



EARLY HELP ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

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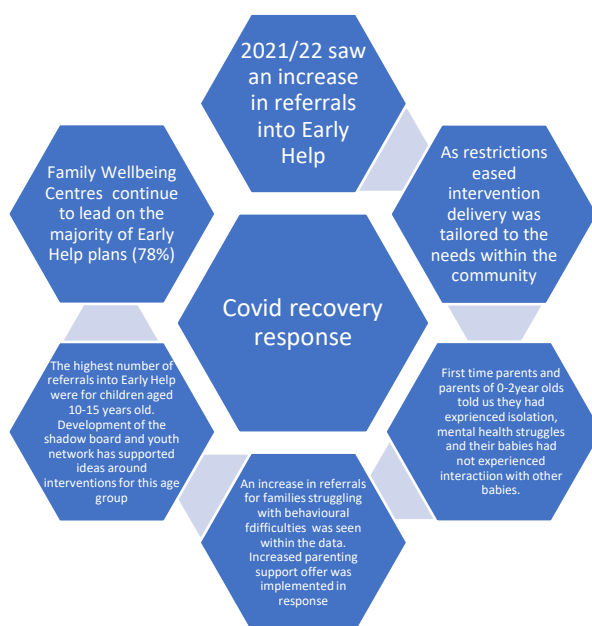
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Executive Summary

This report provides a summary and key highlights of the response to supporting families through Early Help in Sefton. The report captures the breadth of support being offered throughout the Early Help Partnership and recognises the services that work alongside families as part of the 'Team around the Family'.



Key achievements



The team around the school approach has been encapsulated across Early Help. This has been extended to Early Years settings to support early identification of need for under 3's. Targeted intervention delivery of ACES, parenting programmes & relax kids has increased.



A total of 650 families who received Early Help support during 2021/22 achieved positive outcomes on closure.



Sefton BABS Parent-Infant Mental Health Service co-location within Family Wellbeing Centres has supported the integration of the service across Early Help.



Sefton have successfully secured funding to commit to improving positive parental relationships and reducing parental conflict. The funding has enabled training for staff across the partnership and tools to be developed to work alongside families where parental conflict is a feature.

2022/23 priorities

The Early Help Partnership has identified several key priorities for the group to drive during 2022/23. These include:

- Embedding Supporting Families outcomes across the partnership
- Shared ownership and commitment across the partnership to focus on key aspects of the recent inadequate inspection outcome of Children's Services, specifically addressing 'the serious gaps in Early Help services' and further developing 'the role of the lead professional which is largely absent'
- Working alongside Leeds Family Valued approach, invest in practice, prevention and relationships to reduce the flow in statutory services, particularly the numbers entering care.
- Ensuring adequate information sharing agreements are in place to support the development of effective data dashboards
- Reviewing pathways and methods to increase and drive access into early intervention and prevention-based services and associated communications to promote what is available.
- Development of cross partnership working on emerging areas of demand including homelessness prevention and school attendance
- Reviewing existing arrangements for capturing service users voice and how they become integral into the development of Early Help
- A focus on embedding key aspects of practice such as Reducing Parental Conflict and support for parenting
- Building capacity in communities aligned with Family hub based working
- Joint multi-agency workforce development plan across Early Help system
- Strengthening data governance within the Early help Partnership Board
- Developing the role of Early Help Champions across the partnership workforce and providing opportunities for staff to shadow across providers to enhance the knowledge of provision for families.

Introduction

Most children in Sefton lead happy and healthy lives, are part of loving families who take good care of them and support them to reach their potential. All children in Sefton deserve the best possible start in life; but unfortunately, there are some who face disadvantages that affect their development, which impacts on their future potential, health and happiness. Providing 'Early Help' plays a vital part in offering these children and their families the support they need to reach their full potential and keep them safe.

In Sefton we have a rich partnership of Early Help services who work to support families every day. These range from: education settings who are vital in providing learning and support for children, young people and families and which provide a safe place for children to thrive and learn; universal health services such as midwives, GPs, health visitors and school nurses; police teams; and our vibrant voluntary and community sector partners.

This report provides a summary of the work carried out across some of Sefton's Early Help partnership. These services work alongside partner agencies supporting children, young people and their families as part of a 'Team around the Family', helping them to reach their potential, prevent issues from escalating and enabling them to lead happier and healthier lives.



Effective Early Help services prevent problems from occurring and can tackle them head on when they do before problems get worse. They also help to build resilience in families, developing strength and skills that prepare children for adult life and help families to cope better with the challenge's life throws at them.

Early Help takes many forms from community support from family and friends, local businesses, and community organisations; universal services such as nurseries; Schools; GPs; Midwives and Health Visitors, through to more targeted services. Some services will play a role in the provision of both a universal and targeted offer such as our Family Wellbeing Centres who provide a universal offer open to all but have a targeted approach through an Early Help Assessment. The Police, and Health Visitors also offer both universal and targeted support, using their universal offer to identify risk early and follow up with more targeted support where necessary.

“The total support that improves a family’s resilience and outcomes, or reduces the chance of a problem is getting worse”

Some services are specifically targeted to certain vulnerable groups such as young people and adults dealing with substance misuse, housing issues, mental health support. There are also targeted programmes in schools to improve children’s social and emotional skills and other issues. Evidence clearly shows that early intervention has the strongest impact during the first few years of life, it is also true that effective interventions can improve children’s life chances at any point during childhood and into adolescence.

Collaborative working between Early Help services and children’s social care is crucial to support seamless transitions for families into and out of statutory child protection services, ensuring families receive the right support, in the right place and at the right time.

In Sefton, these relationships continue to develop, and systems mature which ensure we prevent as many families as possible from entering or re-entering statutory services.

Early Help is only effective if there is a truly integrated offer and partners work together to support families, children and young people. Strong partnerships are a key feature of how we work in Sefton, and we will continue to build and develop these partnership arrangements for Early Help and work to improve our support for the communities of Sefton. This report will showcase some of the good practice developed over the past twelve months and highlight areas for future development.

Governance

The Early Help Partnership Group

The Early Help Partnership Group has continued to meet under a new Chair – Anne Tattersall. Meetings have been themed in a similar way to the format of partner contributions within the report with a focus on Children and Parents. Considerable discussion has been ongoing as to determining a strong shared vision across the partnership. Regular updates were also received from partner agencies and groups. The Early Help Partnership Group reports directly to the Children and Young Peoples Board.

The Early Help System:



Early Help Strategy and Delivery Model

The Early Help Strategy acknowledges that to have a mature early help system we need to transform the way professionals work with each other and with families, and to develop the right culture, systems and behaviours that support the delivery of the model across the partnership.

The key areas for development during 2020-2025 are:



Establish Effective Leadership, Partnership Working and Governance



Establish easy to use Early Help online information and advice



Develop a suite of tools for early help practitioners to use – ensuring a whole family strength based consistent approach to working with children and families



Develop effective and timely processes for sharing information between agencies



Refresh structures and pathways that support the access to early help



Develop a skilled and competent workforce across the partnership



Develop a joint commissioning framework for early help

Priorities and Progress

Development of a 'team around the school approach'

Early Help workers are aligned to each school and have developed strong relationships with many interventions being delivered within school sites. The COVID response has delayed this extending to the anticipated team around the school approach.

Increased scrutiny and moderation of quality assurance to include participation from families capturing their voice.

Greater involvement from the shadow board, more of a focus on case studies and the introduction of service user surveys have contributed to capturing the family's voice.

Driving quality and practice of Early Help, ensuring all partners are engaged and accountable

Through the development of Early Help Champions, shared audits with partners and regular sharing of best practice through case studies this has been a central strand to the work undertaken across the partnership.

Development and agreement of 'Five Foundations of Early Help'

Whilst the five foundations of Early Help were not formally adopted, the discussion and shared vision for Early Help is ongoing across the partnership and many of the pillars remain central to how we work.

Performance Data

Year on year comparisons – What this means for families in Sefton.



During 2021/22 increased scrutiny of data analysis has driven performance and a greater understanding within council led services. It is the ambition that during 2022/23 the development of a shared outcomes framework and approach will strengthen the overall performance of Early Help.

Early Help has seen an increase in re-referrals during 2021/22, the level of need for families accessing Early Help has been evident in the complexity of difficulties families are experiencing. Domestic abuse, Child/Young Person Mental Health and Behavioural difficulties have been the top 3 reasons for referral into Early Help. This is representative of the national picture and is not specific to Sefton. As part of a Covid-recovery response increased face to face interventions have been delivered from Family Wellbeing Centres and partnership groups. Additional staff training opportunities for IAPT and Commit to Change has been invested in for 2022/23 to develop the offer and respond to need.

Focus on Partnerships - Children

Shadow Board

The shadow board aims to strengthen professional practice, services and ensure the voice of the child/young person is central to service improvement and development. The voice of the child/young person is fundamental within early help services as often decisions, policies, interventions facilitated will directly affect them. The shadow board will enable young people to feel empowered, informed and have the capacity to have their voices heard at the decision-making table. The shadow board has been delivered bi-weekly from our Early Help Youth Staff with regular attendance of 10-12 young people.

Throughout the year the young people have participated in a range of activities with the focus being on Improving services for young people and families. A SWOT task was completed in July 2021 for the Early Help Partnership Board. The aim of the session delivered was to capture the voice of the young people involved in the shadow board linked to their experiences of services. During January-March 2022 the young people have explored a range of areas in table below. A number of representatives from the shadow board also attended the Knifesavers programme with Liverpool Football Club in March 2022. The young people were able to listen, learn and participate in the afternoon training.

