any child or young person within the household is at risk of being taken into care because of ASB
5. the family has children on the child protection register or have been subject of a child protection conference with the previous 6 months.

FIPs focus on the most problematic families who persistently engage in anti-social behaviour and are at risk of losing their homes. The service is delivered by key workers who each have a small caseload of families. The FIP consists of a combination of support and sanctions and an assertive and persistent style of working to motivate the family to change their behaviour. A support plan is formulated and agreed by all parties involved in the FIP. The plan will determine clear boundaries and expectations for behaviour and demonstrate the sanctions that will follow if these conditions are not adhered to. At the same time, incentives and reward for compliance are included in the plan, as is commitment from service providers to support and encourage behavioural change from the family.

The FIP programme in Derbyshire commenced in September 2008. In late 2009 a study was undertaken by Dr Charles Beck, Speciality

Registrar in Public Health, NHS Derby City, to evaluate the FIP process in Derbyshire. Dr Beck attended a working group meeting during the review process and presented his evaluation's findings to the Members of the group.

It was stressed that the evaluation was *interim* and aimed at reporting early outcomes following the first year of the operation of the FIP.

The interim evaluation showed that the Derbyshire FIP was broadly achieving its objectives of reducing ASB, preventing homelessness, promoting quality of life and improving multi-agency working practices with partner organisations. There was some evidence that some endpoints had not improved during the FIP, for example reported health issues and risk factors relating to education and employment. However, improvements to these elements of a family's problems may take time to become evident.

A good measure of the effectiveness of FIPs would be a re-visit to families who have been through a FIP, say, a year after they have completed the FIP process, and ascertain if they can continue the improved behavioural pattern established by the FIP once the intensive support has ended.

It has been shown that FIPs have to be intensive and as a result demand considerable resources and funding. However, the success rate, to date, is impressive with evidence of reductions in anti-social behaviour caused by families who engage in a FIP programme. Support to FIP families also impacts on other priorities of the County Council and its partners. For example, ensuring that children attend school takes pressure off the education system. The close contact between families and their key workers contributes greatly to safeguarding any children and vulnerable adults in the FIP families. Helping individuals within families to reduce alcohol and drug misuse, often through referrals to the Council's Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), contributes to the endeavours of the DAAT in tackling substance misuse throughout the county.

With anti-social behaviour being a predominant cause of families being evicted from their homes, successful FIP outcomes allow housing agencies to retain families as tenants. If the support and sanctions put in place by each FIP are sufficient to reduce anti-social behaviour and other problems, this removes the need to resort to eviction.

FIP families often have health problems, either through poor diet and personal care but more often as a result of substance misuse. Elements of a FIP will include the provision of services and sanctions to

reduce the use of alcohol and drugs. If successful, the short-term effect will improve the individual's health and behaviour and the long-term effect will prevent them from requiring associated health services in future years.

Additional information on the success of FIPs, nationally and locally, is appended to this report.

In July 2008 the Government, in its Statutory Guidance to Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities, identified the commissioning role of local authorities. The guidance stated that for commissioning to be done well, authorities should seek opportunities for joint-commissioning across local statutory bodies to secure a more efficient use of resources and to be creative in seeking opportunities to achieve cross-cutting objectives.

In the current budgetary climate, especially in the public sector, it is even more urgent that commissioning of services is undertaken by all partners who would benefit from the provision of programmes which would result in long term savings.

The joint-support of the FIP programme by all partners who have a vested interest in its success (for example, Health providers, the Police, District Councils and Housing providers) is pivotal to the continuance of the programme and is in keeping with the objectives of creating and sustaining "Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities". It should, therefore, be encouraged through the Derbyshire Partnership Forum.

Recommendation 7.

A follow-up assessment be undertaken of families who have completed a FIP (after one year) to assess the long term benefits of the programme

Recommendation 8.

All the partners who potentially benefit from financial savings of a successful FIP be encouraged to help fund future programmes and that this recommendation be submitted to the Derbyshire Partnership Forum and the Derbyshire Children's Trust Board with a request that Partnership and Board members be encouraged to help maintain the FIP programme.

9. The Development of the Derbyshire Children's Trust: Family Support Strategy

The efforts of parents and carers in the upbringing and development of children, and in ensuring they achieve the 5 Outcomes of Every Child Matters, are now widely accepted as being the most fundamental influence on young children's progress.

The importance of positive parental influence in children achieving the outcomes needed for such development is well researched. A parenting style which is high in praise and low in criticism, combined with the ability to set boundaries within which children behave, increases the child's ability to develop their own protective factors which minimises later anti-social or offending behaviour, school exclusions, substance misuse etc.

