



# Cardiff

## Families First

# Annual Review 2015-16

**DRAFT FOR SCRUTINY  
AND VULNERABLE  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
BOARD**





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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 What is Families First?

'Families First' is a Welsh Government-funded programme to promote effective multi-agency support for children, young people and families. One of the main aims of Families First is to provide timely help for families when they start to experience difficulty, to prevent problems from escalating. It also aims to work with families who need extra support to increase their confidence to return to work and improve their family income.

Families First sits alongside Communities First, Flying Start and Supporting People as key elements in the Welsh Government's strategy for tackling poverty. In Cardiff, these programmes are brought together to make the most effective use of funding to meet local needs. They form an important element in the work of Neighbourhood Partnerships. There is further information about this on page 22.

## 1.2 How does Families First work with families?

Families First is about working *with* families who say they need a bit of extra help or services, rather than doing things *to* or *for* them. Involvement in the programme is entirely voluntary.

Families First has also been designed to recognise the specific needs of different families and the requirement for multiple agencies to provide joined-up packages of support by becoming a 'Team Around the Family' where this is needed.

In line with guidance from Welsh Government, the services provided by the Families First programme are designed to be:

- **FAMILY-FOCUSED:** taking a whole-family approach to improving outcomes
- **BESPOKE:** tailoring help to individual family circumstances
- **INTEGRATED:** with effective coordination of planning and service provision across organisations, ensuring that needs assessment and delivery are jointly managed and that there is seamless progression for families between different interventions and programmes
- **PRO-ACTIVE:** seeking early identification and appropriate intervention for families
- **INTENSIVE:** with a vigorous approach and relentless focus, adapting to families' changing circumstances
- **LOCAL:** identifying the needs of local communities and developing appropriate service delivery to fit those needs, with particular regard for the opportunities to link with the Flying Start, Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS) and Communities First programmes

## 2. FAMILIES FIRST IN CARDIFF 2015-16



*The Families First programme in Cardiff made significant progress during 2015-16. There had been a mid-way review in the previous year to make sure that the funding was being used as effectively as possible to meet families' needs. As a result of this review, a small number of projects ended but there were also other services that received additional funding to increase capacity or to extend the work that they were doing.*

*During the year, the important role that Families First plays in providing preventative services was also recognised. As a result, there was a decision to move the management of the programme to Children's Services.*

*This report provides further information about the programme, and about the progress and changes over the year.*

### 2.1 Overview of the Programme in Cardiff

The programme in Cardiff was designed to meet Welsh Government's requirements but also to fit with local ways of working and to make sure that the services meet Cardiff's needs.

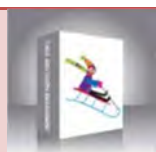
The Families First services started from the beginning of April 2013. They had been agreed and commissioned following an extensive period of consultation with stakeholders during the previous year (2012-13). The specifications were also based on an assessment of needs carried out as part of the development of Cardiff's single integrated plan, [What Matters](#). The commissioning process involved young people, parents and grandparents, as well as professionals.

The Families First programme comprises six 'packages' that provide coordinated services on a particular theme. Each involves a consortium of different providers who work with a Lead Provider:



#### **Early Years**

Provides a range of support for families with babies or young children (under the age of 8) and for pregnant women. Cardiff and Vale University Health Board lead this package.



#### **Child & Youth Engagement (Connect 8-25)**

Makes sure that children and young people do well in school, college or work and get the support they need from their families. City of Cardiff Council's Education Service leads this package.



## Sustainable Employment

Provides help for adults in families who want to get back into work or into better paid jobs. Sovia leads this package.



## Healthy Lifestyles

Helps families to deal with things like diet, exercise, smoking and sexual health and to live healthy lives. Cardiff and Vale University Health Board leads this package.



## Emotional & Mental Health and Wellbeing (Cadarn)

Supports children and young people who are anxious or unhappy. Barnardo's leads this package.



## Disability Focus (Disability TAF)

Provides extra help for families who have a disabled child. This can provide key working as part of the Team Around the Family approach. Action for Children leads this package.

In addition to the six strategically commissioned 'packages' of support, the Cardiff Partnership has also commissioned two city-wide services: the Families First Freephone and Cardiff Team around the Family (CTAF), both delivered by Tros Gynnal Plant:

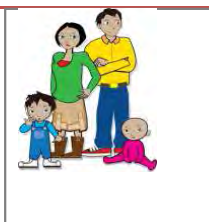


## Families First Freephone

The Families First Freephone service provides a central access point to the Families First programme in Cardiff for families and professionals. The Freephone number is answered by a skilled and experienced practitioner who is able to provide information on Families First services - where these services are available and how to access them.

**The Families First Freephone number is 0808 800 0038.**

**There is also a Freetext number 80800 – messages should start with Families.**



## Cardiff Team around the Family (CTAF)

Provides a team of family workers who help to coordinate a Team Around the Family approach for families with more complex needs (i.e. who need four or more services), but who do not pass threshold for social services interventions. Tros Gynnal Plant deliver this service alongside the Freephone.



## Infrastructure

There are also a number of very important elements of 'infrastructure' support, which underpin work across the programme. This includes:

- Work with Young Commissioners/Young Inspectors, which ensures that young people are involved in planning and monitoring delivery of services
- Provision of TheSprout website for young people which makes sure that information about services is provided in an accessible form
- A Parenting Coordinator, who ensures that parenting services are quality assured and evidence-based
- Use of Time Credits to reward and encourage volunteers within the programme

The sections below carry further information about these Families First services. They also include case studies, which illustrate the difference that they are making to families.

The [Cardiff Partnership website](#) carries further details about the programme as well as the document, *Putting Families First in Cardiff*.



*Children involved in a project using Families First time credits*

## 2.2 Overall Performance in 2015-16

Families First was commissioned to deliver against four Welsh Government National Outcomes:

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### DELIVERING THE FAMILIES FIRST OUTCOMES IN 2015-16

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#### 1. Working age people in low income families gain, and progress within, employment

- 464 parents and carers in low-income families received intensive mentoring support from the Sustainable Employment project to improve their skills and get into employment.
- 63% of the parents who completed work with the project (117) managed to find employment as a result – 100% followed up at 6 months were still in employment.
- A further 54 young people also entered employment as a result of support from youth mentoring projects (19%).

#### 2. Children, young people and families, in or at risk of poverty, achieve their potential

- 152 young people at risk of being NEET (78%) progressed into education, employment or training after support from Post-16 Learning Coaches.
- 261 young people also engaged in bespoke educational provision provided by Cardiff and Vale College, with 172 progressing into education, employment or training.
- 77 parents/carers and 91 young people attained a nationally recognised qualification.
- 133 parents with 133 children from BME communities accessed Cardiff and Vale College's Families Learning Together programme – 100% parents noted a more positive relationship with their children's schools and 100% children had improved language skills as a result.

#### 3. Children, young people and families are healthy, safe and enjoy well-being

- 389 families benefited from support from Home Start with nearly 90% saying they have noticed an improvement in their children's well-being.
- Across the programme, 798 parents benefitted from support for their parenting, with 92% saying that they were better able to cope as a result.
- Over 170 young people experiencing housing problems received support from Llamau's mediation service at the Basement@33 - of those who completed, 66% felt able to return or remain at home while the remaining young people found alternative accommodation.
- Over 1,200 pupils in schools received sex and relationships education as part of the Healthy Lifestyles project – 93% said that they now felt more confident about accessing sexual health services as a result.
- 47 parents with 63 children took part in the MEND [Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do It!] programme, with 83% reporting that it had changed their attitude towards healthy eating and physical activity; 74% of the children taking part had a reduced BMI [Body Mass Index] at the end of the project.