Capturing the Children's Voice

| Why are these groups important to young people? | What do you get from coming to the group? | What do you want to do next term? | What would your Youth Zones look like if you had funding? |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1: To get us out of the house. 2: To get us away from our parents. 3: To meet new people. 4: To get out our feelings. 5: To support our Mental Health 6: To meet new people. 7: To help other young people. | 1: Our dinner and tea. 2: Better Social Life 3: Making new friends 4: A break from home. 5: Better motivation. 6. People listen to what we say. 7: Make a difference to things when we get asked. | 1: Sports activities would be good. 2: Domino's night. 3: To work with Liverpool like we did at ACES. 4: Bowling/Flip out. 5: Help in the area with painting benches maybe. | 1: LED lights 2: Telly 3: Bean Bags 4: Pillows and blankets 5: Oven trays and mixing bowls 6: Sports stuff. 7: Rug. |



Next Steps

- **Social Action Programme** due to start May 2022: The aim of the programme is to enable young people to increase their understanding around their role within communities and ensure active participation. The programme will be delivered in partnership with Liverpool Football Club.
- **Sports leadership Award:** The aim of the programme is to increase young people's participation in healthy lifestyles with the view of increased resilience and mental health and wellbeing. The programme will be delivered in partnership with Liverpool Football Club.
- **Creation of Youth Zones:** The Group are currently exploring additional funding and will work alongside the Youth Endowment Fund to ensure all areas have youth friendly zones.

Focus on Partnerships – Children

swaca

SWACA

During 2021/22 SWACA have provided a range of services to over 500 Children and Young People in Sefton, who have been identified through initial assessments directly, or through mum's initial assessment, as having experienced / been affected by domestic abuse. These include:

- 433 Children / Young People service users accessing 1:1 support
- 55 Children / Young People service users accessing support from SWACA's Child on Parent Violence / Abuse Project
- 21 Children / Young People service users accessing SWACA's Together Programme (group work project)

Services for children and young people service users include:

- 1:1 casework support for a minimum of 6 sessions (usually in schools)
- The Together Programme structured group work programme (age appropriate)
- Support from a specialist Child on Parent Violence / Abuse Project
- Other bespoke services
- SWACA also provide (educational / training) support to various (multi-Sector) organisations operating in Sefton, regarding domestic abuse and 'healthy relationships', to improve awareness

Other issues

SWACA has not been able to provide a Refuge service during 2021/22, primarily relating to COVID-19, but SWACA is in the process of establishing a new and enhanced Refuge, in partnership with One Vision Housing. This will open in Summer 2022.

SWACA will also be establishing an adult Male victim's service in the very near future, to increase our inclusivity, and this extended service will include supporting dad's, alongside mum's, who are victims of / affected by child on parent violence / abuse.

SWACA has also secured funding to develop a new service for Women (mums), living in Sefton, who are accessing services from Liverpool Women's Hospital and are identified as at risk of domestic abuse. We hope to start this service in the very near future.

Focus on Partnerships – Children

The service has been responsive to low numbers of young people and families in treatment by offering a wide range of support and initiatives to young people, families and professionals throughout the last year and increasing service accessibility.

- The service has maintained its strong relationship with the Youth Justice service, adapting its offer to deliver engagement sessions to young people unsure about being referred to the service. This initiative has been agreed between With You and Sefton Youth Justice in response to reduced referrals and to ensure that young people are given the opportunity to talk to a With You worker about the support that is available.
- With You launched Project Re-Frame in January 2022. Re-Frame's main aim is to reduce the criminalisation of children, to divert them from the criminal justice system. At the point of arrest, for possession of a Class B or C substance, the child is offered this restorative programme and if they engage, they will avoid further criminal prosecution (via outcome 22 OOC Pathway). The University of Kent will be evaluating our work through a randomised control trial, the gold standard of evaluation. This will increase the sector's confidence in understanding what works and ensure delivery of diversion projects is of the highest standard to protect and support children.
- The service delivered drug & alcohol awareness sessions in partnership with the Sefton Safeguarding Children's Partnership. *Supporting Children & Families Impacted by Drug & Alcohol Use* has been delivered to professionals from agencies including Education, Sexual Health, 0-19 Service, CSC, Family Wellbeing and Youth Justice. Additionally, the service has contributed to the SSCP Safeguarding training which takes place each month and serves to raise awareness of the service with professionals in the borough. The service has also delivered awareness presentations to the Family Wellbeing Central Locality, the School Health Teams, Smoke Free Sefton and to CAMHS School Mental Health Teams.
- The service has delivered drug & alcohol awareness workshops and assemblies to over 500 pupils across 10 schools and colleges this year. Providing non-judgmental and evidenced based information to young people around substance use and ensuring they are aware of the pathways to support.
- We have launched an online booking system for young people and parents. The online booking service allows those worried about their drug or alcohol use to book an initial telephone appointment with the service at a date and time convenient to them. We have yet to see significant uptake of this offer, with focus being on promoting the offer to partners across Sefton.

Focus on Partnerships – Children

Reducing Parental Conflict – promoting Positive Relationships

Improving Positive Relationships between parents/carers and families, whether living together or not, is a priority within the Early Help Strategy and Supporting Families' Outcome Framework. It is recognised that this can often have the most impact on children's health and wellbeing. Over the last year, Sefton received a pooled fund of £159,000 to support parents facing continued conflict in their relationships and prevent lasting impact on their children. Sefton worked as part of a Liverpool City Region (LCR) cluster.

The Cluster group agreed to invest in several different strands:

- The development of a regional digital tool, which would support LCR families to accessing self-help developed specifically for LCR partner region.
- Family relationship training from One Plus One Parenting to train professionals to support families experiencing relationship difficulties, to include 2500 registrations and 90 professionals trained in the programme across the 7 LA's.
- A trained Ambassador and Champions from across the partnership

Progress

An Ambassador and 6 Champions have been recruited and completed a 12-week training programme. In addition, the Ambassador has gained a Level 4 qualification. Dates have now been released across the partnership for frontline staff to attend training sessions. In addition, briefings are ongoing with key partners such as head teachers and safeguarding leads in education, 0-19 health services team managers, Youth Justice team meetings, Every Child Matter's Forum, Children's Social Care managers, Police and VCF sector, so that they understand their role and can help to identify the right practitioners to attend the reducing parental conflict training.

Governance

A multi-agency steering group meets bi-monthly. The purpose of the group is to lead the development and implantation of an action plan to improve positive relationships.

Next steps

Embed practitioners' ability to:

- Recognise the difference between Domestic Abuse and Parental Conflict
- Utilise available tools for reducing parental conflict
- Promote the referral pathway
- Promote a bespoke regional digital tool, due to be launched June 2022

Steps are also underway to access 3 years more funding via the Department for Work and Pensions.

Focus on Partnerships – Children

South Early Intervention Huddle

The Early Intervention Huddles are designed to bring partner agencies working together in a common geographical area, to dynamically problem solve issues where early intervention and prevention is appropriate.

Within the Huddle, professionals bring a case (with consent), that may not be progressing as quickly as they would like or an aspect they may be stuck with. All agencies check their own systems to share what is known and current involvement. Together they dynamically problem solve any issues that may be present with advice sought on where to go for support.

Over the past 12 months, 77 cases were discussed at the Huddle.

Table 1 Referrals into the Huddle.

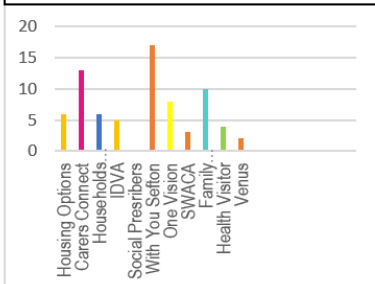
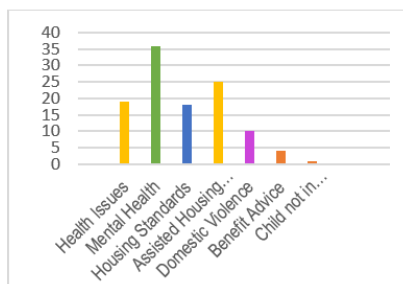


Table 2 Reasons for case discussions



Examples of outcomes and partnership working for families are as follows:

1. An Early Help Worker, Excel Housing and Poet's Streets Housing Associations worked together to repair a home and remove remnants from a home used as a cannabis farm. Mum is being supported with accessing a new property and money management.
2. Adult Social Care, Housing and Health, pulled together to support a family who were close to becoming homeless stay in their property temporarily. The family including 3 adult children with disabilities are being supported to find suitable accommodation.
3. Households into work, Housing Options, Adult Social Care, Council Tax team and Neighbourhoods team are supporting a tenant who is homeless due to debt, and fear of loan sharks. He is now accommodated in emergency accommodation whilst being supported to find a supported living property and managing debt.

Focus on Partnerships – Children



Sefton CVS

Every Child Matters Forum

The Forum is the co-ordinating body for the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector in Sefton working with Children, Young People and Families, with 433 members. It is facilitated by Sefton CVS and has representation on the Health and Well-Being Board.

Thrive Network Sefton

The network held 5 meetings this year and a number of new partnerships were developed. Thrive is the model that Sefton has adopted in its Children and Young People’s Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Multi Agency Thrive Model Training Workshops were delivered with SEAS Partners throughout the year over Zoom. Agencies across the partnership have completed the training. Feedback from attendees was that they could clearly understand where they fit in the model and had more awareness of other partner agencies and what they could offer.

