

## 4.1.11 Parenting and Family Support

### Context

The importance of positive parenting and effective parenting support services in improving outcomes for children is emphasised in both national and local policies and initiatives, many supported by legislation.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 requires all professionals, including those in universal services and those providing services to adults with children, to understand their role in identifying emerging problems and to share information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.

'Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.' (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013).

It is estimated that approximately 31% of children and young people in any district will require early help; examples of this are parents with children with additional needs needing to find behavioural support or short break provision, parents affected by mental illness, substance misuse, parent/adolescent conflict, young people self-harming. Bradford has an early help strategy which emphasises how agencies' response to a situation needs to be proportionate, only making a referral to children's social care when the needs of the child or young person cannot be met through early help.

In order to assist parents and professionals to identify organisations who can provide early help, access routes to Bradford Families' Information Service (FIS) have been improved. Staff provide information to parents, carers and professionals working on their behalf, meeting face to face with parents and visiting organisations or providers with them to help them make informed choices.

Early help to families may be provided in some situations by a single agency but when several agencies are involved, integrated working using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is required. Bradford has introduced a Family CAF process, extending the scope of the framework to include all relevant family members in need of a service. This provides greater flexibility for the assessment of multiple siblings and to include in the Team around the Family those services supporting adult members.

Support for professionals in using the Family CAF process is now made available via the Families Information Service. This includes access to staff who work alongside lead practitioners, providing advice and guidance.

In Bradford, the Early Help Board provides strategic multi-agency oversight of the development and implementation of early help and the changes in policy, process and practice which are required and leads work on parenting across the District.

### National and local targets

An Early Help Action Plan was agreed in early 2014, with priorities aligned to minimum national standards required by Ofsted. These include: improving the awareness of effective services which can address assessed needs early, more consistent, simpler and quicker recording of early help needs assessments and increased responsiveness to the development of practice nationally.

In 2013 Bradford Children's Trust introduced a broad range of performance indicators and outcome measures in relation to the success of early help. These include: the percentage of children achieving a good level of development on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, reduction of childhood accidents in the home and reduced rates of childhood obesity.

## Relevant strategies and local documents

- Supporting Families in the Foundation Years 2011
- Early intervention; the next steps 2011
- Munro Review of Child Protection 2011
- For Parents: A parenting strategy for the Bradford District 2007 (Refreshed in 2011)
- Health Equity Audit of Children and Young People in Bradford District 2009
- Bradford Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014
- Children and Young People's Health and Lifestyle Survey 2013
- Bradford District Early Help Strategy 2013-14

## What do the data tell us?

### Parents with additional support needs

Nationally collated data on drug users in treatment show that Bradford District has 1390 who live with children, 560 users who are parents but do not live with children and 169 users for whom there is incomplete data. In addition, 220 or 8.2% of social care assessments carried out between 1<sup>st</sup> April and mid-September 2013 noted parental drug use to be an issue.

The district has 421 alcohol users in treatment who live with children, 129 alcohol users in treatment who are parents but do not live with children and 6 users for whom there is incomplete data. In addition, 228 or 8.5% of social care assessments carried out between 1<sup>st</sup> April and mid-September 2013 noted parental alcohol use to be an issue.

25% of the 500 young carers known to the Young Carers service in Bradford are caring for a parent with substance misuse issues.

297 or (11.1%) of social care assessments carried out between 1<sup>st</sup> April and mid-September 2013 noted parental mental health to be an issue. 30-35% of the District's 500 known young carers are caring for a parent with mental health issues, most of whom are lone parents.

During 2012-13 547 high risk domestic abuse cases were heard at the Bradford Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs). In addition, 440 or 16.4% of social care assessments carried out between 1<sup>st</sup> April and mid-September 2013 noted domestic abuse to be an issue.

### Parenting Programmes

#### Parenting Programmes Monitoring Data for Quarter 4 2013-14

Parenting Programme	Family Links	Time Out for Teens	Triple P	Total
Parents who start the course	632	30	4	666
Parents who complete the course	467	18	3	488
Number of Groups	64	3	1	68
Individual Work	40	1	0	41

**Further information on needs of Families taking part in programmes:**

Children with a child protection plan	82
Children with poor attendance at school	31
Children known to YOT / ASB Teams	37
Parents receiving support for their substance misuse	25
Parents experiencing domestic abuse	40
Parents experiencing mental health difficulties	49

**Referrals for one to one parenting work through 20 week model of parenting support in the home**

- 109 referrals
- Of which 74 were allocated to workers
- 11 - parents of teenagers or under 5's – did not receive a service
- 13 – Did not receive service due to Interpreting/funding issues

Data analysis shows that we are supporting parents to make positive changes at home which has a positive impact on them and their children, thus on overall family life.

**Future needs and gaps in provision**

- Intensive home-based parenting support for parents of children aged 11+.
- A more intensive move-on parenting programme for parents of over 11+ and teens
- Sufficient and appropriately intensive parenting support for the higher than national levels of parents receiving treatment for drug or alcohol misuse, and for parents experiencing domestic abuse or mental health issues.

**Summary of priorities**

- An emphasis on workforce development, ensuring all practitioners have access to training and to the latest research showing what types of interventions are the most effective. Training will also help a greater number of staff become proficient in multi-agency need assessment, avoiding an events focussed approach and involving both services for adults and services for children in the same Team around the Family.
- Reshaping commissioned services to maximise the effect of various funding streams to provider organisations supporting families. This will reduce duplication and elicit evidence that what we do improves outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Improving customer access to evidence-based services providing early help.
- Helping parents and carers to have a mix of opportunities to influence and shape services
- To identify agencies already in place who are best placed and most likely to come into contact with families emerging needs or 'in need'.
- To identify gaps in parenting provisions and make recommendations for further training and allocation of PEIP funding, (8-13yrs old at risk/in need).

- Building capacity at a local level in each area to ensure sustainability of evidence based parenting programme delivery to targeted families.
- Identifying and responding to blocks which prevent practitioners delivering evidence based programmes.