#### 4. Families are confident, nurturing, and resilient

- 331 families completed a JAFF [Joint Assessment Family Framework] and developed a family plan. Of these, 125 were families with complex needs who needed support from the full TAF process - 84% of the families completing felt that working with the Team Around the Family team said that things had improved in the areas where they wanted to make changes.
  - Over 900 families received support to improve the way that their families worked – 87% reported improved family dynamics as a result.
-





# Cardiff Families First



## Overall Performance 2015-16

### How much did we do?

**22,681**  
participants

**785** Phone calls to Families First Freephone

**331** JAFFs completed

Worked with **116** Schools

**71** services

### How well did we do?

**96.9%** of participants were satisfied with their service

**87.6%** of participants completed their service intervention

**100%** families working with Team Around the Family said the services involved met their needs

**122**  
People into work

**147** Families with a disabled child increased income following welfare benefits advice with £785,952 additional benefits awarded as a result

**1552** Parents benefitting from a parenting intervention

**5099** People improved emotional and mental health and wellbeing

**771** pupils improved school attendance

**1903** families reported that they feel they can contribute to changes in lifestyle and behaviour

**1593** individuals reported an improvement in family dynamics

**120** families affected by a disability report an improvement in family resilience

### How is anybody better off?

2015/16 figures

Families First Free Phone  
0808 800 0038

Website  
[www.cardiffpartnership.co.uk](http://www.cardiffpartnership.co.uk)

Twitter  
#FamiliesFirst



## 2.3 Monitoring Progress

Results Based Accountability [RBA] is the approach used to identify the services needed to deliver the Families First outcomes. It also provides the framework for identifying the difference made to families as a result of those services. Performance monitoring of each of the services delivered is based around three key questions:

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Is anyone better off as a result?

When the programme started, a significant amount of work was done with Lead Providers and individual services to agree report cards with performance measures based on these key questions and in line with the service levels set out in their tenders. The report cards also provide monitoring across the six Neighbourhood Partnership areas of Cardiff.

The National Evaluation of Families First by Ipsos Mori and Ecorys provided positive feedback about the quality of the reporting information provided by Cardiff's report cards. However, there has been a continuous process of review since they were set up to ensure that they reflect the work that projects are doing. During 2015-16, many projects added in measures that would give a more complete picture of the extent of their work. This process is still continuing, in line with the recommendation from the evaluation, *"This is an iterative process and monitoring should continue to be developed and improved to ensure that monitoring is always proportionate and relevant"*<sup>1</sup>.

During 2015-16, the Families First team also worked with Lead Providers to ensure that there was more accurate budget profiling and monitoring of spend. While other programmes such as Communities First had received a reduction in budget for 2015-16, Welsh Government had maintained the budget for Families First at the same level as the previous year. However, this was done on the understanding that any identified underspend would be returned rather than reallocated to alternative or new work. As a result, where underspend was accrued for any reason, there was a requirement that we should return this to Welsh Government.

Measuring Performance 2014-2015												
Activity/Project: Families Learning Together		Providers: Cardiff Council - CAVC			Funding Allocated: £32,500		Actual Spend: £22,500.00					
ID: CY&E.2.1 Outcome(s) met: 2,3,4,8,7		Number of individuals with open cases carried over from 2013/14: 0			Number of children with open cases carried over from 2013/14: 0		Number of parents with open cases carried over from 2013/14: 0					
Customer Group: Families accessing full & half day course												
How Much?	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Cumulative	Baseline Target	How Well?	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Baseline Target
# of full day courses	2	2	0	7	9	8	% of children using courses as good as excellent	1%	20%	20%	20%	80%
# of half day courses	4	6	9	4	32	22						
# of children accessing courses or online completed the course evaluation	41	22	9	34	106	184						
# of parents accessing courses or online completed the course evaluation	6	37	42	38	123	144	% of parents using courses as good as excellent	3%	54%	64%	73%	80%
# of parents completed course evaluation	0	34	41	34	109							
Is Anyone Better Off?												
	Number					Baseline Target	Percentage					Baseline Target
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Cumulative	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual to date	Annual to date	Baseline Target
# % of children will have improved language skills	0	17	42	36	115	139	0%	24%	28%	28%	28%	80%
# % of children will make progress from their previous attainment level	0	17	42	36	115	133	0%	24%	28%	28%	28%	80%
# % of children will report feeling more positive about their learning	0	17	42	36	115	139	0%	24%	28%	28%	28%	80%
# % of children achieving individual targets from the workshop card	0	17	42	36	115	139	0%	24%	28%	28%	28%	80%
# % of parents will report more positive relationships with schools	0	12	18	30	30	122	2%	14%	18%	18%	18%	85%
# % of parents achieving individual targets from the workshop card	0	14	41	34	109	130	0%	17%	23%	23%	23%	80%
# % of parents will have improved language skills	0	14	41	34	109	130	0%	17%	23%	23%	23%	80%
# % of parents to achieve Approved Centre accreditation	0	18	23	34	75	115	3%	18%	23%	23%	23%	80%
# of parents by Neighbourhood												
Cardiff North			Cardiff East			Cardiff South East						
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
3	11	0	10	0	3	0	0	12	6	0	0	33
Cardiff West			Cardiff South West			City Centre & South Cardiff						
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
16	7	0	1	1	12	0	0	21	0	0	0	0
Quarterly Total												Overall Total
37	45	9	42									124
Out of Area												Out of Area Total
0	0	0	0									0
Quarterly Comments												
Families Learning Together run full day (one day a week for one term) and half day (half a day a week for one term) courses for parents and children for whom English is an additional language in schools across the city. The main aim of the programme is to break the cycle of underachievement and to increase parental knowledge and understanding of literacy and numeracy in the home curriculum. In addition to this parents are encouraged to progress into further studies or into the workplace. Family Programmes aim to foster a more positive relationship between home and school and many of the parents who participate go on to help in an voluntary role at school. Parents and children are taught separately for part of the course with an emphasis on language development. All parents are offered the opportunity to complete Approved Centre accreditation. In addition parents and children work together in a joint session for using on language activities to support the school curriculum.												
No courses are run during Q4, however, in terms of the evaluation for how Well and Better Off measures, evaluations are completed in Q2 for Q1 courses, in Q3 for Q2 courses and in Q4 for Q4 courses.												
Q1: No young people carried over as evaluated at the end of last year and results are in last year's reports. Courses started in April/May and will finish in July. Outcomes for 45 children and 36 parents on full and half day courses carried over to Quarter 2. Numbers recorded to courses slightly lower than projected (larger = 8 per course). Families Learning Together continue to work with individual schools to recruit to each course and to reach target families. Schools in Quarter 1 are Newnham Park Primary, Llanedoch Primary, St Joseph's R.C. Primary, St Alban's R.C. Primary, St Mary's the Virgin R.C. Primary and St Paul's C. & W. Primary.												
Q2: Outcomes are for courses which started in April/May and finished in July. Numbers recorded to courses slightly lower than projected (larger = 8 per course) and not all parents who started completed the course. Families Learning Together continue to work with individual schools to recruit to each course and to reach target families. Courses started in Q2 (Q2) evaluated at end of course in Dec (quarter 2). Schools in Quarter 2 are Blakey Primary, Grangeview Primary, St Mary's R.C. Primary, St Philip Evans R.C. Primary, All Saints Primary and All Saints Primary.												
Q3: No courses started due to course being run during school term time. Course started in Q2 (Q2) and ended during Q3 (Q3).												
Q4: Schools in Quarter 4 are Seven Primary, Morford Primary, Bakers Powell Primary, Adamsdown Primary, Bridgeway Primary and South Park Primary.												