Early Help Level 2 Pilot

The Pilot was successful in accessing funding from the Violence Reduction Partnership through Sefton MBC for a further 12 months. Q2 and Q3 Venus and Parenting 2000 continued to deliver the L2 Guided Self Help to families across Sefton. Due to the changes to the Front Door the plan for delivery for Q4 had to be revised, but other similar support was provided to families for this quarter. Co-ordination of this work and reporting to VRP on the project was completed by CVS.

Buddy Up

Buddy Up is a mentoring and befriending project for young people between 13 and 18 with additional needs. The project encourages social inclusion by recruiting and training volunteer peer mentors. The mentors are all young people aged between 13 and 25 who want to support young people with additional needs by befriending them and supporting them to take part in fun activities.



Focus on Partnerships – Children



First Steps – Commissioned Family Wellbeing

Context

First Steps Family Wellbeing Centre consist of a small team supporting over 67 children on Early Help as well as families on Child in Need and Child Protection plans. Since the COVID pandemic we have seen a sharp increase in the number of referrals for children with mental health issues and how these impact on school attendance. This is an area where we are focusing most of our training budget for staff and as a centre we also offer a space for Homestart to hold Counselling sessions for children and adults.

Community Support – we provide a supportive network around families, often preventing any formal need for support. We provide a sense of belonging, an informal listening ear and supportive friendships for new families. The offer is now also available from the new Birkdale Library Hub, Station Masters House. The offer includes:

Drop-in sessions including Rhyme Time, Dancing Songbirds, Baby Rhyme Time, Tiny Club and Inbetweenies, Baby Massage, Dad's club, Toddler group and Little Treasurers.

Paid sessions from Jo Jiggles.

Support baby weighing clinics on both sites run by the local health visitor team.

Space for Homestart to hold their counselling sessions

Holiday Provision

The school holiday periods allow us to extend our offer as we use the larger school spaces. During the Easter holiday period alone, we provided free activities for 128 adults and children including Stay and Play, Den Building, Top Tots, Baby Sensory and an Easter Treasure Hunt. We are now busy planning our Summer Fair which is also back by popular demand this year which includes lots of free activities but also help and advice from local services too.

Other ways we support our community include adult learning which increases the self-esteem and confidence in our adult community. 5 adult learners recently completed our Childcare course run by First Steps Enterprises and their popular Volunteer course for the summer term both provided accreditation for the attendees as well as opportunities for future employment.

Partnerships

We are always there to support our families through particular tough times through our links with local businesses, charities and donations. We have developed a strong partnership with SWACA hosting their successful Mirror project supporting women and children, as victims of domestic abuse, in two concurrent groups.

Our staff also deliver food every Friday from our collection at Waitrose to our most vulnerable families and support them with the collection of food from the Foodbank. We have a number of wider links within our community, having signed up with the OLIO app. We provide fresh food from local supermarkets and work closely with the LIONS charity who support with Asda vouchers and furniture. We are also supported by St John's Church in Birkdale who provide us with shopping vouchers as and when our families need them as well as over 20 Easter hampers which we gave to our most vulnerable families. Recently, we engaged with WAVE a meeting with Ainsdale churches, Ainsdale Councilors, and Sefton CVS to share how we can further collaborate to support our families and vulnerable adults in our community, providing an exciting new project for our future.

Focus on Partnerships – Children

Waterloo - Commissioned Family Wellbeing Centre

Universal Delivery

Sessions to families included “Prambles” in partnership with Crosby Library. Baby Massage courses, and Parenting advice. Volunteers offer their services and time to deliver a “chill and chat” session.

Targeted Delivery

Team around the school – work alongside Waterloo, St. John’s, Ursuline, Valewood, Forefield and Great Crosby Primary Schools, delivering interventions and 1:1 support with children to gain their voice and feelings which contribute towards the Early Help Assessments. Secondary & Special Schools are also supported. Other interventions include a drop-in session by Sefton Carers, sleep clinics and interventions such as Theraplay, Relax Kids, 1:1, tailored support and signposting for families with children with SEND.

Interventions

- Theraplay, Relax Kids, 1:1 work with children were completed face to face and staff went into local schools, homes and community to ensure young people received appropriate support. Children and young people have benefited from Theraplay techniques and Relax Kids on a 1:1 basis.
- Sleep Support - July 2021– 12 Early Help Workers from South Sefton attended training.
- In Spring 2022, following the positive feedback, we have booked for 16 South Sefton Parent Champions to attend sleep support training in May 2022.

Intent

- To deliver vital support to vulnerable families on Early Help Assessments.
- To support families through the assessments by delivering targeted interventions.
- Providing a timetable of activities for families to access to sustain their progress and to engage with other families.

Impact

Quotes

"Thank you I can't thank you enough how you helped me and my child, it's like having a different kid I really appreciate what you did for us xx"

"Thank you so much for everything you have done for my child and me. We've learnt so much and my child has developed into a delight to spend with. I know we still have work to do and it will be a long journey for us, but your support to guide us on this has been invaluable"



Focus on Partnerships – Children

Parenting 

Parenting 2000

Parenting 2000 offer a range of services, which support Early Help intervention and Prevention. Including:

Therapeutic Counselling for adults, young people and children from aged 6 years. 35 Children and 7 adults on Early Help Plans were referred to counselling this year.

Mental Health Wellbeing Groups for Children:

Kindness Box Group for Young People. Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) an evidenced based approach to learn how to sooth difficult emotions and thoughts such as anxiety and low mood.

Walk and Talk: Young people can walk out with youth workers in nature to boost mental and physical wellbeing and healing. It was a Covid safe way of engaging with young people as well as promoting their health and wellbeing.

Youth Circle: Emotional and mental health support group developed and led by our Educational Psychologist. This year over 30 young people attended.

Parenting Programmes:

Youth Connect 5 (YC5): Delivered 5 courses for parents/carers of children and young people with additional needs and /or behavioural issues. YC5 equips parents to better help their child/young person with their emotional /mental health.

Wellness for Work: A confidence building employability course for long term unemployed adults. From the 14 attendees 2 people gained employment and 1 entered further education.

Alchemy Youth – Parenting 2000's Youth Friendly Brand

Youth Club has over 250 members aged 9 – 18 years. Offering a variety of targeted sessions supporting mental health and wellbeing, skills for life and citizenship. Highlights this year include:

Career mentoring with The **Strive** programme, introducing young people to career mentors

The Girls Imperium - A boot camp for girls and young women, to give them vital skills and guidance to staying safe.

Youth Café: Our summer holiday drop-in Café providing food for children, young people and families.

Alchemy Detached Youth Mentoring:

Provides support to tackle County Lines activity by empowering vulnerable young people who are involved in or at risk of criminal exploitation to make positive choices, enhance their opportunities and widen their horizons.

This is achieved via a combination of mentoring, personal development and diversionary activities and non-clinical therapeutic support. The project has during 2021-2022 worked with 57 children and young people at risk who reported outcomes as follows:

- ↑ Over 56 % of cyp reported improved Personal Relationships.
- ↑ 93 % reported that they have made new friends.
- ↑ 77% are working towards goals at school that previously they had not been able to achieve.
- ↑ 62% are enjoying school more.
- ↑ 90% feel more knowledgeable about staying safe online.
- ↑ 80% know how to report drug suspicions online, and to say no to drugs.
- ↑ 80% strongly agree that they are making healthy choices regarding drugs.
- ↑ 90% agree or strongly agree that there are more knowledgeable about the dangers and risks of county lines.
- ↑ Over 90% feel they are now interested in new things and feeling less anxious and stressed.

Focus on Partnerships – Children

Sefton BAB's

Sefton BABS aims to break trans-generational cycles of ACES, at the earliest possible opportunity (during the antenatal and early postnatal period).

The aim of Sefton BABS Parent-Infant Mental Health Service (PIMHS) is to support parents and infants in Sefton to build strong, secure bonds and attachment relationships with their babies, via strength-based parent-infant interventions. BABS supports vulnerable parents to 'separate out' their past/present issues and recognise the difficulties which impact/pose a risk to their relationship with their baby.

Sefton BABS work in very close partnership with Sefton Early Help and Children's Social Care Teams. These working relationships are especially key and crucial in ensuring that vulnerable/at risk families receive the right assessments, safeguarding and therapeutic support/interventions, which enable the most positive and impactful immediate and longer-term outcomes.

There is no escaping the reality that 'our infants of today will become our parents of tomorrow'. Sefton BABS offers much needed Parent Infant Mental Health Provision for vulnerable, 'at risk', families and supports parents and infants to 'build good bonds' and break costly cycles for generations to come. This can, without a doubt, significantly reduce safeguarding issues/concerns, the removal of babies from parents' care, and prevent many unnecessary and unfortunate costs to families, commissioners, and society. This is earliest intervention as its most effective, impactful, and far reaching.

Focus on Partnerships – Children

Sefton Young Carers & Young Adult Carers Service

Sefton's specialist commissioned Young Carers provides support for young people aged 5yrs – 25yrs who have some sort of caring responsibility for someone in their family. This support may go above and beyond the normal tasks that young people may be expected to help with at home. The Young Carers Team has placed a big emphasis on increasing the identification of young carers and young adult carers, via partnership working and raising awareness particularly with Sefton schools and colleges.

This past year has seen the Young Carers service in Sefton expand to be able to offer support once a young person has become 18 and beyond. The Young Adult Carers service has engaged with 144 young people since it was launched in 2020.

