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To: Children Families and Education Policy Overview Committee
27th March 2009

Subject: Working Draft: Kent Children's Trust "Thinking Family" Implementation Plan for Kent Supporting Parents

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report gives an update on the "Thinking Family" Implementation Plan for supporting parents and sets out the draft priorities, how it will be taken forward and some initial challenges and opportunities linked to the implementation of the Supporting Parents strategy. It also updates on recent government initiatives related to this area of work.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The KCT Strategy for Supporting Parents, the accompanying Parents Charter and a summary for parents were launched throughout October and November 2008.
- 1.2 Since June 2008 meetings have been held with a wide range of multi-agency providers, practitioners, Local Children's Service Partnerships and parent groups to discuss the implications of the strategy, its implementation and areas of need. Identified issues, both around gaps in services for groups of parents, service improvement potential and workforce development opportunities are reflected in the plan as a result of these discussions.
- 1.3 The implementation plan also takes account of recent government initiatives and requirements related to this area of work. These are set out in section 2 of this report.

2. Further Developments

- 2.1 DCSF Parent Grant Funding has been provided to employ a Senior Parenting Practitioner whose role includes:
 - Co-ordinating a national offer of training for parenting practitioners
 - mapping of services and providing a central database of parenting interventions, including trained practitioners, programmes and levels of intervention for local commissioning purposes
 - working towards supporting practitioners and programme developers to assess quality of parenting programmes offered to parents in Kent
 - Kick-starting parent practitioner groups locally to improve information sharing, networking and understanding of client need
- 2.2 The Government has funded the National Academy of Parenting Practitioners (NAPP) which works to transform the quality and size of the parenting workforce across England so that parents can get the help they need to raise their children well. NAPP are currently offering

local authorities free training places on a range of evidenced-based training programmes for parenting practitioners and the Extended Services team is working to co-ordinate places on this training. Requirements set out by the Government on standards of delivery, supervision of practitioners and data provision on delivery back to the DCSF are rigorous. Priority services have been identified as Children’s Social Services, Youth Offending Service, KDAAT, CAMHS and Health but take up has varied according to service capacity to co-ordinate, deliver and meet the required standards.

2.3 With regard to the NAPP offer of training, co-ordinating services has proved difficult as has the co-ordination of practitioners on the ground where services do not have a lead “parent champion”. Areas where there is an existing practitioners group or lead co-ordinator are more able to make a speedy and informed response. Services have been very keen to engage in the strategy as a whole but will need a period of adjustment, (including budgets and planning). Where there are commissioner/provider relationships, work will need to begin to help commissioners think through how services could better be ready to meet growing training opportunities and demand especially around “Think Family”.

2.4 The Government has also recently announced additional funding for local authorities for “Think Family- Improving Support for Families at Risk”. Funding will be provided for 2009-10 and 2010-11 in the first instance for:

- Implementing Think Family reforms in local authority systems and services including more effective ways of working between children’s and adults services
- Family Intervention projects which provide intensive support to families in the greatest difficulty
- Parenting Early Intervention Programmes to help parents of children at risk of poor outcomes to improve their parenting skills

We are liaising with the DCSF for further detailed information and guidance in order to take forward these areas of work.

3. The priorities

3.1 The Draft Priorities of the Thinking Family Implementation Plan are:

1	Reducing poverty
2	Resilient and healthy families
3	Positive families
4	Housing
5	Supporting Vulnerable families
6	Safe, active and confident communities
7	Help parents to bring up children and young people ready to face the world as it really is
8	Strategic Delivery and Workforce Development
9	Respecting, involving and listening to parents

The priorities and actions have been set out in a way that is intended to demonstrate the linkages to targets and indicators in the Local Area Agreement, the Children and Young people’s Plan and other relevant service and partnership plans.

3.2 As parent support is a cross-cutting agenda, it is neither possible nor practical to include all actions and work that will be carried out to implement these priorities at a local level. This plan therefore reflects a range of services and work plans and sets out how they will contribute to the priorities, desired outcomes and strategic commitments of the strategy.

Actions incorporated within the plan demonstrate a commitment to actively seeking, promoting and responding to parent voice, a desire to re-assess and improve the practice of parent support across services as well as a need to improve and co-ordinate the strategic direction of travel towards “Thinking Family”.

4. Implementation

- 4.1 The implementation plan will go out to wider consultation following consideration by CFE SMT and the Kent Children’s Trust Board 8-13 Sub Group.
- 4.2 A workshop is being organised in Partnership with Kent Can to discuss the impact of the strategy on VCO organisations in Kent and their role in its implementation.
- 4.3 Local Children’s Service Partnerships will have a key role in implementation, translating the commitments within this strategy into actions which support their own local Children and Young People’s Plan priorities and tailoring the local actions to the voices of their parents, evidenced need and gaps in service provision.
- 4.4 Consultation will be ongoing and will continue particularly with parents through the local Parent Forums and other local and County-level parent groups.

5. Structure, Governance and Accountability

- 5.1 The Strategy and implementation plan are located within the overall framework of the Kent Children’s Trust arrangements. Oversight of the strategy will be the responsibility of the 8-13 Trust Sub-group.
- 5.2 Monitoring of the implementation plan will be through the “Thinking Family” Implementation group whose terms of reference are attached at the back of the draft implementation plan. This group will report back through the 8-13 Sub-Group who will own and manage the outcome framework and performance management of the strategy.
- 5.3 Monitoring will be undertaken at two levels:
 - Against CYPP and National Indicators (in order not to replicate current monitoring arrangements)
 - Against progress of key actions and projects and using qualitative feedback from parents and, where relevant, practitioners.

6. Recommendations

Members of the Children Families and Education Policy Overview Committee are asked to:

1. Note the draft priorities for the implementation plan and give views
2. Note the ongoing consultation, implementation and monitoring arrangements and give their views.
3. Note the national developments as set out in section 2 of this report.

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Background Documents:

Draft Think Family Implementation Plan for Supporting Parents 2009-2012

KCT SUPPORTING PARENTS STRATEGY

http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/UserFiles/CW/File/Extended_Services/Strategy_for_Supporting_Parents/Strategy_for_Services-Final.pdf

PARENTS' CHARTER

http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/UserFiles/CW/File/Extended_Services/Strategy_for_Supporting_Parents/Parents_Charter-KCT_final.pdf

Other Useful Information: None