**Report cards enable close monitoring of performance measures**

<sup>1</sup> Local Authority Feedback from 3<sup>rd</sup> National Evaluation of Families First, Ipsos MORI & Ecorys on behalf of Welsh Government

***“Data collection from the local authority is of a high quality and the report cards used by the LA provide good detail for commissioning decisions ongoing”***

National Evaluation of Families First, Year 3 Local Authority Feedback, Ipsos MORI Ecorys on behalf of Welsh Government

2016-17 is the final year of the first commissioned Families First programme. The quality of data gathered across the life of the programme will form an important part of the review that the central Families First team are carrying out as the last part of the current commissioning cycle (*‘Analyse, Plan, Do, Review’*). The team will also be talking to providers, services that make and/or receive referrals and service users to form a complete picture of what has worked well and what we could do better. This review will form the basis for the next round of commissioning (see also Section 11.2 below *‘Next Steps’*).

## **2.4 Meeting the needs of a diverse population**

Cardiff has the largest and most diverse urban population in Wales. During 2013-14, the programme developed arrangements for collecting anonymised data about Families First service users to improve our business intelligence. This was done to ensure that we are reaching the right target groups and providing services that are available to all who need them across the city.

The central team asked Lead Providers to collate a core set of anonymised contact information so that we could analyse where service users live across the city, their protected characteristics, language needs and family members etc. This detailed information is gathered for those families and individuals who work with Families First services on an extended basis. Throughout 2014-15 and 2015-16, we worked with providers to improve the arrangements for gathering this information to ensure a more robust and consistent data set. Once again, the central team are using this information for a mapping analysis to identify referral and service gaps in provision, which will inform service delivery going forward.

***“Cardiff as the largest LA in Wales, by population and budget, has differing challenges in implementation of Families First to the rest of Wales; particularly relating to the diverse communities living in the city.”***

National Evaluation of Families First, Year 3 Local Authority Feedback, Ipsos MORI Ecorys on behalf of Welsh Government

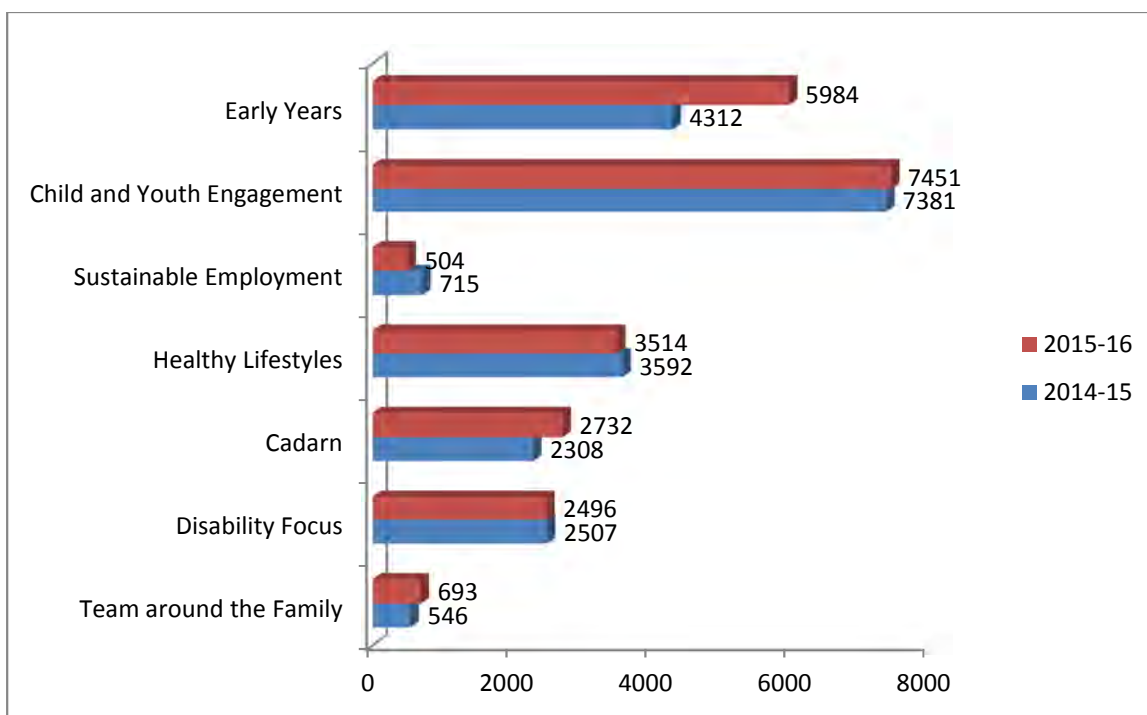
There are still some issues regarding this data that are difficult to rectify without the use of personalised data. However, data collection has improved year on year. In total, detailed information was collected in relation to 10,184 service users over the 2015-16 reporting period; this can be compared to the previous year’s total of 9,695 service users, showing an increase of 5%. This has resulted in a more complete picture of the Families First population.

## HEADLINE FACTS ABOUT FAMILIES FIRST SERVICE USERS IN CARDIFF

- In terms of age, the largest number of referrals was for **young people aged 12-16 years**. This age group also accounted for the largest number of males, but the largest number of females and the biggest group by age and gender overall was female parents and carers **in the 25+ age group**.
- In total Families First delivered services to families with around **75 home languages**: Out of 9,239 service users who recorded a home language, **87.2% (8,053 service users)** classified their home language as **English**. The next three most common home languages were **Arabic (157 service users)**, **Welsh (149 service users)** and **Czech (145 service users)**.
- Out of **9,320** service users who gave their ethnicity, **71.2% (6,639 service users)** classified their ethnicity as White British. The next three highest ethnicities after this were White Other (440 service users), Asian British Other (284 service users) and Black British African (270 service users).
- Out of **10,055** referrals, the largest number came from **Schools** and other education services (37.2% or 3,744 referrals). Schools and education had also been the largest source of referrals in the previous year, but with a much lower level of 2,603 referrals (26.9%).
- After schools, the three highest sources of referrals were **Self-Referrals** (28.7% or 2,883 referrals), Third Sector (875 referrals) and Health Visitors (734 referrals).
- Of those families who reported on disability, **9.6% (929)** included a **disabled child** and **3.0% (293)** a **disabled adult**.