The Young Carers service provides opportunities for young people to connect with other young carers, facilitating peer support to help young carers feel less isolated.



Focus on Partnerships – Parents

swaca

SWACA

Domestic abuse and unhealthy relationships are repeatedly identified as primary contributors within the Early Help context in Sefton, in terms of family challenges, distress and risk of harm (to both children and adults particularly, but not solely, mums).

Research clearly demonstrates that unaddressed domestic abuse, (in terms of both on going domestic abuse and emotional distress resulting from historical experiences of domestic abuse), can lead to serious risks of immediate physical harm, and, just as importantly, long-term trauma and poor mental health outcomes for children and parents.

During 2021/22 SWACA has provided a range of services to over 980 Women in Sefton, including those who are parents who have experienced, or been affected by, domestic abuse. These include:

- 766 Women service users accessing 1:1 support
- 41 Women (mums) service users accessing support from SWACA's Child on Parent Violence / Abuse Project
- 177 Women service users accessing SWACA's Mirror Project (adult group work project)
- Over 90 Women service users accessing Counselling, through a partnership between SWACA and SWAN Women's Centre

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Focus on Partnerships – Parents



Sefton CVS

Perinatal Support Community of Practice Sefton and Support Programme

Funding was available from Cheshire and Mersey Women's and Children's Services Partnership and Sefton CCG to further develop and enhance the work of grass roots voluntary and community groups on women's peri-natal mental health across the sub-region. The funding was to support activity in Sefton to support women and their families who are expecting a child or have recently given birth. They may be affected by social isolation due to Covid-19. The CVS Network was used to manage a small grants programme and to facilitate a Perinatal Community of Practice bringing the organisations together to share good practice.

5 Projects in Sefton received funding from Cheshire and Mersey and CCG for Perinatal Support.

The projects involved were:

Parenting 2000 - Emotional and practical support and guidance for children, young people and families

SWAN - Supporting Women to achieve mental wellbeing

Venus - Providing support, advice and group sessions

Homestart - Supporting Families

Feelgood Factory - Helping local people improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life

All projects delivered support groups for parents this allowed access to peer support, advice from trained counsellors and activities to enjoy. Parents reported improvements in their mental health and no longer feeling isolated.

A Perinatal Community of Practice was developed to link the projects together chaired by Sharon Cotterall at Sefton CVS.

The group was approached by Partners through the BABS Communications Group to expand the group to other partners.

Focus on Partnerships – Families

Light for Life

In addition to providing whole family support, Light for Life's Early Help Worker has established a Housing Advice Surgery at Talbot Street Family Wellbeing Centre to assist with housing issues and queries from both staff and other clients attending the Centre. This is being well utilised and providing a useful addition to the services already provided.

Over the past 12 months, Light for Life's Early Help Worker has worked with over thirty families with the incoming referrals and collaborative work with Talbot Street Family Wellbeing Centre. The majority of this work that has included housing advice and assistance, mental health issues, anti-social behaviour, concerns within school settings and support with accessing food and other necessities.

The past twelve months has seen a dramatic increase in the number of families in crisis due to the rising cost of food, utilities and household essentials and this has had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of families.

Focus on Partnerships – Families



Safe Families

Safe Families work in partnership with Councils; reducing the flow of children going into Looked After Care and improving outcomes for disadvantaged children and families. The value brought by the Safe Families model is also based on the social capital brought to communities through the volunteer model that Safe Families utilises; improving local connectivity, social organisation and ownership, along with the evidence that people can become more independent.

Safe Families offers bespoke packages of support, delivered through a network of volunteers providing a community solution for families in crisis or in need of support. The support is aimed at families of all description at any level of need and can provide support to parents and/or direct work with children, offering children's activities alongside support.

This may include:

- Practical work with parents on home conditions.
- Providing daytime respite for parents.
- Mentoring parents and improving parenting capacity through modelling, parental support, and advice.
- Providing emotional support to increase self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.
- Providing practical child focused activities – ensuring appropriate boundaries and strategies and providing access to community resources through positive and stimulating activities.
- Reducing isolation and increasing integration into local communities - building resilience and networking by encouraging and accompanying families to facilitate their engagement with community resources, toddler groups, Family Wellbeing Centres etc.

During the last 6 months, Safe Families has worked with families referred from Early Help and Children Social Care.

- 43 families have been supported.
- 24 cases are currently receiving active support.
- 111 children have benefitted from or are continuing to receive support during.
- Of families supported 77% (33) were Early Help and 23% (10) were from Children's Social Care.

19 Families have closed during the period having either received partial or full support. When surveyed at the closure of support, the families gave the following feedback:

- 100% improved/maintained social networks, confidence and self-esteem and/or ability to meet child's physical need.
- 95% improved/maintained family relationships and/or confidence in positive parenting.
- 90% improved/maintained happiness and mental health wellbeing.

Of the 19 Families closed during the period having either received partial or full support.

- 13 families (68%) when referred at Early Help have now closed to all services.
- 3 families (16%) when referred at Child in Need remained stable following support
- 1 family (5%) when referred at Early Help remained stable following support
- 2 families (11%) when referred at Child in Need de-escalated to Early Help following support

Focus on Partnerships - Families



Venus

Parents and Families

We have successfully supported over 100 families within 2021-2022 on Early Help plans improving outcomes for families and children. This support has been delivered by working with the family to identify support needs, remove potential barriers and reduce the need for social work intervention. In addition to this, we were commissioned in 2021 -2022 to work on the Early Help Level 2 pilot, to identify families who may not meet the level of need threshold but still require support. This involved short term, task centered support which enabled families to gain knowledge and information about support available in their local area and empowered families to access, which has reduced the need for longer term interventions.

To complement the support plans we offer:

- Weekly drop-in groups focusing on women's emotional wellbeing
- Financial resilience support
- Women's adult counselling
- Daily Information and guidance service
- Parenting Support
- Weekly family drop-in
- Evidence Based Parenting programmes (Incredible Years, Riding the Rapids)

Children and Young People

Any children and young people we support can attend the Star Centre where young people up to the age of 18 years can access information and advice on mental health issues, as well as group support and a variety of therapies.

Since 2020 Venus has experienced a significant increase in demand for children and young people's services following the COVID-19 pandemic – this has resulted in a 134% increase from pre-pandemic 2019 figures to 2021.

Figure below shows overall referral figures:

| Year | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Total |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 2019 | 20 | 19 | 28 | 43 | 36 | 51 | 42 | 31 | 34 | 49 | 54 | 50 | 457 |
| 2020 | 69 | 58 | 61 | 17 | 16 | 52 | 52 | 32 | 63 | 62 | 105 | 78 | 665 |
| 2021 | 75 | 66 | 95 | 78 | 123 | 115 | 96 | 56 | 86 | 97 | 96 | 86 | 1069 |
| 2022 | 95 | 75 | 89 | | | | | | | | | | 259 |

As a result of this we have now extended our services to an additional site at Thornton Family Wellbeing Centre, where we co-work with Sefton Council. We now provide a youth offer of an evening with a range of groups such as LGBTQ, creative crafts, life skills and a range of young people drop-ins offering mental health advice and guidance across both sites.

Focus on Partnerships

ACES

ACES Recovery Programme

The ACE Recovery Programme continues to go from strength to strength. The Recovery Programme have a bank of practitioners trained and enhanced partnerships with Health, SWACA, Adult Education, Liverpool Football Club, Active Sefton, VENUS, Supporting Families, Children Social Care and a number of voluntary community faith sector partners.

Reach of young people and adults

77 young people between April 2021 to April 2022 have engaged in the ACE Recovery Young Person Programme.

97 adults between April 2021 to 2022 have been referred and engaged in the ACE Recovery Programme.

The model below shows the activities undertaken as part of the programme 2021-2022 with anticipated and/or reported outcomes experienced as a result of the programmes.

| | | Increased resilience (Emotional resilience and self-regulation through development of coping strategies) | |
|--|--|--|---|
| A C T I V I T I E S | Pilot several school-based ACE Recovery Programmes. | Number of referrals into the programme. | P O T E N T I A L O U T C O M E S |
| | Home visits and school visits to carry out ACE assessments of individuals who may take part in the sessions. | ACE assessment and AVA scores. | |
| | Homework to be carried out with all participants to embed the tools learned. | Numbers engaging with the programme. | |
| | Ensure effective partnership engagement with a range of service areas. | Numbers completing the programme. | |
| | Effective supervision of facilitators and streamlined evaluation process following delivery. | Self-reported outcomes. | |
| | Promote of the programmes both locally and nationally. | Validated measures pre and post and follow up | |
| | | Increased understanding and awareness of ACES. | Increased social connectivity-through opportunities to link into the wider community. |
| | | Improved self-awareness and self-development. Understanding behaviour, emotions better recognition and controlling triggers | Increased confidence- the ability to cope in difficult situations and engage with other services. |
| | | Developing communication skills (to communicate needs and desires). | Increased sense of achievement-through attending the course putting the course content into practice. Positive developments in personal, social and emotional life. |
| | | Negative outcomes. Poor attribution due to the course content. Negative impact on mental health (short term) as the course brings up difficult emotions. | Increased self-esteem and mental wellbeing |
| | | Lack of support after the sessions and ineffective move on strategy for the participants. | Increased motivation |
| | | | Increased agency- a sense of control, self-management, self-determination and choice of responsibility. |
| | | | Positive change in relationships between children's young people and families. |
| | | | Increased educational attainment |
| | | | Positive change in behaviour for the children, young people, and adults. |

Focus on Partnerships



Career Connect

Career Connect deliver Sefton Council’s NEET Prevention and Early Intervention Service commissioned by Employment & Learning. The service aims to prevent the disengagement of young people who are not actively participating in education, employment, or training (NEET) and help them get back into education and training as soon as possible to help them reach their full potential.

