



Early Intervention in Early Years

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About Family Action



- Founded in 1869
- Mental Health Services
- Grant maker for individuals
- Family Support services:-
 - Children's Centres
 - Home-based family support
 - Families with multiple needs
 - Campaigns against poverty

Review of where we sit



Huge array of services for under 5

- This is excellent
- But how do they fit together?

The Government's Priorities



- SureStart – thumbs up
- Education for disadvantaged 2 and 3 year olds / social mobility
- 4200 health visitors
- Investment in troubled families
- Improving parenting
- Public health

Day care works: impact



Huge evidence base from research and OFSTED

- Social skills
- Learning
- Language/reasoning
- Interaction
- Impact increases with quality
- Impact improvement
 - Reading, numeracy, science, through primary
- 14 year old study
 - Impact less but statistically significant

Reshaping children's centres



Family Action Centres: in addition to core services:-

- Family support, parental outreach
- Job centres and work skills
- Work with young families
- Work with fathers
- Partnerships with health visitors/midwives
- Parenting support
- Credit unions
- Financial advice
- Relationship support, summer schemes, ie. targeted support in universal setting
- Better use of buildings – reaching to 18

Health: keeping the focus



- Services for children moving to LA and public health
- FNP works – but targeted at small numbers
- Practice varies hugely in focus
- We like midwives, HV, speech and language therapists etc

Families with complex needs



- Parent focus
- Enduring mental health problems
- Post natal depression
- Learning difficulties
- Substance misuse
- Chaotic families

Families with complex needs



- Children's centres not reaching this small group
- Not very good at reaching families with children under 1
- Different needs, different services
- Children at risk – developmentally, educationally, socially, cognitively

Why should we be concerned



1. Earlier you intervene the better
2. Greatest impact in early years
3. Midwives, health visitors and early years workers know who so many families with complex needs are.

The case for intervening is so strong....

Let's look at Brains



De Bellis, M., & Putnam, F. (1994). The psychobiology of childhood maltreatment. *Child and Adolescent Clinics of North America*, 3, 663-678.

Impact of acquired parental difficulties on children



1. Post-natal depression

Prevents attachment, affects mother/child and inter-parent relationships

2. Mental health difficulties

Affects parenting capacity, recovery can be slow, significant impact on child/young carers

3. Substance abuse (<1% of CPPs)

Children often neglected, deeply impoverished, emotional and physical neglect

4. Domestic abuse (under-reported)

Affects ability and confidence to parent. Emotional and physical impact on children.

Impact of inbuilt parental difficulties on children



Lack of knowledge/experience

Benefit from parenting classes

No family/partner/local friends to consult/help

Need support and reassurance

Learning difficulties

*Need help throughout childhood.
High % of children placed in care.*

Chaotic lifestyle/no natural parenting aptitude

Period of family support

- Serious impact on child wellbeing/health/school attendance/lack of control/children no respect
- High cost, high harm families.
- Need long term support
- High % children care proceedings

Importance of Perinatal period -9 to 24 months



What could go wrong

Untreated post-natal depression can impact parent-child attachment

Childbirth places pressure on family finances and relationships

Likelihood of domestic violence increases during pregnancy

Why?

Parent-child attachment impacts on baby development

Neuroscience tells us first two years are crucial to personality formation

New babies most vulnerable to abuse

Potential interventions

Perinatal Support Project

Family Nurse Partnership
Health Visitors

Intervention cycle: linking to early years child aged 2-5 years



What could go wrong

Parental capacity and poor environment can impact on speech and motor skills

Parents can become isolated and lose skills, which impacts on relationship to children and future prospects

Parents with capacity issues may lose children to care system

Why?

Creative play crucial to motor skill and speech development

Socialisation in preparation for school

Input in children's centres can help address deficits in poor home environments

Intensive support now can help address issues in home environment in time for starting school

Potential interventions

Children's centres including new two-year-old Offer

Family Support

families s...

Made the case – how to achieve change



- Midwives and health visitors have huge workloads and are an expensive resource
- Families with complex needs require time and support to make changes
- Solution: *work together for families with complex needs*

Home based support



- Service needed in own home
- Requires 6 months to 1 year
- Expensive @ 4,000 per family
- High risk of family breakdown
 - Neglect / abuse
 - Parental hospitalisation
- Ready to attend centres at end of programme

