

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EARLY HELP TO PROMOTE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES

## WITNESS SUBMISSION

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**Role:** Service Manager

**Organisation:** Key Working Service

### SUMMARY OF EARLY PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION IN HILLINGDON / ROLE OF YOUR SERVICE OR ORGANISATION

The Key Working Service is designed to work in support of families to resolve problems, that without key-work intervention would escalate, become more entrenched and difficult to resolve.

This is achieved by delivery and coordinated personalised, evidence based early and preventative interventions for children, young people and their families with the aim of de-escalating issues of concern, achieving sustainable change, promoting capability and capacity within families to problem solve difficulties they are or may experience in the future and preventing the need for statutory intervention services. These concerns relate to a variety of challenges a family might face alongside those of a more specific nature such as children's participation in education, employment and training, low family income as a consequence of unemployment and involvement in criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

The service also working in collaboration with social work teams in support of higher need families (Level 3) with complex and multiple difficulties which may include low income as a consequence of worklessness, involvement in or at risk of being involved in crime, alcohol or substance misuse, antisocial behaviour, disengagement with education and risk of homelessness or children on the edge of care.

Lower need families (Level 2) experiencing difficulties that are likely to become more complex and entrenched without a brief solution focused intervention.

In addition to these key-working functions, the service includes support and promotion principles and processes designed to enable the identification of the need for early support and to facilitate appropriate and swift responses for residents. These processes include the application of the Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Family (TAF) methodology. This service is informed by the fact that families often experienced multiple and sometimes common issues that were not always responded to in a unified manner. This could lead to families experiencing numerous interventions that had not been collectively conceived based on a common understanding of what the problems were and how they may best be resolved.

The new Key Working Service operates so that these needs are best served by a service delivery model that adopts a collaborative approach to resolving presenting issues as opposed to a 'team for an issue' arrangement. Integrated key-worker teams with the capacity and expertise to attend to a range of presenting issues have consequently been established from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. The teams comprise key-work practitioners with core as well as more specialist skills, knowledge and expertise relevant to the accountabilities of the role and the needs of the families it serves. Practitioner and team knowledge and expertise is applied and shared across the service in response to family need. Knowledge and expertise is being developed through the continuous professional development of team members and a core workforce development programme. Partnership work with Social care colleagues, Police, Schools, Children's Centres, Targeted Programmes and Health professionals is key to success.

- The Key-working Service is developing, implementing and reviewing evidence based and time-bound intervention plans, based on assessed needs, which address areas of concern whilst promoting problems solving skills/strategies within the family. Plans can be for the family as a whole or specific to individual members.
- It works intensively with family members in their own homes and community settings. Key-workers apply modelling and coaching techniques to promote the development of practical skills, such as budgeting and domestic management, and social skills. They also provide guidance, advice and training to parents on child care and parenting skills at different stages of child development and support family members in managing difficult and challenging behaviour.
- The key-working function combines case-work and client tracking as part of the process of monitoring the impact of interventions made. The tracking process is being developed and supported by the Performance and Intelligence Team.
- Statutory duties in relation to the provision of education welfare services and support, information, advice and guidance are located and discharged within the Key-working Service. This includes the need to fulfil the duty to prosecute, where necessary and appropriate, parents who do not ensure their children attend school as required or ensure their children receive full time and appropriate education.

## **OUTCOMES ACHIEVED SINCE 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2015:-**

### **DEMAND FOR SERVICE:**

Requests for Early intervention and Prevention Services direct intervention: 227

Demand allocation (\*Cases in addition to schools specific case-work)

Preventative team 1	Preventative team 2	Intensive team	Early help co-ordination Team	Participation team*	Targeted youth services	Intensive team and participation team	Services outside EI	Total
56	56	39	14	11	4	1	46	227

## **OUTCOMES:**

Families 'stepped down' to universal context: 37

Cases escalated to children's social care: 7

## **COMMENTS ON PROVISION OF SERVICES E.G ANYTHING THAT YOU THINK COULD BE IMPROVED OR DONE DIFFERENTLY ETC.**

1. The role of the intensive key working team leader is being reviewed to strengthen and sustain the interface with children's social care.
2. The use of data is being developed. 'Clearcore', data matching software, has provided an opportunity to identify families who are experiencing multiple challenges but may only be known by individual agencies.
3. Co-location of key working services is a current project to enhance soft data exchange and improve consistent practitioner standards.
4. Links with children's centres are improving through the appointment of a service manager responsible for this element of Hillingdon's early intervention and prevention offer.
5. All academies have commissioned the participation team for early intervention and prevention input prior to statutory intervention. The one exception to this is Stockley academy. Operational relations with this school are sound and effective. Improvements in strategic links are sought on an ongoing basis.
6. Residents will benefit from the newly configured key working service receiving a comprehensive continuous professional development package currently being designed.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Data sharing arrangements with partners can be challenging when identifying and supporting vulnerable families, particularly with Health. Working is being progressed via the early intervention and prevention strategy group to strengthen arrangements.

The Key Working Service is contributing to the development of a revised CAMHS Strategy and is also working with associated services and partners in response to the needs of young people on the autistic spectrum. .