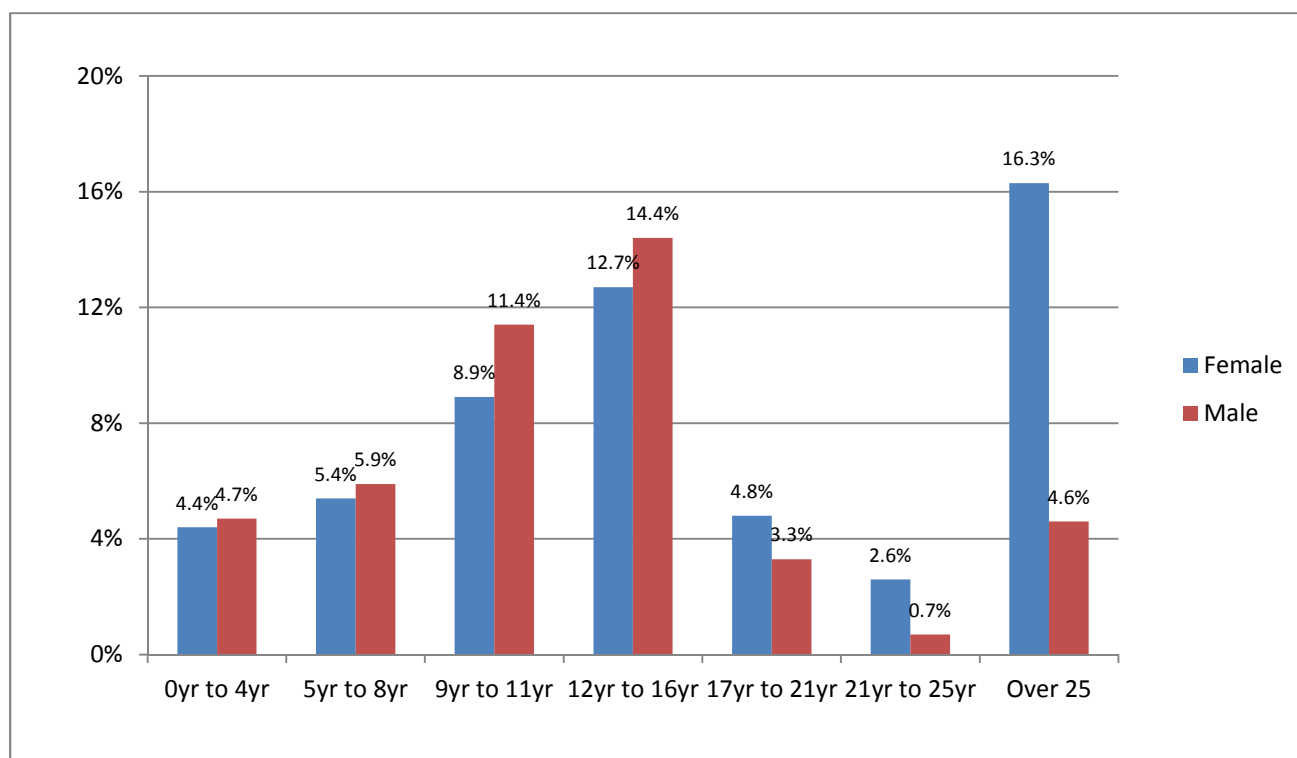
As the programme was well-established in 2015-16, numbers remained largely stable. The biggest increase in service users was in relation to families accessing the Early Years services.

**Figure 1: Number of Service Users accessing Families First in Cardiff, by Package 2014/15-2015/16**



A more detailed breakdown of the age and gender of Families First service users is given in Figure 2:

**Figure 2: Service Users accessing Families First in Cardiff, by age and gender, 2015-16**



*Baseline of 9,951 represents 97.7% of the total number of service users*

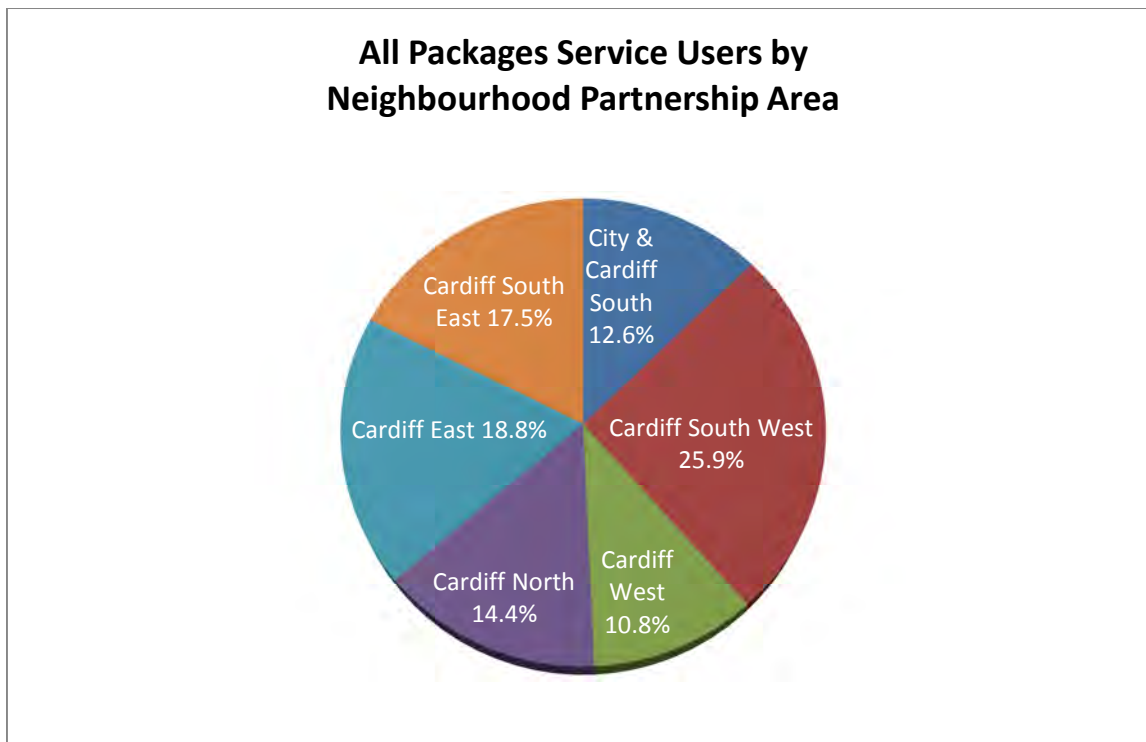
As in the previous year, schools were one of the main sources of referrals/service users although with a slightly lower number (down from 3,668 in 2014-15 to 3,376 in 2015-16). These came from nearly 116 different schools across Cardiff but the 10 schools with the highest level of referrals/service users are shown below:

Rank	School	No of Referrals/ service users
1	Mary Immaculate High School	309
2	St Illtyd's High School	309
3	Willows High School	299
4	Eastern High School	239
5	Tredegarville Church in Wales Primary School	185
6	Fitzalan High School	173
7	Albany Primary School	146
8	Oakfield Primary School	120
9	Michaelstone and Glyn Derw	98
10	Cathays High School	94

*Baseline of 3,376 represents 33.1% of the total number of referrals/service users*

The data also enables the Families First team to monitor delivery of services for families living in different Neighbourhood Partnership areas across Cardiff:

