

**Interventions that reduce demand to social care/safely prevent family breakdown (not part of the Early Help core offer)****Targeted Offer – Family Group Conferencing****Intervention rationale**

The Council does not have a statutory duty to provide FGC but it has a clear evidence base in reducing family breakdown and in delaying or reducing demand on the social care system.

**What is it?**

A Family Group Conference (FGC) is an evidence based decision making and planning process whereby the wider family group makes plans and decisions for and with children and young people who have been identified, either by the family, a service provider or social care, as being in need of a plan that will safeguard and promote their welfare (Family Right Group 2010). Set within a restorative practice approach FGC offers an opportunity to get everyone together and discuss how to sort out the concerning issues about their family and children.

Family Group Conferencing is about empowering families to arrive at their own solution to the presenting issues and to take a collective responsibility for improving outcomes for children and young people. The family is the primary planning group and this process can be used in any area of family and childcare practice.

The Council is committed to delivering the EIP outcomes and reduce or delay the number of families requiring social care support. The FGC model promotes practice which empowers families to devise sustainable plans to help address issues that impact negatively on the child and family life, giving control and confidence back to the family. It is also a successful transition route from specialist services to universal services or independent functioning without further intervention.

**Impact Analysis**

- FGC's are effective in reducing re-offending and achieve high levels of victim participation.
- FGC's have significantly improved outcomes for children where there are concerns about attendance, bullying and behaviour problems with half of schools making positive comments about the effect of the FGC on the young person, family, home-school relationships and their own understanding of their behaviour.
- A greater proportion of children attend their FGC's than attend child protection conferences and most value the experience and their ability to take part in it.
- Most adult family members are very positive about the process
- There is a higher rate of attendance by fathers and father figures at FGC's than at statutory meetings
- FGC's make more use of family and community resources than plans made at meetings which are dominated by agencies.
- Families produce plans that agencies agree to support in the great majority (over 90%) of situations.

- FGC's produced plans which were assessed by social workers as having prevented children going into public care in 32% of cases; prevented court proceedings in 47%; and made no difference in 21% of cases

### **Why is this approach the best?**

Family group conferences are used by local authorities in England and Wales and in over 20 countries worldwide. Supported by a growing body of credible research and evaluation, family group conferences provide positive outcomes for children, families, agencies and communities.

Evidence clearly demonstrates a range of excellent outcomes:

- Plans that are viewed as safe by families and workers in over 90% of conferences
- Significantly improved communication and understanding between agencies and families
- A reduction in the number of children who are accommodated increased contact for children and young people with their family network and friends.<sup>[1]</sup>

Referrals are taken in Kirklees based on following criteria:-

1. The family have agreed to the referral and want to make changes (FGC is a voluntary, family led process)
2. There is a need for a plan (The purpose and outcome of FGC is a plan made by the family during private family time)
3. There is a wider, extended family/friends network to draw from (FGC cannot succeed without this)

FGC is a highly affective intervention for many families and has a clear evidence base supporting it. We will need a variety of interventions FGC empower families to find their own solutions and is in keeping with new council aims, encouraging communities to support each other. FGC's can targeted early help cases or Child in Need (CiN) or Children on the Child Protection (CP) register.

Delivering FCG requires staff trained in the approach. It requires a financial commitment to undertake training, allocation and delivery of FCG to ensure the approach is embedded within the Council.

### **Cost**

It would cost approximately £97K per year to undertake 42 FGC per year.

### **Targeted Offer– Juvenile Referral Scheme**

#### **Intervention rationale**

The Council does not have a statutory duty to provide the JRS but it is known as a community resolution and is one of the out of court disposals available to the police when responding to an offence which prevents a young person from entering the crime justice

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<sup>[1]</sup> <http://www.barnardos.org.uk/familygroupconferences.htm>

system. It has a clear evidence base in reducing family breakdown and in delaying or reducing demand on the social care system

### **What is it?**

The Juvenile Referral Scheme (JRS) offers a quick and proportionate response a young person's low-level offending and allows victims to have a voice in how the offence is resolved. Using restorative justice techniques, a young person has to face up to the impact of their offence, offer an apology and examine why the offence took place. Where appropriate, a plan is made for the young person to make good the wrong that was done in the offence.

JRS intervention requires a home visit and a one off intervention; offences which are dealt with by way of JRS intervention are also counted within Stronger Families criteria to measure progress in reducing offending. Currently the Youth Offending Team (YOT) pays for the JRS via the current delivery model. This is reviewed annually by the YOT Board.

Evidence shows that this approach could work well as part of the wider Early Help offer in order to provide the best opportunity to address concerns at the earliest opportunity and reduce the likelihood of further offending occurring or other issues escalating.

The Juvenile Referral Scheme works to ensure that there are clear links to address identified support needs as well as the offending behaviour. The offences which qualify for JRS interventions are low level and the response should be appropriate from a youth offending stand point, however a failure to address other contributory areas of concern at this early stage could lead to further more serious offences. The JRS support the Stronger Families 'whole family' approach as it requires all family needs to be addressed as opposed to a specific response to offending behaviour only.