We work in partnership with the Council’s Early Help teams to create sustained changes with some of our most vulnerable young people in Sefton, challenging stereotypes of what young people can achieve and addressing barriers to support them to move into appropriate learning and employment through a targeted professional, Information, Advice and Guidance service. By delivering effective support to address barriers and building resilience in families, we aim to equip young people with the necessary skills to prepare them for adult life and help families to cope better with the challenges life throws at them.

Through this coordinated approach, our designated Careers Coaches and Advisors work with our young people and their families to build trusting relationships and through the delivery of high-quality careers support, achieve excellent outcomes.

IMPACT

- Career Connect have 174 young people identified with Early Help flag
- Career Connect have worked with 67 young people as part of Supporting Families and/or early Help Plans in the last 12 months from 1st April 2021 - 31st March 2022
- A total of 370 interventions delivered
- 29 young people post 16 have received support and progressed into Education, Employment or Training destinations



Service features:

- 1:1 support
- caseload model
- regular contact with young people
- employability skills
- named adviser
- whole family approach
- link to localities



Partnership working:

- SEND
- YOT
- IMPACT
- Young Carers
- Elective Home Educated
- Social Care
- Early Help
- Complementary Education/Pinefields
- Year 11 Transition



Professional Body Awards

WINNER

Careers Service Manager

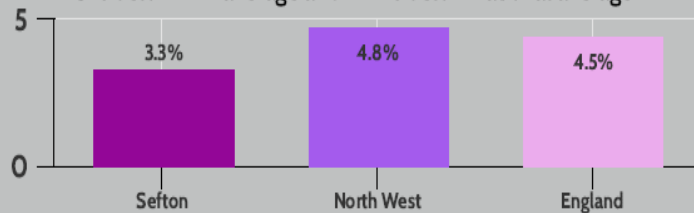
Shortlisted

Elective Home Educated, Early Help & YOT

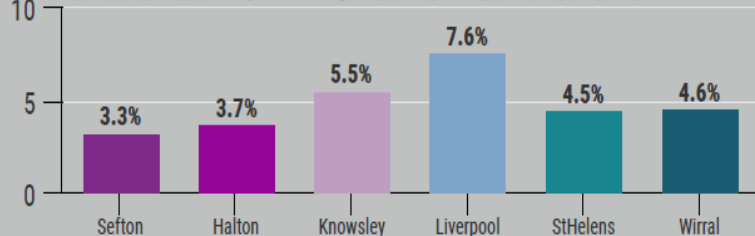


16-17 NEET and Not Known % March 22

-1.5% below NW average and -1.2% below national average



Ranked lowest in LCR NEET & Not Known Combined for 16-17



Focus on Partnerships

Sefton Parent Carer

Sefton Family Wellbeing parent/carer forums started in October 2021, initial feedback from parent/carers (P/C) was that Early Help is getting support at the right time, to support families to find out information that is important to them. Examples of support is finding activities for children, access to parenting courses for specific issues such as Children with Disabilities, help with how to complete benefit forms.

Some P/C's when looking at the internet, struggle to find up to date information about services, support. P/C's access information through Family Wellbeing staff, social workers, health visitors, schools, libraries, neighbours, their local community links, families and friends.

Parents and carers have reported that Covid-19 has affected their confidence, as support networks were limited. As services began to open they were nervous to attend groups, often feeling that they needed a first point of contact, a friendly face and someone to speak and interact with, rather than a screen.

Parents and carers also reported finding the correct support for children with disabilities, visible or not, and behavioural issues, a particular struggle. They often feel discriminated against in public and not as accepted as others.

Next Steps

A lead member of staff has been identified for each Locality; they are currently fact finding how parents want to be consulted. This could be either face to face, by telephone, as a group, through questionnaires, or via social media – to name just a few. This information will be reviewed with a view to further develop a Family Wellbeing Parent and Carers forum, taking feedback into account.

Focus on Partnerships

Mental Health and Therapeutic Approaches

Council based Early Help, have developed a range of approaches and undertaken a workforce programme of high-level training to provide psychological therapies and evidenced-based interventions supporting children, young people and their families with mental health needs. It is trauma-informed, ACE aware and positive relationship focused. This is delivered through:

WellYP Team (Well Young Person) – a small team working with schools as a traded offer individual, group or whole school intervention. Throughout the academic year 2021 – 2022 the team delivered 121 interventions across a range of mental health needs, 5 small group interventions and 2 Wellbeing assemblies. There is currently a waiting list of schools wishing to buy in the WellYP Service as the current team cannot meet the demand.

IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) – Sefton Council is a member of the Sefton IAPT Partnership which includes: CAMHS, Venus, Parenting 2000, Alder Hey, CCG and Council. Undergraduate and Postgraduate training is provided and funded by HEE via Manchester University. All partners have a commitment to annually grow the workforce and to deliver a range of targeted evidence-based therapeutic interventions. A total of 15 staff across Council based Early Help services have accessed training and are offering interventions. During 2021-2022 a further 6 staff qualified in delivering a variety of **IAPT** therapies delivered at Thornton FWBC and other Locality FWBC ranging from 1:1 therapy, group therapy as well as in-school based interventions. A total of 60 therapeutic interventions were delivered. A new referral pathway was established in January 2022 to improve accessibility and consistency for families.

Family Wellbeing Thornton Partnership with Venus – in March 2021, we embarked on a 5-Year project to co-locate therapeutic interventions at Thornton Family Wellbeing Centre. The aim of the project is to:

- Build on the IAPT and ACE programme offer
- Include WellYP traded service
- Forge links with the MHST offer
- Co-delivery of the BABS (Building Attachments and Bonds) Initiative with Health
- Develop a referral process for therapeutic interventions that sit under CAMHS and supports earlier intervention and prevention

Since September 2021, the **Thornton Project** has developed a joint delivery programme, maximising staff capacity through co-delivery and partnership. The number of partner agencies using the centre has also increased, as has the numbers of the public accessing. Agencies regularly using the centre now include:

- Sefton IAPT staff
- Sefton Early Help staff
- Venus and Star staff
- Mental Health support teams
- WellYP
- ADDvanced Solutions

The centre is now open 3 nights a week to facilitate three young people groups: Creative Drop In; LGBTQ+; and R-Gen group. Groups include:

- Incredible Years IAPT
- Riding the Rapids Primary IAPT
- Riding the Rapids Senior IAPT
- Adolescent Skills Training group IAPT
- Cathy Creswell – Parenting the anxious child
- ACEs Adult
- Young Person Participation group
- Baby Mindfulness programme: sensory play, massage, rhyme time
- ADDvanced Solutions parent/carer advice and support

The centre also offers a number of drop-in services to the community: Parent Mental Health; Early Help; Young Person Mental Health.

Focus on Partnerships

Active Sefton

Active Sefton supports Early Help through various programmes and partnerships, using positive activity to help address wider agendas and issues that may be experienced by our children and young people.

These include

- **1-2-1 Futures Community Programme:** Providing children and young people aged 11-19 with 1-2-1 mentorship to support with their physical and mental-wellbeing.
- **1-2-1 Secondary Offer:** Providing children and young people in secondary schools with a full programme of support to improve their physical and mental wellbeing.
- **MOVE IT:** A community-based weight management programme for children aged 5-18, and their families, who are above their ideal weight or need help with weight maintenance.
- **Active Schools:** Promoting health and wellbeing in primary schools across Sefton through a range of programmes and workshops. This project supports the pupils and their families to follow healthier choices by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to do so.
- **Reset, Restart, Rethink:** The programme works with either victims of domestic abuse or those who have witnessed domestic abuse, on a 1-2-1 basis, as an extension to the Children and Young People's 1-2-1 Programme, with the aim of improving physical and mental well-being.

In addition to Active Sefton delivery, the team also work in partnership with Early Help to co-deliver the following programmes:

- ACE's Programme; Commit to Change Perpetrator Programme; Ride the Rapids

Impact

Throughout 2021/2022, over **6,500 children and young people** attended Active Sefton sessions. 83% of young people across the services offering mental wellbeing support have improved their mental health, with 71% increasing their confidence. This is alongside all children and young people increasing their physical activity levels and improving healthy habits around nutrition. Feedback from schools demonstrated how young people's behaviour has significantly improved, alongside school attendance and attainment, focus and concentration.

Feedback

"I really enjoyed the positive energy and motivation from the coach. It really helped me when I didn't think I could do more, he helped me a lot. I wouldn't change anything about the programme, I think it's great."
(Move It participant)

"Thank you, Active Sefton, for helping to make us healthier". "I really enjoyed learning about the benefits of eating different types of food." (Pupils from St Monica's Primary School who participated in Active Schools)

The 1-2-1 programme has resulted in one student, who was on a personal support plan stage C and since the programme he has now been downgraded to Stage B, which means he is becoming less at risk of exclusion. This is also improving the relationship with parents as they can see the additional support being given to their child. (Assistant Head Teacher, Maricourt High School)

Case Studies

Focus on Partnerships – Children

Case study

Waterloo – Commissioned Family Wellbeing Centre

A family made up of both parents and two children ('J' - aged 2 years & 'E' - 8 years old).