**Figure 3: Service Users by Neighbourhood Partnership Area, 2015-16**



*Baseline of 9,834 represents 96.6% of the total number of service users*

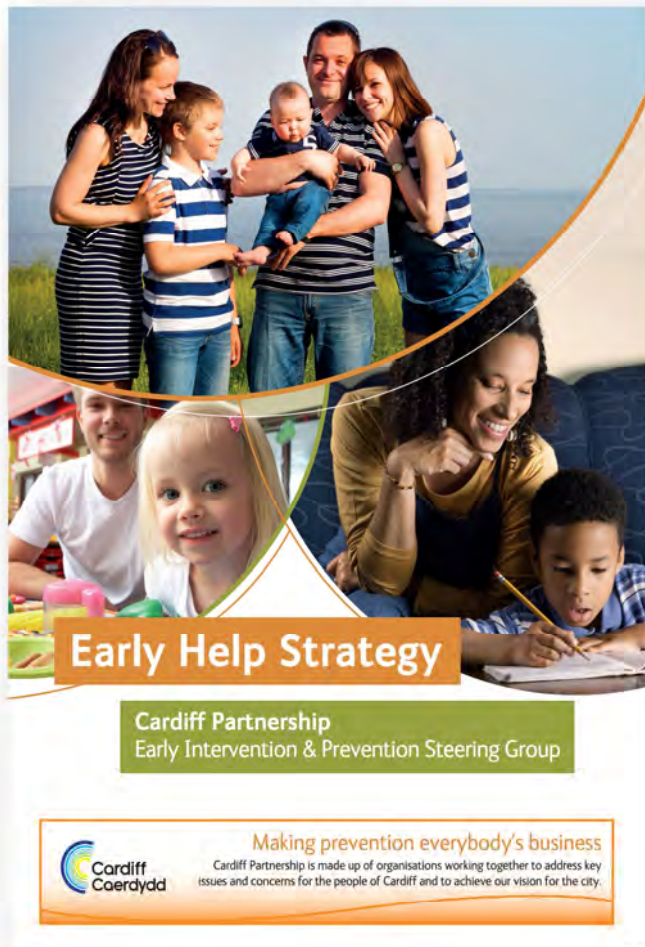
This distribution of service users across the Neighbourhood Partnership areas of Cardiff is a clear demonstration that there are families who need additional help in all parts of the city, not just the 'Southern Arc'. One of the strengths of the Families First programme is that it is able to respond based on identified need, not a service user's postcode.

The full reports on the data collection for 2015-16, 2014-15 and 2013-14 are available on [Cardiff Partnership website](#).

## 2.5 Key Learning

One of the principles of the Families First programme is shared learning to improve service delivery. This annual report provides an opportunity to review delivery over the past year and to identify some of the important themes and issues which will help to shape future planning.

### 2.5.1 'Early Help' and the role of Families First in preventative services



One of the most important developments in services for families in Cardiff during 2015-16 was the development and launch of the Early Help Strategy in October 2016. The multi-agency Early Intervention and Prevention [EIP] Group developed the Strategy. The EIP Group is part of the Cardiff Partnership delivery arrangements and chaired by a senior manager within Children's Services.

The Strategy sets out the approach for responding to families with appropriate and timely support when needs arise. It proposes a 'Think Family' approach with a shared, strengths-based ethos (underpinned by Restorative Approaches) for all services that work with families in Cardiff.

The principal aim is to reduce the number of families needing higher tier interventions, particularly Children's Social Services.

All the key statutory services, as well as the main third sector organisations working with families in Cardiff, have signed up to the Strategy.

Early intervention is also one of the main aims of the Families First programme in Cardiff and there has been growing recognition of the role that the programme plays in providing preventative services. Families First is central to the implementation of Cardiff's Early Help Strategy.

Great progress was already being made to strengthen working relationships. However, during 2015-16 senior managers decided to strengthen the links between Families First, the Early Help Strategy and Children's Services further.

There were two important developments:

- Extending use of the JAFF
- Moving management of Families First to Children's Services

### Roll out of the JAFF

One of the main actions in the Strategy was to use the good practice of the Families First Joint Assessment Family Framework [JAFF] as the first level of assessment for identifying when families need early help. The JAFF was developed by the TAF teams and provides the structure for a practitioner to engage with a family to identify their strengths and their needs, and to support the family to identify the services that will help them to make changes and prevent things from getting worse.

The generic Families First TAF team works with families with more complex needs, although still below the threshold for Children's Services, and the Disability TAF specialises in support for families where a child is disabled.

The Early Help Strategy identified that we needed to identify and support other families with lower levels of need. The way to do this was to roll out use of the JAFF to other organisations and services. In November 2015, Children's Services

appointed an Improvement Project Manager to support the implementation of the Strategy. Her first task was to engage practitioners in a pilot to see how this should work.

The two TAF teams have been central to this group, which also involves other Families First services and schools. Members of the group said that it would be helpful to see an experienced family worker completing the JAFF with a family. In response to this, a senior practitioner from the TAF team was filmed working with a 'family' (for logistical and ethical reasons, actors play the family). The DVD is now being used in training. The pilot is continuing into 2016-17 when there will be an evaluation of how well it has worked.

***"I cannot think of a more challenging set of aspirations than those set out in this strategy. The devil is in the detail and the implementation. There will undoubtedly be things that just don't succeed. Many individuals or situations will defy the most determined efforts to help. Some will sustain change and others will relapse but as professionals we will need to draw on the strength of the evidence base and have the courage of our convictions that 'prevention works', if we want to make a real and lasting difference. We know that there are already many well established services in Cardiff where we can evidence transformational success. This strategy aims to multiply that success and maximise the impact of different professionals and services by combining our efforts more effectively and focusing everyone who works with children on a common goal - prevention."***

Tony Young, Director of Social Service and Chair of the Vulnerable Children and Families Board, in his Foreword to the *Early Help Strategy*





*Filming of JAFF Training DVD at St Mellon's Family Centre*

### **Moving Families First into Children's Services**

The JAFF pilot has illustrated once again that Early Help and Families First are inextricably linked. Not only does Families First demonstrate good practice in relation to early help, but it also provides expertise and advice about the services available for families via the Freephone service and a whole range of the services themselves.

As a result, senior managers in City of Cardiff Council agreed that Children's Services should manage the Families First programme alongside the Early Help Strategy. The Financial Guidance for Families First is clear that the funding cannot be used for delivering the core functions of statutory authorities, so Families First cannot and will not be used for delivering statutory Children's Services. However, Families First does have an agreed and important role delivering preventative services and will be able to contribute to the arrangements for Information, Advice and Assistance under the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014. Commissioning of the next Families First programme will also be informed by the Population Needs Assessment that is being carried out in 2016-17 as part of the implementation of the Act.

### **2.5.2 Links between Families First, Schools and Education Services**

The links between Families First and education (schools and other related services) is as important as the links with Children's Services. There is a strong correlation between poverty and low educational attainment: supporting families to ensure that young people are able to engage effectively in education and improve their attainment levels is one of the most important steps to tackling the root causes of poverty and not just mitigating its effects.

Schools also provide a vital contact point with families. If a school identifies problems with the attendance, punctuality or behaviour of a student, they may often find that there are things going on in the family that are affecting the young person's ability to engage. They may have been affected by family breakdown, redundancy, threat of eviction, family illness or disability, substance misuse, or the adults may just need some additional help with parenting. The young person his/herself may be experiencing anxiety or depression. The role of the school is to deliver teaching and learning. But sometimes, working in partnership with services like those delivered via Families First can help families to make changes and for the adults to support their children more effectively. Helping families to access help and support when they need it can in turn help students to engage and learn more effectively. This is also a vital contact point for providing early help.

Families First provides a range of targeted services for children and young people, by themselves and with their parents. Some services also work with teachers and school staff to provide training in particular areas such as dealing with bullying, sex and relationships education or coping with bereavement. Further information about these is given in the package descriptions below.

Schools are one of the main routes for children, young people and their families to access Families First services. Schools are also one of the largest sources of referrals into the TAF team. Reporting indicates that services have been delivered in partnership or have been signposted from over 200 schools across Cardiff, and the Education Service is the lead for the Child and Youth Engagement Package.