Every member of the Children and Young People's Trust has a role and responsibility for supporting families. These roles and responsibilities are central to the Children Act 2004.

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) has identified the core set of **skills** required for successful intervention with families which the Children's and Young People's Trust staff are expected to practice. These are:

- effective communication
- knowledge of child and young person development
- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- supporting children, young people and families at transition points in their lives
- how to work in a multi agency arena
- sharing information

Many staff and managers already embrace these approaches. However there are some concerns about the additional work which the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the Team Around the Child (TAC) entail. These two frameworks are based on strong integrated teamwork with members of the TAC actively supporting the lead professional, who takes responsibility for being the central figure in each child's particular case. In order to avoid misunderstandings as to the concept of integrated working, a structure which clearly sets out this role is very important.

To facilitate such a structure, the Children's and Young People's Trust is developing a Family Support Strategy. This will identify;

- a **universal** set of services which are available to all families – for example, childcare, primary healthcare, early learning and school based education and leisure facilities. These all play an important part in supporting families.
- **Targeted** services which provide additional support where early intervention is desirable to counter identified needs – for example,

support from a children's centre worker for a teenage parent or the provision of activities for a young carer.

- **Specialist services** for families who have complex needs – for example, children in families where neglect is affecting their safety or support to parents whose use of drugs or alcohol is affecting their parenting ability.
- **Intensive support** via the Family Intervention Project teams for families whose complex needs span several areas of significant disadvantage.

The production of a robust Family Support Strategy would include a set of **core values** to which all staff would work, a **workforce development strategy** which would provide staff with the knowledge and confidence to intervene successfully and practice within a “support and challenge” framework, **robust systems** to support staff and which are consistent and seamless across preventative, safeguarding and other specialist services, systems which identify needs to help plan **future commissioning of services** and **measurement tools** which will provide evidence of whether interventions have affected change.

The Provision of Family Support in the Local Community

To successfully promote the support of families through the CAF and TAC processes, the County Council and its partners are developing integrated teams for young people and family support. Wherever practically possible, these teams will be co-located in local communities, frequently on the site of secondary schools. The teams would comprise of staff of various backgrounds but whose common role is to deliver services to families.

Some staff groups are particularly appropriate members of the integrated team of family supporters and these include Children's Centre workers. However, these staff would best remain located in the Children's Centres so that their contribution to families continues to span the universal and targeted support as identified by the “core offer” of Sure Start Children's Centres.

The role of Schools

Schools are an essential part of family support, being in a good position to identify those children and young people who are likely to require early intervention. School staff should therefore be included in working to the core values, principles and professional theories which will be commonly used across the Children's and Young People's Trust.

Involvement of school staff would include the continuing of home/school agreements and the strengthening of existing ties with the Educational Welfare Service, the Behaviour Support Service and with Parent Partnership services.

The Future of the Family Support Strategy

It is considered that the implementation of the Family Support Strategy would result in flexible delivery of services to raise “ whole family” self fulfilment, family change which is more likely to be transformational and will enable most children and young people to develop into confident and capable young adults with promising life chances.

Recommendation 9.

The development of the Derbyshire Children’s Trust: Family Support Strategy and the proposals to develop staff to implement the strategy effectively, be supported by the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

It is widely accepted that the most important influence on a child's development is provided by their parents (or carers who adopt the role of parents). Any dysfunction in parenting skills will impair a child's development and their ability to obtain the 5 Key Outcomes of Every Child Matters.

Throughout this review, several areas of good practice in helping parents raise their children have been identified and it is hoped that these can be continued and developed.

The review working group is mindful of the resource implications of providing good quality parenting services. However, it is considered that the provision of support to parents and carers is crucial in ensuring that children and young people are able to reach their potential and develop successfully into adulthood.

The sooner support is offered to young children and their parents, the more effective the outcomes will be. The ability of service providers to identify needs and quickly offer the correct level of support is crucial to this and the development of staff and managers to undertake this role is therefore very important.

The review working group is supportive of the initiatives already in place, and proposed, to provide support to children, parents and families throughout the county and endorses the work of the teams and partners engaged in this provision.

It acknowledges the need to seek additional resources to continue to offer good quality support and that the Council's partners should be encouraged to participate in this respect.

Recommendations

1. The cost analysis system currently utilised by the DAAT team be offered to the Children and Younger Adults Department to calculate potential savings made to the County council and other agencies in running successful FIPs with local families
2. Research be further developed within the Children and Younger Adults Department to develop financial models to calculate future savings and benefits to promote the use of parenting projects and programmes
3. Initiatives to encourage "hard to reach" families to use parenting services through Children's Centres be further developed through methods such as "peer promotion" and outreach work.