Mum has been bed bound for 7 years due to neurodevelopment condition and the family were referred to WFWC for Early Help support via Sefton Carers Centre as dad reported he couldn't cope anymore.

An Early Help assessment was completed together and parents outlined their worries at present - financial difficulties - dad is working long hours but only one wage, concerns youngest 'J' was not developing age appropriately, 'E' was presenting as worried and withdrawn.

Through Early Help, a 2-year old discretionary funding application was completed and a 2-year check completed by the Health Visitor to highlight developmental delays. There is now support in place for 'J' as he attends funded nursery 5 mornings and referred to portage & SALT for additional support.

This has alleviated some stress at home as dad is now able to work from home and solely concentrate on his paid employment. Mum was able to chat to workers via video calls and she reported this really helped her feel involved with everything. Mum did not want home visits to see her as she felt embarrassed. Workers dropped food parcels weekly during the holidays to see the family that way.

Safe Families support was offered but mum felt her extended family support worked fine for them.

'E' is now accessing Young Carers to meet other young people in similar situations. He has a trusted adult there to offload his worries about mum. School have also funded free after school places twice a week which he thoroughly enjoys. This has meant dad is able to complete his job in the day and not work when the children have gone to bed. 'E' has also completed 6 weeks of Relax Kids sessions and reports to feel calmer and less anxious.

Through Early Help support and services in place the family are now in a much better place and are so grateful for all the support they have received.

"Thank you for all your help it has made such a difference."

Focus on Partnerships - Children

Parenting 

Case study (A) *Parentina 2000*

Referred by: Counsellor from Parenting 2000

Reason for referral: Young person experiencing poor mental health/anxiety

Overview

14-year-old boy struggling with his mental health, due to trauma suffered in the very early stages of his life and bullying at primary school. After Covid, this led to him not being able to access his educational establishment. This young person found school difficult as he struggled educationally.

Mum was under her GP for her anxiety due to the trauma she had suffered from a young age and into adulthood with two major traumas; the loss of her first born and domestic abuse when married to the children's father.

Response

EHW asked the GP to do an urgent referral to CAMHS due to the son's declining mental health. CAMHS assigned a mental health practitioner to work 1:1 in the family home and a psychiatrist to manage his medication.

EHW worked closely with the CAMHS worker who decided that alongside his poor mental health that he probably had undiagnosed ASD. CAMHS worker did the referral to the ASD pathway and asked the Clinical psychologist to take the history. EHW worked with clinical psychologist to support mum with her trauma. EHW referred mum for Rewind Therapy on the recommendation of the Clinical Psychologist.

EHW supported mum to claim PIP for her son. Also, with an excessive £3000 bill from her household energy provider which had put mum into debt, EHW helped with an application to British Gas Energy Trust in getting a Smart Meter fitted; and this followed with a complaint to the energy provider asking for a refund.

Outcomes

- The son's diagnosis of autism has supported him to understand how he processes information. Accepted by Sefton's complementary education service has allowed him to access education at home, which helped mum to better understand some of his difficulties and some of his routines.
- Mum had further counselling to prepare her for the Rewind therapy. Mum found the rewind therapy hard but helpful.
- Smart meter fitted, proved the amount of electricity used and resulted in a partial refund. British Gas Trust awarded mum money, this removed 80% of the debt.
- Early help and multi-agency working together successfully supported this Lithuanian Family.

Focus on Partnerships

Parenting 

Case study (B) *Parentina 2000*

Referred by: Hospital Mental Health Team

Reason for Referral: Mum's mental health had led to an overdose

Overview

Mum had taken an overdose and missed the school pick up for her children. This had an impact on her eldest son who was then worried that she may not turn up again in the future. Her eldest son started to show anger and aggression at home. Sleep routines for all three children was also a concern. Due to this the two older children were often late to school, and the mornings were very stressful for mum and the children.

Mum had difficulties in asking for family support and also for finding time and support for herself. Mum and dad were also struggling financially due to several loans that needed repaying and items on credit that had been purchased by another member of the family in their name. Both mum and dad are self-employed, but mum had not been working.

Response

Early help assessment was conducted with mum shortly after the overdose; worked collaboratively with the crisis team to ensure that a safety plan was in place for mum and that any ongoing medication had been arranged and collected from the pharmacy.

Early Help made referrals to the Swan Centre for mum to access some counselling, also met with mum to discuss ways on how to tackle asking the family for support with her youngest.

Early Help worker conducted some sleep workshop work with the family, and as a group created a sleep routine for all three children. Through a TAF meeting, school also offered the option of breakfast club which enabled the children to start earlier and have a positive start to the day, one in which they did not feel "late" to school.

Early Help signposted family to the Citizen's Advice Bureau, and they managed to consolidate their debts into an easy monthly repayment which reduced the stresses on home life.

Arranged Relax Kids referral and zoom counselling sessions with Parenting 2000 for the eldest son, along with school organising a mentor to support him through his anxieties.

Outcomes-

- Children were arriving at school on time
- Sleep had improved mental wellbeing of whole family
- Mum went back to work, self-employed, with family support for childcare
- Mum and eldest son accessed appropriate therapeutic support
- Mum had grown in confidence and felt in a more stable place with her mental health
- Eldest son was dealing with the school day with less anxiety and anger had reduced at home

Focus on Partnerships – Children

Case Study *Sefton BAB's*

Family had been hard to engage, so nursery nurse from the health visiting team worked with the Early Help team and completed a joint visit. Mum required support around the child's behaviour.

The collaboration between the Early Help worker (EHW) and the nursery nurse (CNN) from the health visiting team, meant that a clear plan for the mum and her child was developed with mum only having to share her story once. Mum's participation means that the plan has a much better chance of working as her views and concerns were taken into account by both teams and she could see the collaborative working.

The benefits for the CNN and EHW are they have been able to define who is responsible for each area of work (this means no overlap and blurring of roles with clear accountability); and have already arranged a further date for reviewing progress with mum which ensures that she and her child are kept at the centre of the Early Help plan.

Mum commented on the visit and said she has been listened to and feels supported. She was happy for future visits to continue on a joint basis.



Focus on Partnerships – Children

Case study

Sefton Young Carers & Young Adult Carers Service

'KS' was referred to the Young Carers service by a teacher at her school. She had noticed 'KS' was becoming very withdrawn and was distancing herself from her usual friendship groups.

'KS's mum is registered as blind, she has been losing her sight gradually for a few years. She is currently undertaking white stick training. 'KS' constantly worries about her mum and feels a great responsibility supporting her mum when they are out and about.

Recently 'KS' found her mum after she had a fall at home, which she found very distressing and fears her mum will get badly hurt one day.

'KS' started coming to the Young Carers weekly clubs and soon made lots of new friends. Each week she became more confident and attended a 3-day circus skills workshop during the school holidays.

Mum has said that the change in 'KS' has been so positive, she is a lot happier at home and engaging well in school again. She continues to attend the weekly clubs and says she looks forward to the trips that will be coming up in the school holidays.

She has also made lots of new friends at club who she keeps in contact with during the week and arranges to meet up with outside of the Young Carers clubs.



Focus on Partnerships - Children

Case study *Active Sefton*

Reset, Rethink, Restart Programme

'B' is a single mum who self-referred in July 2021 on to the 'Reset, Rethink, Restart' programme after speaking to one of the programme mentors, Jackie. The programme works with either victims of domestic abuse or those who have witnessed domestic abuse, on a 1-2-1 basis, as an extension to the Children and Young People's 1-2-1 Programme. Working in partnership with SWACA, Family Wellbeing Centres, IDVA's and Early Help Teams, referrals are made across Sefton and a range of activities take place in various settings including leisure centres, parks and open spaces. Participants are assigned a mentor who works with them to deliver 1-hour sessions over 6-12 weeks, which are bespoke to the individual needs and interests, with the team further signposting on to appropriate services if not already engaged. The programme can be tailored to work with adults on their own, a family unit together or see the adult and children separately, using physical activity to break down barriers.

'B' described how she and her sister grew up in a toxic household with her their mum's partner being abusive and violent towards them. She felt like she needed support with her anxiety and depression and felt weekly 1-2-1 sessions with her mentor Jackie would help her feel better about herself. The aims of the sessions were to build up 'B's confidence to attend activities alone, alongside increasing her self-confidence in everyday life. The barriers to overcome involved childcare for her son as she has little support, also struggling with general fitness and motivation, alongside her anxiety.

As a result of taking part in Reset, Rethink, Restart, 'B' was introduced to the Netherton Activity Centre, as it has a crèche for her son to attend who could be looked after whilst she undertook activities in the Centre. This has enabled her to have access to free time on her own to get herself fitter and consequently feel better about herself. As part of the programme, participants receive a three-month free gym pass, which has meant she could sustain her activity outside of the 1-2-1 sessions. As a result of the sessions, 'B's mental wellbeing significantly improved, as well as her self-esteem and confidence. With some of the techniques she was taught by Jackie (including breathing techniques) her anxiety levels have also decreased, as has her depression, and she has managed to keep making progress since finishing with the service.

Further support for 'B' was gained from signposting her to the crèche at the Netherton Activity Centre, as well as referring her in to Living Well Sefton where she will receive a wider range of support addressing all social determinants of health.

Feedback received from 'B':

Hi Jackie, just been to see the crèche and gym, it is absolutely fantastic. I am so made up, it is going to change my life thank you so much x

My anxiety has improved, I look forward to coming the gym, I feel I am getting back on track putting me first, I am going at least 3 times a week.