However, Families First have recognised that further development work is required to ensure a more embedded approach of Families First Services within schools. We have received feedback that schools are not always clear whether or not the services in their schools are actually Families First services. This is often due to the fact the services are identified by the project name or provider rather than as a Families First Service.

There is progress being made to develop more consistent processes. The Youth Mentoring projects, which have now been extended through ESF funding, have made links with high schools in relation to completion of a Vulnerability Assessment Profile. This is helping to provide a more consistent approach to identifying and coordinating support when young people are at risk of becoming NEET (i.e. not in education, employment or training).

Schools are also key players in the Early Help Strategy. Education Services have recognised the importance of having a clear approach to identifying when families need additional help and support. A number of both primary and secondary schools have also confirmed the importance of this through joining the JAFF pilot.

However, this needs further work and it will be a priority focus during 2016-17, as part of the review of the current programme. This will inform future commissioning, with the intention of developing a more consistent approach.

### 2.5.3 Impact of Welfare Reform

During 2015-16, there was increasing awareness about the impact that welfare reform would have on families in Cardiff. Information about changes, such as the benefit cap and introduction of Universal Credit, suggested that a significant number of families could have a reduction in family income or need to move from their current housing.

Families First joined forces with the Advice and Welfare Reform Managers in City of Cardiff Council to organise a conference, Working Together to Tackle Family Poverty, which explored ways to mitigate the impact of the changes on families.



*Participants at 'Working Together to Tackle Family Poverty'*

The conference took place at Butetown Community Centre on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016. Councillor Susan Ellsmore, who is the lead Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Wellbeing, opened it and there were expert contributions from the lead for child poverty in Children in Wales, Sean O'Neill; the Welsh Government's Welfare Reform Champion, Paul Neave; and the Council's Welfare Reform Manager, Leah Whitty.

The conference provided an important opportunity to bring together Families First providers with other services to find out more about the changes and what they will mean to families in Cardiff. Round table discussions explored how we can work together to support families into work or to maximise their income. This is part of a continuing piece of work that will be taken forward under a new Tackling Poverty Group in 2016-17.

### Case Study 1

- ▶ Household: Single claimant with 5 children (Boy aged 12, Girl aged 10, Boy aged 9, Girl aged 5, Girl aged 2)
- ▶ Property Size required: 4 Bedroom Property
- ▶ Council Rent: £120.79 per week
- ▶ Income: £384.02 per week (Income Support, Child Benefit and Child Tax Credits)
- ▶ Housing Benefit Entitlement: £120.79 per week
- ▶ Excess income: £119.81 per week
- ▶ Capped HB award: £0.98 per week
- ▶ Income Reduced to: £264.21 per week

### Case Study 2

- ▶ Household: Couple with 4 children (Boy aged 9, Girl aged 7, Girl aged 4, Girl aged 3)
- ▶ Property Size required: 3 Bedroom Property
- ▶ Council Rent: £108.37 per week
- ▶ Income: £366.76 per week (Jobseekers Allowance, Child Benefit and Child Tax Credits)
- ▶ Housing Benefit Entitlement: £108.37 per week
- ▶ Excess income: £90.13 per week
- ▶ Capped HB award: £18.24 per week
- ▶ Income Reduced to: £276.63 per week

#### 2.5.4 Cardiff Families First Practice Network

Another important element of Families First shared learning is the Practice Network. Restorative Approaches has again formed the bedrock for shared learning in Cardiff. During 2015-16 there were 6 courses with over 80 participants from Families First and other related services. For the first time, these provided opportunities for refresher training and Restorative Approaches for leadership along side the introductory and advanced courses (see also section 10.4 below for more information on Restorative Approaches). Motivational Interviewing provided another key element in the skill-set for strengths-based work with families.

The Families First Practice Exchange continued successfully throughout 2015/16. This included two larger conferences: the first on Wellbeing, which was organised in collaboration with Barnardo's and the Cadarn package, and the second on the impact of Welfare Reform (see 2.5.4 above). These enabled Families First to explore important issues not only with each other but also with other practitioners in schools, housing, community organisations etc.

Providers were offered bespoke sessions relating to the National Participation Standards and they have found this very helpful for enabling them to prepare for self-assessment against the standards and for inspection by the Young Inspectors (see section 10.1 below for more information about the Young Inspectors).

It has also been an important feature of the programme that specialists in the different packages share their expertise with each other and with practitioners in other related services. During the year, the learning that FF providers have offered has included:

- Supporting the language and communication of young children in pre-school settings
- Level 2 (Agored Cymru) Community Food and Nutrition Skills
- C-Card Sexual Health
- Strengthening Families



***Participants in Families First Communication Workshop***

During the year, the programme also included an interactive Communication Workshop, which gave participants a range of skills to improve face-to-face and written communication. Practitioners attending one of the lunch and learns in the previous year had asked for this workshop to help them improve how they provided services for family members with language and communication difficulties. However, learning from the course can also help the way we interact with other professionals and families in general. One of the main learning points was not to think about 'accessible communication' as something special – you are only communicating if it is accessible!

## 2.6 Aligning programmes

Families First is one of a number of family and anti-poverty programmes that have been put into place by the Welsh Government. As such, it has always sat alongside Flying Start and Communities First. Historically, these programmes have all had separate guidance and programme management arrangements, and have worked to deliver similar, though different, outcomes. Integrated Family Support Service was also part of the Child and Family programmes originally but this is now part of core provision.

From the start, Cardiff has made arrangements to make sure that these programmes are aligned and working together effectively to deliver services that meet local needs.

Families First services have become part of the work programmes within communities and this has made people more aware of where there was potential duplication. For instance, the support around employment being offered by the Sustainable Employment package has been flexible to ensure that it is complementary to related support provided by Communities First.

Families First also works in partnership with Communities First, Careers Wales and Cardiff Education/Youth Service as part of a Cardiff-wide response to the Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework. This work seeks to address the key elements of the strategy, to identify young people most at risk of disengagement and achieve better co-ordination of support.

During 2015-16, Welsh Government took steps to encourage greater alignment by developing a shared outcomes framework. Cardiff was a pilot area for this and the central Families First and Communities First teams developed processes for mapping outcomes from the different programmes.

The Welsh Government has taken a decision not to proceed with the Outcomes Framework in this format. However, they do still want to see increasing alignment between these programmes. They have also directed that work to align the anti poverty programmes should also include Supporting People, which provides additional help for people experiencing problems or needing additional support with their housing. They have also given local areas additional flexibility to vire up to 5% between programmes if they consider that this will meet local needs more effectively.

Cardiff Partnership is responding to this by setting up a new Tackling Poverty Group. This will combine the old Operational Steering Group with the Welfare Reform Group to form a group with a much clearer focus for joint working. There are also discussions taking place about joint commissioning of services where there are shared priorities.