4. The value of Parenting Programmes currently being used by the County Council, such as “Webster Stratton – Incredible Years”, be acknowledged and endeavours be made to source continued funding for these projects.
5. The capacity and use of Children’s Centres throughout the county be looked at separately to this review to identify areas of success and good practice and to ascertain that localised needs are being provided for as effectively as possible.
6. The impact of the misuse of drugs and alcohol on children, dependants and other family members be taken into account when services are offered, either through the DAAT or Health agencies, to ensure that dependants also have access to appropriate support.
7. A further assessment be undertaken of families who have completed a FIP (after one year) to assess the long term benefits of the programme
8. All the partners who potentially benefit from financial savings of a successful FIP be encouraged to help fund future programmes and that this recommendation be submitted to the Derbyshire Partnership Forum and the Derbyshire Children’s Trust Board with a request that Partnership and Board members be encouraged to help maintain the FIP programme.
9. The development of the Derbyshire Children’s Trust: Family Support Strategy and the proposals to develop staff to implement the strategy effectively, be supported by the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix 1

Successful Results of FIPs (National figures produced by National Centre for Social Research on behalf of Dept for Children, Schools and Families)

The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) set up a web-based Information System in February 2007 to collect data on all families referred to FIPs. Information is collected by FIP staff at the initial referral, when a support plan is put in place, at regular formal reviews and at the point the family exits from the intervention. The NatCen research produced information about the families that received a FIP intervention aimed at **reducing anti-social behaviour** up until March 2009.

Key Findings

- Up until March 31 2009, **2295** families had been offered a FIP intervention
- Of these, **2225** accepted
- Of those families offered a FIP intervention, 699 (30%) completed the intervention with a formal planned exit and a further 990 families (43%) were still receiving an intervention on 31 March 2009
- 367 families (16% of all those offered the intervention) refused to engage at different stages of their FIP intervention
- Results for the 699 families that completed the intervention show **overwhelmingly positive improvements across a wide range of measures;**
 - families with *no* involvement in anti-social behaviour(ASB) increased from 10% to 66%
 - families with four or more ASB problems declined from 46% to 6% (an 87% reduction)
 - families facing one or more housing enforcement actions declined from 47% to 15% (68% reduction)
 - families with education and learning problems declined from 76% to 47% (38% reduction)
 - families experiencing truancy, exclusion and bad behaviour at school declined from 56% to 25% (55% reduction)
 - families in which there were concerns about child protection declined from 38% to 27% (29% reduction)
 - families in which domestic violence was a concern declined from 22% to 9% (59% reduction)
 - families with drug and alcohol problems declined from 32% to 17% (47% reduction)

Input by the FIPs

- The mean length of time that families which completed the intervention with a formal, planned exit, spent working with a FIP, was just over 12 months (375 days)
- The mean number of weekly hours contact time provided directly by FIP staff to each family was 9 hours per week at the beginning of an intervention (between the time a support plan was put in place and the first review). This number had decreased to 6 hours per week by the end of the intervention (between the last review and the formal planned exit).

- Support provided to families through FIP intervention was most commonly provided directly by FIP staff. This support was very wide ranging. The most common forms of direct support included;
 - Challenging anti-social behaviour (69%)
 - One-to-one parenting support (65%)
 - Supporting children into education (54%)
 - Help to provide meaningful activities for parents and children such as sports activities, cookery classes and craft workshops (52%)
 - Help with managing risk of eviction (45%)
 - Support to improve the property that the family lives in (43%)
 - Support to find education, training and work experience for parents and young people (37%)
 - Financial management support including help with claiming benefits and managing debt (37%)
 - Support to stop offending (36%)
 - Living skills support (34%)

Notable Outcomes

Outcomes are only reported for families who completed a formal planned exit. In the future NatCen plans to compare outcomes for all families having received support from a FIP, regardless of whether they completed a formal planned exit.

FIP staff were asked to only include information for which there was evidence, and where possible to collect information from colleagues working in different agencies, for example through multi-agency review meetings.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

ASB levels decreased considerably between the beginning and the end of the intervention.

- the proportion of families *not* involved in ASB was 66% by the end of the intervention – compared with 10% of families at the start of the intervention
- only 6% of families had four or more ASB issues at completion – compared with 46% of families at the start of the intervention
- level of ASB were considerably lower for all specific types of ASB reported at the end of the intervention compared to the beginning

Appendix 2

FIP Case Study 1

Sue is a single parent. She has five children. The eldest daughter, G is 19 years old and lives independently with a male much older than her.