Since I have been coming to the gym my confidence has come a long way, having a reason to get out of the house has helped with my depression.

It helps me work out my frustrations. Having Jackie to talk to who does not judge has helped a lot.

The programme is fantastic, it has given me the opportunity to work out and take some time for myself, the crèche is amazing, Brenda is fabulous with my son, I feel so at ease leaving him there. Since the programme, my mental well-being has improved. There's still a way to go but Active Sefton are amazing, and I couldn't thank you all enough.

From her sister:

B is so made up with the programme she is so happy, she can have time to herself to attend the classes and gym, having her son in the creche has been so good for the both of them.

Focus on Partnerships – Parents

swaca

Case study SWACA

'A' separated from her ex-partner several years ago, who was controlling and coercive, subjecting her to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. 'A' raised concerns about the impact of the domestic abuse on her child, her own wellbeing and her current relationship, together with the ongoing emotional stress of having to see her ex-partner when she facilitates handover for contact. There is a child arrangement order in place to enable the father to see his child.

'A' requested emotional support from SWACA to support moving forward with her life, as she felt her ex-partner was still controlling her through contact. A SWACA Adult Caseworker undertook regular phone appointments with 'A', arranged due to COVID-19 restrictions. The appointments adopted a person-centred approach, focusing on 'A's 'whole experience' of domestic abuse and provided emotional support using psychoeducational resources. This increased 'A's understanding of what domestic abuse consists of, enabling her to be able to recognise future abusive behaviours.

The sessions enabled 'A' to safely explore and increase her understanding of how domestic abuse had impacted on her emotional wellbeing and relationships with others, for example through negative thought processes, and behaviour responses. This provided 'A' the opportunity to identify changes she wanted to make and initiating change.

Other work completed centred on emotional and physical safety from 'A's ex-partner, supporting her child's emotional wellbeing, the importance of self-care, and developing emotional regulation techniques. 'A' also received counselling via SWACA psychotherapist for therapeutic support around her anxiety.

'A's child was allocated a children's worker to enable a safe space for them to explore their emotions/feelings and thoughts.

'A' highlighted that she was more aware of how the domestic abuse has affected her and that she had more of an understanding of why she responds to issues the way that she does. 'A' was able to fully acknowledge the ongoing impact of the child arrangement order was having on her life and 'A' built up the confidence to make changes to the order, so that she did not feel as vulnerable when facilitating handover. 'A' was able to identify the importance of being kinder to herself and that it would not be a quick process to heal after the long-term domestic abuse she had experienced.

'A' was also able to implement self-care strategies and to fully express that she felt things would improve following the work she completed with SWACA.

Focus on Partnerships – Families

Case study *Light for Life*

Case Study One

Family A – two parents, three children, accessed the Centre as they had received a section 21 from their Private Rented Sector landlord, who was intending to sell the property.

One of the children has additional needs and although the family had tried to find alternative PRS accommodation, a suitable property was not available.

A DTR was made to the local authority who found them to be in Priority Need, along with a property Pool Plus application to access the Social Housing register, and they were rehoused within a short few weeks.

The new property is close to the University where mum attends, which she was very happy about and the family are doing well.

Case Study Two

Family B – lone parent, two children. The eldest son (adult) has ADHD and a child of his own and need their own accommodation.

Having additional needs, he found it extremely difficult to hold conversations on the phone, due to concentration and memory issues.

He was assisted to make appropriate phone calls and to register with Property Pool Plus to access the Social Housing Register.

With additional support, the application is now 'live' and he is currently 'bidding' for properties for himself and his son.

Focus on Partnerships – Families



Case study *Safe Families*

Referral Information

'S' is a single mum, she has one child at home, 'K', who is the youngest of 5 siblings. She is an 11-year-old female and has a diagnosis of ASD. 'K' has aggressive outbursts towards 'S' randomly – 'S' is not sure of triggers. 'K' doesn't like leaving the house and she hasn't been to school for 2 years. 'S' is suffering with her mental health too as she is not able to leave house easily and do shopping etc. 'K' self-harms and has extreme hygiene issues - she will not get washed for long periods of time i.e. she won't wash or brush her hair for several months at a time.

Intervention

- **Therapeutic Parenting** was suggested to mum which she agreed to.
- A **befriending volunteer** was matched with the family to reduce isolation for mum.

Therapeutic Parenting Coaching is a telephone support program to help families deal with a range of challenges. Safe Families provides a qualified therapeutic parenting coach who will chat to the parent/carer on the phone for up to six calls. Alongside this, they are provided with a Safe Families guide to Therapeutic Parenting to support the sessions.

Topics covered include a brief overview of Therapeutic Parenting and an exploration of the brain science and trauma response, including an understanding of the Fight, Flight, Freeze response and how this impacts the executive functioning of the brain.

Participants are taught about the three C's – Calm, Connect and Consider when responding to a child who has been triggered into a trauma response and helped to explore the use of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) in their parenting.

Other topics that are covered are structure, routine and boundaries, the importance of parental presence and 'time in', not 'time out' and the use of natural and logical consequences.

The support can be tailor-made to the individual family and may also cover strategies to manage challenging behaviour such as stealing, lying and swearing or incontinence issues or sexualised behaviour. The Therapeutic Parenting coach can also signpost parents/carers to other relevant support. 'S' has fully engaged with Therapeutic Parenting support and although her situation is very challenging, she has done her best to take on board and practice some of the new strategies she has learnt. It has been a pleasure supporting 'S' and although her daughter is extremely challenging with highly anxious behaviour, 'S' has felt that understanding this has changed her perspective and helped her to support 'K' as best she can.

The Parenting Coach has reassured 'S' that she can message them anytime if she wants to chat about anything related to Therapeutic Parenting.

Family/Parent Feedback: 'You have worked wonders with me. The things you have taught me I never knew, and I wish I had known this years ago - it would have made such a difference. I think every new parent should do this before they have their baby!'

'She opened my eyes to a lot of things - even the first session I learned a lot of information and I feel that if I had had this advice years ago, maybe things would have been a lot different with 'K'. Just being able to understand 'K' - how she feels - and a changed approach to parenting - things would have been different if I had have known earlier - Fiona is very pleasant to talk to and non-judgemental.'

Focus on Partnerships

Case study ACES

The ACE Programme coordinator completed a further analysis of 13 young people who completed the programme from Newfield School based on the high levels of poor mental health and poor educational attainment vulnerabilities to track and measure progress.

Educational attendance and attainment: 100% of the sample group had low level attendance or were on the verge of exclusion from mainstream education due to behavioural issues.

| Pre course attendance below 90% September 2021 | Post course attendance December 2021 |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 23.81% | 30% |
| 97.62% | 100% |
| 61.54% | 100% |
| 80% | 95% |
| 95% | 100% |
| 19.05% | 80% |
| 97% | 100% |
| 100% | 95% |
| 100% | 100% |
| 60% | 100% |
| 90% | 90% |
| 23% | 30% |
| 57% | 90% |

Health and wellbeing: 100% of the young people had an ECHP and all young people were experiencing low level mental health.

- All 13 young people demonstrated an improvement in their motivation using the motivational assessment across the 8 weeks.
- All 13 young people were referred into Aiming High for additional support and additional funding was secured to provide an easter and summer residential experience.
- All 13 young people received discount memberships for the gym through Aiming High.
- All 13 young people were able to identify and build their protective factors which resulted in building resilience.
- All 13 young people were able to develop and increase their awareness and develop strategies linked to self-regulation.
- All 13 young people were able to develop and participate in grounding techniques.
- All 13 young people received 2 support session with Career Connect.
- All 13 young people received wellbeing packs.
- All 13 young people were referred to the Active Sefton 1-1 programme.
- 2 young people have been attending the shadow board to ensure the voice of young people is heard and shared.

Next steps

- ACE participants to engage with national researchers ECORYS to share experiences.
- TIE will launch training September 2022.
- Pilot programme with CCG to launch September 2022 to respond and ensure effective early intervention and prevention referral pathway is developed.
- Recovery Programmes 12-month operational plan in place and external funding secured 2022-2023.

Focus on Partnerships

Parenting 2000

Case study

Parenting 2000

Baby Talk Perinatal Drop-in Group

Overview

Seamus was born by caesarean section in July 2021, and he was 7 weeks premature. Mum spent three weeks in the SCUBU with Seamus on breathing apparatus and feeding tubes. They were in hospital and for a few weeks when they came out there were still COVID restrictions in place, so they couldn't have visitors or go to groups. Also, mum was suffering with her C- section scar and struggled to get out for walks etc. This took a toll on her Mental Health as she was feeling isolated and lonely.



Response

Mum found out about Baby Talk through social media and in September 2021 she joined the group to alleviate these feelings of isolation and loneliness she was experiencing. She was keen to make other mum friends and to talk to people in the same situation as herself.

During the group, mum was able to access free nappies, food and baby clothes and has enjoyed the pamper session which she described as 'A MUCH NEEDED bit of self-cure'

Outcomes

Since joining Baby Talk mum has reported to have felt so much better. She looks forward to Tuesday mornings.

Mum said 'It has been brilliant to share experiences and tips with other parents and getting out of the house has improved my mental and physical health. I hope to see the group continue, so it can benefit other new parents as it has benefitted me.'

