

Reducing Parental Conflict Programme Briefing Note

1. Background

This is a cross Government national programme with a total of £39 million available until 2021.

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) is offering two grants to help local authorities firstly strengthen strategic leadership around parental conflict and secondly fund training for frontline staff to identify and appropriately respond to parental conflict.

The programme is based on evidence:

- Exposure to frequent, intense and poorly resolved parental conflict can affect children's emotional, social and educational development.
- 11% of children (more than one in ten) who live with both parents in the same household will have at least one parent who reports relationship distress.
- Children living in workless families are three times more likely to experience parental conflict than families where both parents are in work.

2. Programme objectives

Objective 1 - Supply

Ensuring proven interventions are more widely available to improve children's outcomes

- Face to face interventions for workless families delivered through four regional contracts
- Specialist Parental Conflict Intervention Training for practitioners to increase supply of proven help
- User-led digital solution

Objective 2 - Demand

Supporting local areas to embed parental conflict support in wider services for children

- Training & guidance for Front-line workforce to improve identification and effective referral to appropriate support
- Support to embed addressing parental conflict from needs assessment to delivery
- What Works' function (evidence, dissemination and commissioning toolkit) to ensure that local commissioners understand why addressing parental conflict is important and how to do it

3. Sefton programme

Sefton has been awarded a total grant of £40,100. £15,000 is from the Strategic Leadership Grant to provide support for strategic oversight and planning. £25,100 is from the Practitioner Training Grant to support frontline identification of parental conflict to help local family support professionals spot parents in relationship distress and refer to available services.

The programme is designed to be developed and delivered as a multiagency approach locally. A range of partners should be involved to ensure parental conflict is consistently understood and responded to across Sefton.

A timetable of events is being developed, which will include consultation and engagement with local agencies, action plan development, multi agency awareness raising workshops and training for frontline professionals. This will be shared across partners and strategic leads.

Venus, a local third sector organisation with knowledge and expertise on working with families and parental conflict, will be supporting the delivery of the Sefton programme.

4. Strategic partnership commitment

As parental conflict is a cross thematic issue, it is proposed that the programme is championed and promoted jointly across Sefton's Health and Wellbeing Board, Sefton's Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Sefton Safer Communities Partnership.

This will help promote a joint and consistent approach to the programme across Sefton and hopefully encourage strategic buy in from a wide range of Sefton agencies.

A draft letter has been prepared which could be signed by the Chairs of each of these Boards.

If agreed, regular briefings can be provided to each of the Boards to give an update on progress. The Regional Integration Lead for the DWP, Helen Armstrong, is also available to attend the next round of Board meetings to provide an overview of the programme to partners.

The Chairs of the Health and Wellbeing Board, LSCB and SSCP are asked to consider this proposal.