Mansfield model



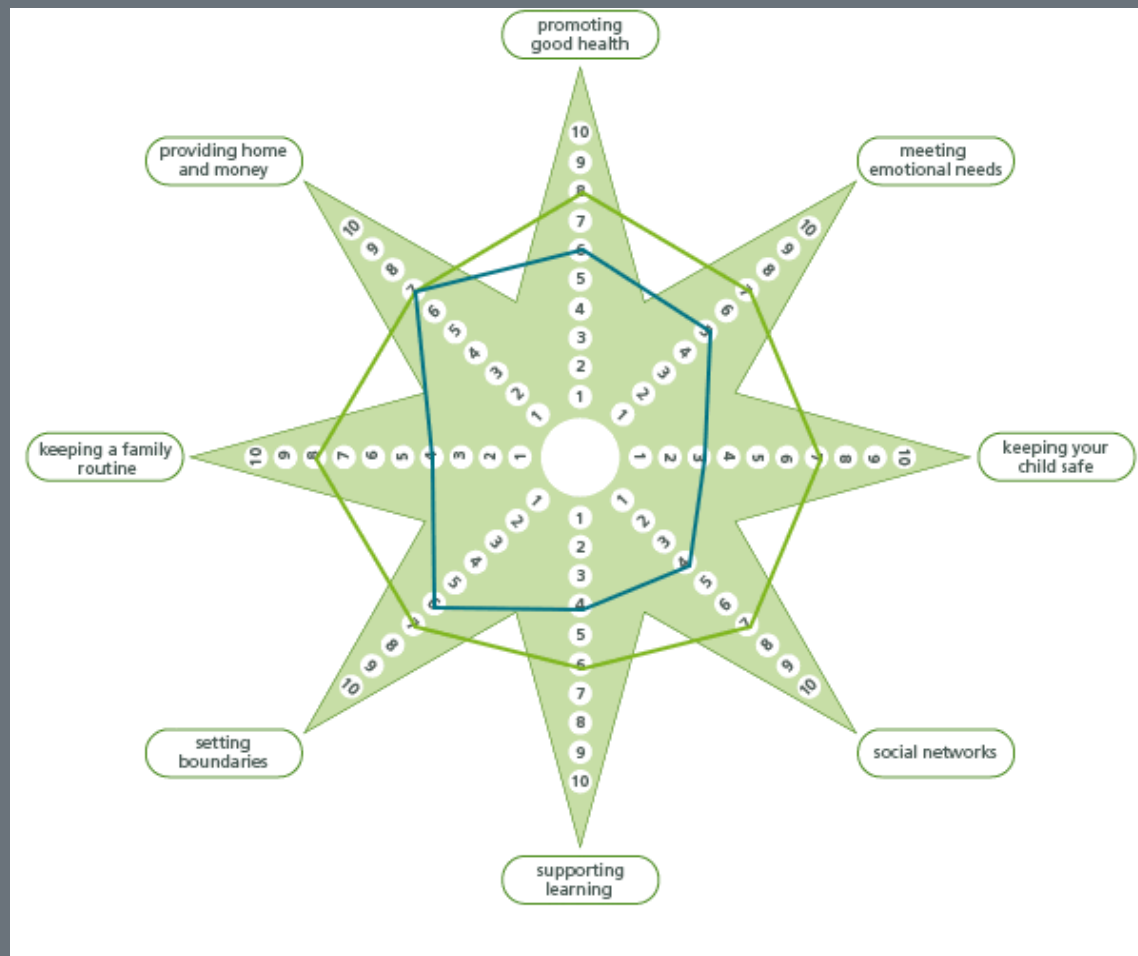
- Family support workers attached to HV – all co-located in children's centre
- HV diagnoses concerns and we agree a plan
- Family support workers visit and work with families on the range of issues, HV monitor
- Typically a range of issues – weaning, poor diet, hygiene, poverty, housing, development milestones, DV, relationship

It works



- Better use of resources FSW paid 15k less. FSW less threatening to parents
- HV remains key worker and responsible
- Parents focus on needs on children
- Families supported to make change
- Work on inter-related range of issues
- Safeguarding is stronger

Family Star



Family Action: Perinatal Services



- Reliant on FNP - targeted at a few
- PND huge problem, significant impact on children – need a continuum of care
- Developed with Maudesley now run 5 pilot projects, evaluated by Warwick
- One paid worker to assess referrals from midwives, recruit and manage volunteers
- Volunteers work from pregnancy to 1 year old

Conclusions



Investing in Parenting- Early intervention cost effective

- Evidence based and it works
- Need to invest in range of perinatal services
- Children's Centres to engage better with fathers, families children under one
- HV / midwives need to work with family support workers to affect change in families with complex needs

Conclusion



- Stick to vision and promote what works
- Quality services, easy access
- Universal services
- Better value for money from centres
- SureStart is the Big Society
- Our EYS are a national treasure