### 3. TEAM AROUND THE FAMILY AND FREEPHONE SERVICES

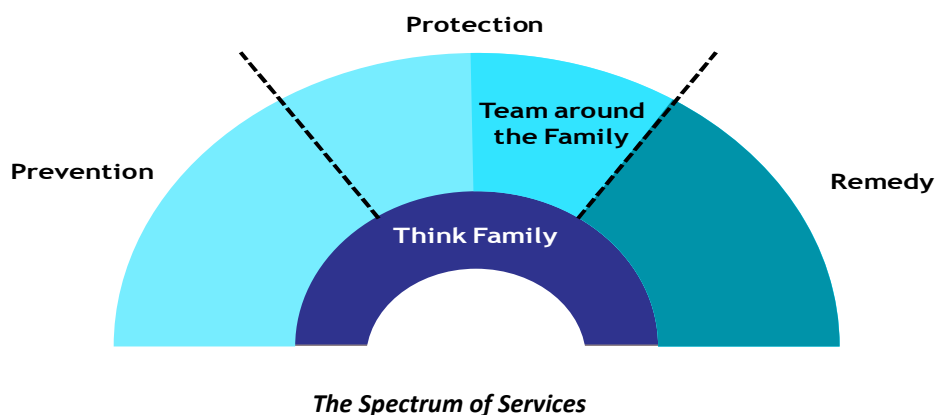
*Tros Gynnal Plant provides two services that are central to the Families First programme in Cardiff: the generic team that supports Team around the Family [TAF] working and the Families First Freephone Service that acts as a central access point to the programme.*

#### 3.1 Cardiff Team Around the Family team

The aim of Cardiff Team Around the Family team (CTAF) is to provide a service to families who are experiencing difficulties to help those families resolve their problems and prevent things from escalating. Team around the family working is a central requirement of Families First.

The target group for CTAF are those families with complex needs but who do not pass the threshold for social services interventions. CTAF coordinate a team around the family response where a family’s needs indicate that they would require support from four or more services. These may be any services, not just Families First services. Also, the family may not necessarily be accessing those services – only in need of them.

**Figure 4: Where CTAF is placed on the Spectrum of Services**



The Spectrum of Services above shows where the Team Around Family team is placed in relation to other tiers of services. The spectrum covers the range of needs from ‘prevention’, where families’ needs can be met through universal services, through ‘protection’, where families may need some targeted additional support, through to remedy where families need statutory interventions.

The Families First programme provides services for those families who are generally coping but just need some additional help at a specific time, or the right information to get them back on track (prevention at tiers 1 and 2), through to services for families with higher levels of needs (protection at tier 3), but who do not meet the criteria for a social services intervention (remedy at tier 4).

## The CTAF process

All Families First services are expected to 'Think Family' and to take into account the needs of the whole family. They would also be expected to signpost and support families they work with to access other services where they only need one of two additional services. The CTAF team are there to provide a coordination role where the family's needs are more complex as set out above.

CTAF work with families in two phases:



At **Phase 1**, CTAF practitioners engage with families to complete a Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) that identifies their strengths, skills and resources using a variety of approaches including Motivational Interviewing, Restorative Approaches and Family Group Meetings.

CTAF practitioners also help families to identify what it is that needs to change; ways to go about making changes and who else can be involved.

At **Phase 2**, CTAF practitioners facilitate a CTAF Planning Meeting to draw up a support plan developed by the family and any professionals involved and then monitor the plan, co-ordinate the service delivery and make sure that the plan meets the needs of the family.

## The Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF)

The Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) is a tool to help families identify their strengths and needs and develop a family plan. Members of the CTAF team use the JAFF to help structure their work with families. However, the first step is always engagement with the family and starts with what concerns the family. The team draw on their experience of restorative approaches to ensure that they work *with* families to do this.

During 2015-16, the CTAF team started working with the Improvement Project Manager in Children's Services to roll out use of the JAFF to other practitioners as part of the Early Help Strategy.

The JAFF also incorporates the distance-travelled measures that are used to identify whether families are better off as a result of the services they have received. This information is reported to Welsh Government for each calendar year and 2015 information was provided in January 2016. The JAFF pilot group has developed descriptors in plain language to get a more consistent approach to the scaling used in the distance-travelled measures.





# Team Around the Family and Freephone Services



## Performance 2015-16

### How much did we do?

**430** Times when other services engaged in the TAF process

**226** JAFFs Joint Assessment Family Framework Completed

**785** calls to Freephone including **430** from families

We've worked with **615** children and young people and **437** adults in 250 families

### How well did we do?

**93%** of professionals felt engaged in the TAF process

**100%** of families said TAF involved right services to meet their needs

**100%** adults and 95.75% of Children felt central to process and their voices heard.

**563** callers to Freephone had improved understanding of Families First Services

**89** had said improved access to FF services

**47** TAF families completing at phase 1 reported improved relationships

**56** TAF families completing at Phase 1 were better able to resolve their own problems

**74** TAF families completing at phase 2 found working with TAF beneficial to their family

**54** TAF families completing at phase 2 reported improvement in emotional wellbeing needs

**26** TAF families completing at Phase 2 reported improvement in finance and employment needs

**127** professionals involved felt working with TAF had helped families

### How is anybody better off?

2015/16 figures

Families First Free Phone  
0808 800 0038

Website  
[www.cardiffpartnership.co.uk](http://www.cardiffpartnership.co.uk)

Twitter  
#FamiliesFirst





**Got children? Lots going on with your family?  
Finding it difficult to cope? Want to make some  
changes? Cardiff TAF might be able to help...**

Children, young people and their families sometimes need a little extra help for them to have happy and healthy lives.

The Team around the Family aim to work with families to help them identify their strengths and needs and make their own family plans to guide them towards their goals.

**1** TAF are contacted by a family or someone working with a family because they want help to make changes to improve their lives.

**2** The family will be contacted by a TAF worker to talk about what has been happening in their life.

**3** Together the TAF worker and family try to work out what the whole family need.



**4** The family and TAF worker pick services they would like to work with.

**5** Those services, plus friends are invited to take part in a TAF family meeting.

**6** At the meeting the family will agree an action plan which should aim to help the family to move forward.

**7** The TAF worker will help make sure the plan is followed by the family and services they have chosen to support them.



**GET IN TOUCH WITH US:**  
**02920 487 816 or email us at**  
**TAF@trosgynnal.org.uk**



Afennir gan  
Lywodraeth Cymru  
Funded by  
Welsh Government

## CTAF delivery in 2015-16

The CTAF team provide a detailed breakdown about the families that they were working with and the referral route. Not only does this provide valuable information for monitoring the effectiveness of the Families First programme but it also provides intelligence about family needs that will help decision-makers in planning services and will be included in the commissioning review.

### TAF Families – Main Sources of Referrals

Type of Organisation	Number of referrals
Social Services	69
Self-Referrals	64
Education	37
Third Sector	24
Health visitor	19
Mental Health/CAMHS	10
Police – Women’s Pathfinder	10
Primary Health Care	6
Employment services	3
Youth Offending Services	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>251</b>