G left the family home when she was 16 years old.

The younger members living with Sue are Laura 17 years, Maria 15 years, Shannon 13 years and Mark 12 years.

Sue suffered 14 years of domestic violence from her two previous partners who were brothers.

Sue's immediate family were aware of the situation and advised her to leave her second partner but she chose to stay with him. This resulted in her losing contact with her family members for several years. She became isolated and controlled resulting in her partner being abusive not only to Sue but also towards the children.

Over this period Social Care did have some involvement with the family due to referrals received from the police and a health professional. They closed the case due to lack of cooperation and non engagement.

Sue began drinking alcohol in order to cope with the situation and the fear of her violent partner returning and this severely impacted on her ability to parent her children.

There were many concerns raised by agencies which lead to the FIP referral.

- Constant reports of ASB made to housing providers and SNT and local county council member.
- Threat to tenancy (NOSP) due to antisocial behaviour and rent arrears (£900+).
- Local young men involved in criminality, visiting the property on a regular basis.
- Noise nuisance every weekend due to parties held at the address.
- Damage to property e.g. broken windows, graffiti.
- Rubbish and lack of general maintenance of the house and garden area.
- Substance misuse e.g. drugs and alcohol.
- Community living in fear of intimidation and harassment.
- Allegations of younger family members prostituting.
- Very poor school attendance.
- Shoplifting and assault charges pending for Maria and Shannon.
- A violent assault occurring at the family home against Sue, Laura and Maria- court case pending
- Sue was alcohol dependant.
- Health needs not being met.
- Family members aggressive and intimidating towards agencies visiting the property
- Sue had never attended any meeting at children's school.

The FIP began working with the family in January 2009. The process was made very clear to each family member, with rules and boundaries being set. The family chose to accept the support. The contract was agreed and signed by all involved.

FIP requested a meeting with Safer Neighbourhood Team and Rykneld Homes before the contract . A collective decision was made - that all young people be given acceptable behaviour contracts with curfews included.

FIP's involvement began and the work included

- Regular visits to the property, including some out of hours (OOH) at weekends
- Building relationships with all family members by offering support but being clear with sanctions for non-compliance
- Emotional and practical support offered to Sue to engage with drug and alcohol team and engage on a alcohol programme
- Introducing some structure to family functioning
- Addressing debt/finance issues and accessing funding to clear some of it (Severn Trent)
- Referral to social care due to safeguarding issues
- Support to family members in attending court
- Supporting Sue in attending meetings with other agencies and taking to them at school.
- Regular referrals made to OOH team
- Feeding back concerns/compliments to family from other agencies
- FIP providing skip x2 to remove rubbish and make property acceptable
- Accessing funding from flexible budget for household items e.g. cooker, microwave, hoover and washing machine, decorating bedrooms
- Addressing diet/nutrition and involving Sue and young persons in activities in the home (cooking)
- Out of school holiday activities
- Identifying individual needs and making appropriate referrals
- Working closely with the family and all involved agencies
- Being consistent and persistent!

The family have made many changes and improvements since FIP involvement

- No risk to tenancy-rent arrears – payment plan agreed
- No reports of anti social behaviour at the property or in the wider community
- Compliments from neighbours, garden much tidier.
- Sue completed alcohol programme and is maintaining it.
- Sue has secured 12.5 hrs employment
- Laura attending college full time and also remains in part time employment and sees drug and alcohol worker

- Maria attends alternate education provision and is making good progress - all YOT appointments kept
- Sue is more confident to attend meetings in school to address any problems which arise with Mark and Shannon.
- Overall school attendance has improved
- School are preparing to submit a report this term to apply for a statutory assessment for Mark due to his complex learning/behavioural needs.
- Sue cooks a well balanced meal everyday and meets all basic needs
- Health issues addressed eg dentist, health appointments
- Young persons engaging with Space 4 U, connexions, out of school activities at local youth community centre
- Sue is developing a relationship with agencies and communication is much better
- Social Care have now closed the case on the family due to having no concerns with safeguarding.
- Sue was recently involved in process of interview for a FIP key worker

The FIP continues to work with the family to help maintain routines, develop appropriate problem solving skills and provide consistent support and boundaries.

Appendix 3

FIP Case Study 2

Date Referral Received: 18th September 2008

FIP meetings held: Referral Meeting 6th October 2008
Contract Meeting 13th November 2008
Reviews held every six weeks – last review held on 8th September 2009.