Focus on Partnerships



Case study *Career Connect*

Case Study - Young Person, now 18 years old. previously open to early help, previously on a CIN plan and one historic missing persons episode. previous non-attender at school. Has also had a brief period of involvement with Sefton YOT and CAS teams. Ongoing contact since 2019. YP has spent brief periods of time in EET destinations, back to NEET and various spells of 'not capable' due to ongoing poor mental health. Support from Career Connect continued throughout this time and following closure of plans with LA. From early interventions, YP's mental health was identified as a significant barrier. When COVID and lockdown restrictions hit, there was an obvious decline in YP's mental health leading to YP contacting Coach and expressing suicidal intention. With encouragement and emotional support, YP engaged with emergency services, attended emergency department and further appointments with mental health services. Ongoing support and eventually receiving a diagnosis and treatment. YP explored self-employment as an option, this would offer flexibility and working hours/days around their 'good mental health days'. Coach provided information, advise and guidance, referred for support for young entrepreneurs, sources for potential business start-up grants/loans. YP had a focus and began to do their own market research, identifying gaps in the market locally, made connections with a local community resource, providing low-cost rental retails space and YP began successfully trading from there in October/November 2021. As of 12th May 2022, YP reports business is successful, maintains stability with mental health due to new medication since receiving BPD diagnosis and is even seeking ways to further expand their business.

Client Voice:

Anonymous feedback received on our online survey.

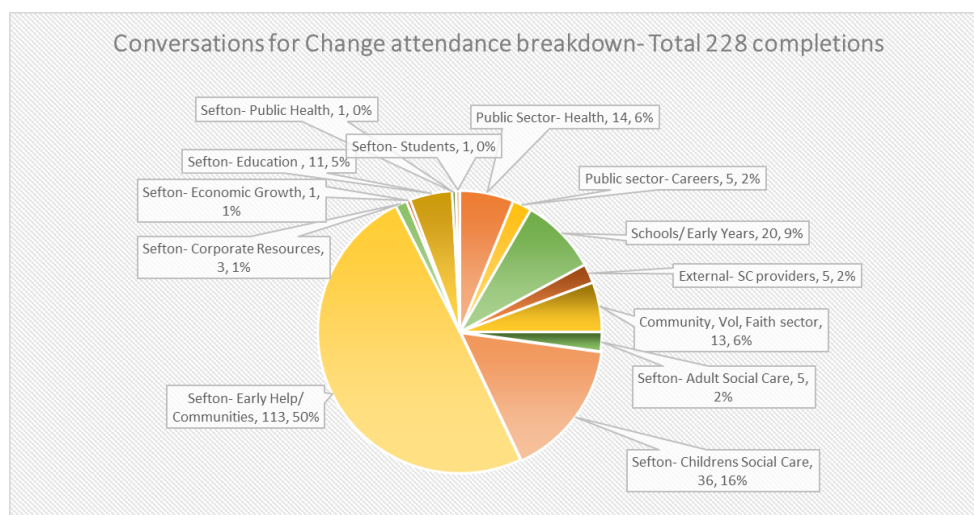
"Career Connect Coach Lisa, simply put is one of the best workers on your books. She has an incredibly friendly personality and what shines through her personality most is the fact that she legitimately cares about the people she is working with. She always strives to help them as best as she can and always succeeds. Lisa has helped me through some of my darkest moments..... Most would have given up on me, I know because most have."

FEEDBACK FROM PARENT - "Career Connect is absolutely brilliant! The coach has been so patient with both Lee and myself. Lee doesn't engage with anyone but he did with Career Connect. The coach seemed to know exactly what he wanted and needed. We were worried that he hasn't done anything since leaving school and were worried about his involvement with gangs we thought he was going in a downward spiral. Career Connect got him the training he needed and now he can see his life moving in a different way. He is so happy and so am I and this is because of what the Career Connect Coach did."

Training and Learning

During 2021/22 Early Help training offer has primarily been delivered virtually, there has been an increased E-Learning package to compliment the mandatory offer of training. In 2021/22 a total of 63 professionals accessed Early Help Plan, Assess, Review training and 60 attended Early Help systems training. The training is offered across the partnership to enable professionals to be equipped to take on the role of lead practitioner and use the EHM recording system.

During 2021/22 Early Help invested in external training with a delivery of conversations for change workshops. The workshops introduced motivational interviewing and relationship-based practice, the additionality of conversation clubs enables the workforce to attend workshops to practice techniques and build confidence in the approach.



The successful DfE bid in 2021 has secured the support of Leeds City Council to launch the Family Valued Partnership. During 2022 Early Help will take part on restorative practice training sessions during the course of 2022 to build on the relationship and strength based approach which has been developed.

It is acknowledged that further work needs to take place to provide a wider representation of lead practitioners across Early Help. Training and development across the Early Help Partnership and review of the training offer will be key to the next steps in creating and implementing a clear plan of how the role of Lead Practitioner will be developed wider.

Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance Subgroup was established in April 2021. The purpose of the subgroup is to undertake and monitor all activities in relation to quality assurance. This will include any review of audit activity, identifying good practice and sharing learning identified across the partnership. Membership of the group was sought from across the partnership, CVS, Family Wellbeing Centres and We are with You (WAWY) have been influential to the group and their participation has driven the group forward.

A focus on data analysis through the Early Help Dashboard has informed activity within the group. The sharing of quality assurance practices was an early topic explored to consider how this is aligned across the services within Early Help to triangulate key findings, learn from best practice and make best use of the resource we have across the partnership. This has prompted discussion around raising awareness of key partner agencies where data is showing high level of referral to Early Help however specialist services are reporting low referrals for support. Joint audits have been completed by We are with You Service Manager and Early Help Quality Assurance and Audit Officer, in response to low referrals being reported by We are with You and an increase in referral rates into Early Help for children, young people and parents substance misuse. The findings of the audit led to further awareness sessions being held across Family Wellbeing Centres with WAWY Service Manager attending staff development sessions, newsletters being circulated across the partnership and initial discussions around co-location of WAWY practitioners within the Family Wellbeing Centres once Covid-19 restrictions have lifted. It is positive to report that WAWY are seeing an increase in involvement within families plans and a slight increase in referrals from lead practitioners.

In November 2021, the concept of the Early Help champions group was developed through the subgroup and we considered ideas on how to engage practitioners across the partnership. A poster was created with nominations sought until December 2021. It was positive to see a fantastic response from across the partnership with practitioners being nominated by their peers and managers. The group will be key to future development in capturing practitioners voice and ideas in service delivery.

Membership of the meeting presents a risk, unfortunately, wider representation from Health, Education, Police and Children Social Care has not been consistent. Since October 2021 Children's Services quality assurance arrangements were under review through Children Social Care improvement team, quality assurance activity was being implemented through Senior Leadership. This impacted on the momentum of the group and the ability to implement and fulfil the purpose of the group. This has been recognised within Early Help and agreement secured from Senior Leadership to re-establish the group. Following the decision, the group met in May 2022 with the purpose to review the Terms of reference and focus on how we engage key partners within the group. The Quality Assurance Subgroup will continue to meet bi-monthly, quality assurance frameworks are due for review and will need to be aligned to Children's Services improvement plans and vision. A survey has been created and distributed across the partnership to gain the views of key partners on the vision

for Early Help, challenges and ideas for development. The findings of the survey will be shared with the group & included within plans in 2022/23. It is the intention for the group to be integral in developing the framework and implementing future auditing schedules across the partnership. The priority for the group is to secure consistent membership from across the partnership.

Strengths and Challenges

The Early Help Partnership has collectively identified several strengths, which if capitalised upon will provide leverage to the continued journey of development for both the partnership and the early help agenda. These include:

- A strong commitment from a broad range of members, who have expertise and knowledge
- A dedicated and skilled workforce who are passionate about improving outcomes for children, young people and families
- A group committed to overcoming barriers and finding solutions to how we improve and move forward.

However, the partnership has also identified several ongoing challenges for which we need to find solutions. These include:

- An increase in demand and complexity of cases within Early Help
- A method to better share and understand what each other offers, identify clear pathways and referral routes to avoid duplication and ensure families are signposted to the right support at the right time
- The ability to measure impact against a shared outcomes framework, with effective data sharing
- An effective data dashboard to enable the partnership to identify trends and/or gaps and flexibly alter delivery to meet emerging need
- Effective use of predictive data to offer a more proactive and less reactive approach
- System development, so all forms of Early Help can be captured and reported

Future Priorities

The Early Help Partnership has identified several key priorities for the group to drive during 2022/23. These include:

- Embedding Supporting Families outcomes across the partnership
- Shared ownership and commitment across the partnership to focus on key aspects of the recent inadequate inspection outcome of Children's Services, specifically addressing 'the serious gaps in Early Help services' and further developing 'the role of the lead professional which is largely absent'
- Working alongside Leeds Family Valued approach, invest in practice, prevention and relationships to reduce the flow in statutory services, particularly the numbers entering care.
- Ensuring adequate information sharing agreements are in place to support the development of effective data dashboards
- Reviewing pathways and methods to increase and drive access into early intervention and prevention-based services and associated communications to promote what is available.
- Development of cross partnership working on emerging areas of demand including homelessness prevention and school attendance
- Reviewing existing arrangements for capturing service users voice and how they become integral into the development of Early Help
- A focus on embedding key aspects of practice such as Reducing Parental Conflict and support for parenting
- Building capacity in communities aligned with Family hub based working
- Joint multi-agency workforce development plan across Early Help system
- Strengthening data governance within the Early help Partnership Board
- Developing the role of Early Help Champions across the partnership workforce and providing opportunities for staff to shadow across providers to enhance the knowledge of provision for families.