Consideration will be given to deliver this program alongside others that engage with vulnerable teenagers at risk of being taken into care such as Missing, Prevent, CSE, PRS, and Step Up.

### **Impact Analysis**

Work has previously done that shows a significant number of those who are 15-17yrs old that were taken into care were first engaged by services through the JRS program. The programme currently provides an early intervention opportunity to identify and address family issues alongside the specific intervention session which explores consequences of further offending. This allows the worker to approach the family with an offer of support and assess their needs where appropriate. Offences which are dealt with by way of JRS intervention are also counted within Stronger Families criteria to measure progress in reducing offending. Characteristics of successful outcomes achieved in supporting families and young people evidence the need for a trusting relationship with a key individual in order to bring about positive change.

### **Cost**

JRS Interventions are required to take place at any time during the week with the flexibility to work weekend days where required. To provide JRS for 235 young people per year it will cost approximately £58K per annum.

## **Targeted Offer – Independent Return Interviews**

### **Intervention rationale**

The Council has a statutory duty to provide IRI's to all children and young people missing from home or care. The Statutory Guidance on responding to missing /absence episodes requires every young person to be offered a visit by an independent person (not a police officer or social worker) to explore the reasons for going missing. It also has a clear evidence base in reducing family breakdown.

### **What are they?**

Independent Return Interviews are currently completed by the Council with an embedded offer of early help support to address directly the family support needs and in particular any areas of concern which have directly led to the missing/absent episode and would include a specific Missing Intervention Programme. If the Council was to continue to offer this intervention it would have an associated cost but by embedding this support into the wider Early Help offer it will provide the best opportunity to address concerns and reduce the likelihood of further episodes occurring or other family issues escalating. There is a requirement for the Local authority to ensure provisions are in place to offer an Independent Return Interview. A key inherent function of the interview is to provide the young person someone to talk to.

### **Definitions;**

Missing - "Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another."

Absent – "A person not at a place where they are expected or required to be."

The 'absent' category should comprise cases in which people are not presently where they are supposed to be and there is no apparent risk. 'Absent' cases should not be ignored, and must be monitored over periods of time with consideration given to escalating to 'missing' if there is a change to the circumstances that has increased the level of risk.

The interview offer is made to the parent/carer rather than direct to the young person which may lead to occasions where a young person may not have had the opportunity to accept or decline the offer themselves.

The continuation of the Independent Return Offer needs to be responsive and flexible to meet demand. The Independent Return offer is to be made within 72 hours of the young person returning home safely, this is processed within the Multi Agency Safeguarding (MASH)Hub team. The Missing statutory guidance advises that the return interview should take place within 7 days.

### **Impact Analysis**

The most recent Ofsted inspection stated they were happy that the current offer of IRI's was timely and meeting the requirements. Nearly half of all young people who complete an IRI say they went missing due to problems at home. The IRI involves the worker engaging with the young person giving them the opportunity to express their views away from their

parent/carer to ensure their feeling and needs are captured. Where needs are identified the relevant services are engaged and will address any areas of concern.

This intervention therefore contributes to longer term aims of reducing the likelihood of young people going missing and the associated costs incurred during the missing episode and in follow up. It also provides an opportunity to intervene early to protect young people from danger and offer services promptly.

### **Cost Benefit Analysis**

The University of Portsmouth estimated the cost to the Police of each missing episode was between £1344 - £2145. They also highlighted that the social and memorial cost to young people was immeasurable. This does not account for the other costs to other aspects of the system but gives an indication of cost of just one aspect.

#### Cost

To provide 280 Independent Return interviews it will cost approximately £58K per annum.

### **Targeted Offer – Traded School/Pupil Referral Service Offer**

#### **Intervention rationale**

The Council does have a statutory duty to provide education for excluded pupils who are excluded from school on and after day 6 of their exclusion. It also supports the reduction in family breakdown and in delaying or reducing demand on the social care system.

#### **What is it?**

The current EITS/IYSS service has provided the Pupil Referral Service with support to young people during school curriculum time. The support is offered in both 1:1 and group work settings with the aims of supporting young people to enhance educational opportunities. This is often linked to transitions between schools, social interaction skills and basic educational input. This work is currently recharged to schools who pay for the support.

There is scope to review costs agreed with the Pupil Referral Service agreement, but there are also opportunities to tap into the wider school market to provide school based group or 1:1 support. There is potential scope for a self-financing model but this would require further investment and development.

#### **Cost**

A small team of staff delivering only on the PRS agreement would not be cost effective but a team approach with workers delivering other programmes would allow more flexibility to manage demand across programmes where there are peaks and troughs of demand.

A single hour cost has been calculated at £28.00 but this needs review and would be in line with other programmes considering a full cost recovery model.

**Impact Analysis**

Concerns which lead to difficulties within school and the need for PRS involvement can be traced back to family concerns and potentially gives the opportunity to intervene early to address Stronger Family criteria. Support via PRS has supported the achievement of Stronger Families outcomes. PRS has continued to fund the programme despite general reductions in their budget and recognise the benefit that the sessions with this cohort of vulnerable children and young people.