Family History:

Long history of domestic violence, substance misuse and criminality within the family. Mum has nine children, eight still live at home with her in overcrowded conditions and she also has a private fostering arrangement for a young man of 16 years old. The four eldest children have the same father with whom they have no contact. The younger five children have some contact with their father who lives locally and is the perpetrator of around 12 years of domestic abuse on Mum. During this relationship Mum used amphetamines on a daily basis and there was regular police involvement at the address. The three older boys all became involved in criminality and ASB from their mid teens. Two of the boys (19yrs and 20 yrs) both dropped out of education from around 13 years old and had failed ABC's. Mum has historically struggled to maintain school attendance and no one in the family has ever been employed for any period of time. Mum has never accepted any support offered to her family.

Family circumstances at point of referral:

- Noise abatement order issued and breached
- School attendance of all children down to between 50%-70%
- ASBO's being sought for 18yr and 19yr old sons, who had several outstanding charges against them
- 19 yr old son addicted to anabolic steroids and cannabis
- 20yr old son addicted to cannabis and alcohol - serious health concerns in relation to this
- Mum recently convicted of possession of £26,000 worth of stolen goods and awaiting sentencing
- Three Valleys Housing preparing NOSP
- Strong community and agency perception that this family will never change
- Environmental health preparing to issue nuisance notice for rubbish and waste in the garden
- Mum and 17 yr old daughter engaged in street drinking
- Rent arrears due to suspension of housing benefit

Work carried out since referral:

With Mum:

- Onerous Community Order given with many requirements. Breached on three occasions and eventually revoked with FIP evidence given at court to avoid custodial sentence. A more manageable community order was given and this has not been breached to date.
- All amphetamine use has stopped and Mum supported to get anti-depressants prescribed by GP
- Two skips provided by FIP to clear rubbish and garden
- £9000 remitted from fines following FIP evidence given at court re: family circumstances. Payment plan set up for remainder of £625. No missed payments to date.
- Notice Seeking Possession avoided due to cessation of complaints and tidying up of garden – regular housing inspections taking place.
- New household rules established and boundaries set with all children
- Referred to Positive Parents Course and offered one to one work at home

With Son (20yrs old):

- Joint visits to Probation Officer to reduce breaches of Community Order
- Became subject to ASBO in April 2009. One to one support given to ensure all requirements are understood – no breaches to date.
- Supported to access County Alcohol services and assisted to reduce intake
- Assisted to develop a positive relationship with community police officers through meetings and joint visits
- Assisted to make Homeless application with local housing office
- Regularly visiting FIP office for support

With Son (19yrs old):

- Visited by FIP whilst in custody
- Supported in maintaining requirements of community order with drug testing requirement in May 2009 – no drug tests failed to date.
- Supported to enrol in Prince's Trust Business Start Up Programme
- Supported at court and given an Attendance Centre requirement supported by FIP involvement
- Regularly visiting FIP office for support

With daughter (17yrs):

- Supported to attend Army Recruitment appointment
- Supported to access Connexions PA
- Completed Princes Trust 12 week programme
- Supported with housing application

With Son (15 yrs):

- System in place to ensure he is returned to school by community police if found to be truanting

- Early morning visits carried out to ensure he has left for school on time
- School attendance panel meeting held to try and resolve truancy issues
- Close liaison with Education Welfare officer to secure work placement or alternative curriculum

With younger children (10yrs, 9yrs, 7yrs, 5yrs):

- Extra school uniform sourced
- All registered and attended dentist for check up and some treatment
- 10yr old daughter registered at opticians and glasses prescribed
- Early morning visits carried out to ensure all children have gone to school
- All referred to school Family Resource Worker for self-esteem work
- Children taken on activities in school holidays
- 9yr old son attending breakfast club

Family circumstances one year on:

- School attendance increased to around 98% for all primary school children.
- 20 yr old son on ASBO with no breaches to date, and no pending convictions. Reduced alcohol intake to safer levels and currently reducing cannabis use. Seeking accommodation away from family home. Complying with community order and curfew.
- 19yr old has an ASBO prepared but no pending convictions to attach it to therefore application on hold. No longer using steroids or any illegal substances. Engaging with Prince's Trust Business Start Up programme. Beginning to build a positive dialogue with Community Police officers.
- NOSP has not been served and there are no plans to do so as no ASB complaints are being received
- 17yr old daughter engaged in college to retake GCSE's
- 15yr old son increasing his school attendance with a view to considering Army College next year
- No rent arrears
- Agency perception is that the family have made significant progress and are making positive changes.

Future work to be focussed on:

- Assisting the older children to secure accommodation away from family home
- Ensure Positive Parents work is put in place and sustained
- Updating benefits entitlement
- Supporting Mum to access adult education or employment
- Supporting 20yr old son and 19 yr old son with training and employment opportunities