

Family Support Programme Case Study

Pre-Intervention

Following referral by the Education welfare team an Early Help Assessment was undertaken by a Family Support Coordinator and the following strengths and needs were identified. The family were experiencing a lot of problems and stresses related to mum's depression and low self-esteem, partner coping with mental health issues and three children under 12, all with different health issues. The middle child (Child B) was finding it difficult to engage in family life. There was also a strained relationship between the adults, particularly between the mum and the biological father, who was verbally abusive to the children on some of his informal visits. The impact was stresses within family life.

There were also concerns mum being on benefits, poor school attendance of the eldest child (Child A), sibling conflict and a lack of boundaries in family routines

Post Intervention

A series of multi-professional TAF meetings took place and with the support of a dedicated key worker from the Family Support programme and an evolving action plan based on the needs and strengths of the family the following outcomes were achieved. The family appear to have made significant progress in a number of areas thanks to their efforts and the multi-agency support provided by the TAF. Mum appears to be, and reports, to feeling more resilient in dealing with issues relating to the children, having set boundaries into place. This has reduced conflict between the children and family life was much calmer. Mum was particularly pleased that the middle child was becoming more independent, allowing her time to support her partner.

Mum has worked with the DWP advisor to resolve her benefits issues and the attendance of the eldest child is consistently improving. CAMHS have also started working with the eldest child to resolve some of the mental health issues.

Referrer and appointed lead agency/lead professional

The family were referred by Education welfare and Education acted as the lead agency

Identified family strengths at beginning of intervention

- Step-dad working
- Good relationships between Mum and children
- Mum keen to get back to work
- Youngest child statemented and receiving support with speech therapy at school
- Initial CAMHS assessment had been carried out for eldest child

- Both Mum and partner very willing to engage and completely open and honest about the issues affecting them
- Good friends and family support
- Good relationship with neighbours
- Secure local authority tenancy
- Eldest child has several friends and gets emotional support from extended family
- Middle child loves school and has a good relationship with cousins. Child B also enjoyed sports.

Identified family concerns at beginning of intervention

- School attendance for eldest child
- Mental health of eldest child
- Relationship between the eldest two children
- Relationship between step-dad and two eldest children
- Impact of the non-resident Dad on Mum and children
- Spending priorities and budgeting
- Relationship between Mum and partner
- Mum said the family was 'chaotic'
- Low self esteem of Mum and the eldest child
- Middle child follows Mum around constantly

Referral criteria met

- Mum on out of work benefits
- Attendance for the eldest child below 85%
- Eldest child had been spoken to by police officer about behaviour -
- Child in Need of Help
- Parents and Children with a range of health problems

Interventions offered

Intervention	By whom?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAMHS appointments • Parenting Guidance and Support • Benefits advise • Sign posted to CAB for help with budgeting • Sign posting to Domestic Abuse Outreach • Support re Self –esteem for mum • Help with funding school trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAMHS • Family co-ordinator • Troubled Families Employment Advisor • CAB • Chapter 1 • Family Co-ordinator • Surrey Young Carers

Evidence/Impact

Changes	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mornings are much calmer • Eldest child is attending regular CAMHS appointment • Eldest child's school attendance improved by 6/12 week TAF meeting • Eldest child doing well in school and much happier by 12 week TAF meeting • Relationship between Mum and partner improved • Relationship between partner and middle child improved • Middle child has stopped following mum around completely and is more independent • Benefits now in order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testimony from Mum • CAMHS records • Report from Education Welfare Officer and closure of their case • Report by School attendance Officer • Testimony from both Mum and partner • Testimony from middle child • Testimony from Mum • Report from TFEA/CAB

Team around the family members

HSLW from primary school
 CAMHS
 EWO
 Attendance Officer from secondary school
 SEN Caseworker from primary school
 Family Support Worker from primary school
 Surrey Young Carers
 Tutor from secondary school
 TFEA from DWP

Team around the family ways of working/lessons learnt

The TAF meetings were well attended and meant that information gathered by the Family Co-ordinator could be shared with other professionals with the consent of the family –it was very useful for the multi-professional team to hear the difficulties caused by the complexities of the family and the impact of this on the whole family.

Family feedback

Mum looked like a different person – more relaxed by the end of the Family Support intervention. She said that things were a lot calmer in the mornings in particular and she was very satisfied that the middle child was more independent. The relationship between her and her partner had improved and he was spending more time with the family rather than isolating himself.

Partner was very grateful for the help and gave thanks for the difference in the family dynamics.