### TAF Families – Top ten issues raised

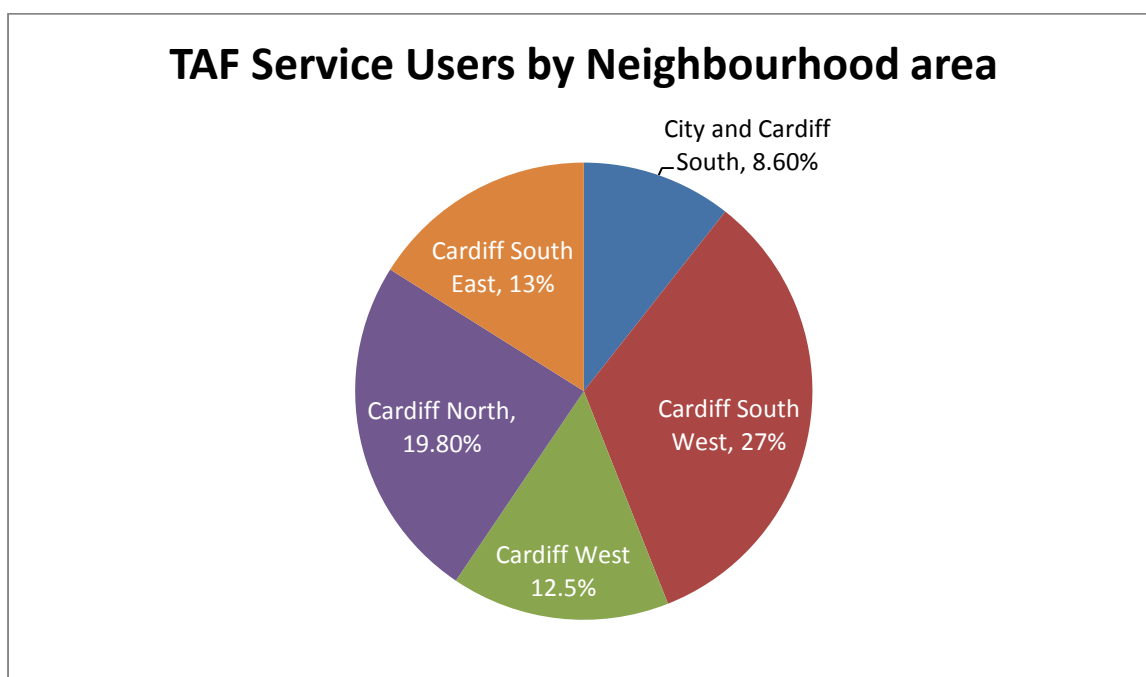
Key Issues	Total
Parenting	98
Education/Attendance	82
Finance	76
Housing	74
Emotional Well-Being	72
Family Relationships	64
Mental health	63
Domestic Abuse/Sexual Abuse	49
Substance Misuse	26
Employment	24
Health	24

The CTAF team also highlighted two issues that were of particular concern:

- The team encountered a significant number of parents experiencing acute mental health episodes. In a number of cases, the team had to deploy Anti Suicide Intervention Training (ASIST). Members of the CTAF team have to demonstrate a high level of professionalism to deploy ASIST safely and accurately. This also illustrates the impact of parental mental health issues within families. However, unlike for some of the other ‘top ten’ issues, this is one area where there are no services within the Families First programme itself.
- During this year, the TAF team have also issued Foodbank vouchers to families as well as distributing baby food, toddler meals, kettles and slow cookers to families, donated by Foodbank. In order to obtain a Foodbank voucher, a family or individual must be in crisis with no other source of food at that time. The families that they have issued with Foodbank vouchers have very young children who would otherwise have gone without food - many parents tell the team that they go without food themselves to ensure their children do not go to bed/school hungry. This is a reminder of the levels of poverty that families across the city are already facing – a trend that could increase as the changes being introduced as part of Welfare Reform are implemented with the cap on benefits.

TAF families come from across the city but it is significant that a high proportion come from North Cardiff, an area that is traditionally seen as less deprived – the area provided the highest number of referrals in 2014-15 and second highest in 2015-16. The higher rate could reflect the fact that, during a recession, even more prosperous areas can be affected. These areas also have fewer of the other kinds of support services provided by programmes such as Flying Start and Communities First that have been targeted on areas of deprivation.

**Figure 5: TAF Service Users by Neighbourhood Area**



Baseline of 753 represents 96.2% of the total number of service users (i.e. individual family members)

## Feedback from TAF service users

As part of the process, all service users are asked for feedback on the service and any improvements that could be made:

*"The service offered plenty of flexibility and worked around our family."*

*"Happy that we have got a plan and glad of the services you found for us. The talking has helped, especially as it was in a relaxed atmosphere in our own home."*

*"Out of all the professions I've worked with you're the best. You're not formal and unlike the other professionals, you didn't talk down to me." (young person)*

*"Having you there - you took charge of the meeting in the right way. We were the star of the meeting and people were listening to us. You were an advocate for us."*

*"TAF don't judge or look down their nose which a lot of people do. TAF know more agencies than a lot of people know about."*

*"The service could be improved by TAF having more influence to make services such as mental health and housing agree to do things and for TAF Practitioners to be able to refer to mental health support such as CAMHS and PMHT.."*




*Cardiff Foodbank has become an important resource for families*

### 3.2 The Families First Freephone Service

The Families First Freephone service provides a central access point to the Families First programme in Cardiff for families and professionals. 2015-16 was the second full year of the Freephone service and the service has quickly established itself as a vital resource:

- You can phone this number if you or your family would like to know more about Families First services. Someone will be able to come and see you to talk you through what services there are and to support you to access them.
- You can phone this number if you are a professional and would like more information about Families First in Cardiff or would like someone to visit a family you are working with to discuss the services they could access.

The Freephone number is answered by a skilled and experienced practitioner who is able to provide information about Families First services - where these services are available and how to access them.



**The Families First Freephone number is 0808 800 0038.**

**There is also a Freetext number 80800 – messages should start with FamiliesFF.**

The main role of the Freephone service is to provide information and advice over the phone and to signpost to appropriate services where needed. During the year, the service handled an increasing number of calls, with a substantial number coming from families themselves:

**Distribution of Freephone service users by source of referral 2015/16**

Source of Referral	Total	Source of Referral	Total
Self-Referral	496	Police	23
Health visitors	53	Child and adolescent mental health services	17
Third Sector	45	Other employment support services	5
Schools and other education services	42	Other	2
Children’s social services	39	<b>Total</b>	<b>722</b>

Baseline of 722 represents 100% of the total number of service users

Where needed, the service also goes out to visit families and to complete a JAFF with them to help families identify the services they need. Where they identify a small number of services, they will be signposted to the relevant services. However, if the families identify that they need more than four services, they will continue to have support from the team through a full team around the family process. During the year, 32 families who had contacted the Freephone went on to receive support through the full TAF process.

***“The TAF phonenumber appears to have been a major success in ensuring that families in need are being identified. The soft referral process means that families can be assessed fully before being taken into the programme or sign-posted elsewhere. This is shown in the data where 26% of all referrals are self-referrals compared with only 9% in the rest of Wales. If Families First is to be a non-coercive provision, then this may be one of the better ways to identify the right families to work with.”***

Initial feedback from 3<sup>rd</sup> year evaluation of Families First, Ipsos MORI Ecorys on behalf of the Welsh Government

### Freephone Families – Top ten issues raised

Key Issues	Total
Behaviour	98
Access to services	83
Education/Attendance	72
Mental health	63
Emotional Well-Being	68
Parenting	54
Family Relationships	47
ADHD/ASD	29
Health	24
Domestic Abuse/Sexual Abuse	20
Finance	20

#### Feedback from Freephone service users

***“[The Practitioner was] very warm, friendly and understanding of our family situation and has put us in touch with the support we need.” (Parent)***

***“Very informative – was told about agencies I had not heard about.” (Parent)***

***“Very kind and understood many situations.” (Young person)***

### 3.3 Inspection against the National Participation Standards

The Young Inspectors team (which is part of the Young Commissioners project) inspected the Team Around the Family and Freephone services during the year. They wanted to see how well the service involved service users and whether they met the seven participation standards.



***Young Inspectors meet the TAF team during the Inspection***

The young people involved in the inspection were very positive about the way in which Tros Gynnal Plant worked with service users and concluded that they were achieving all seven standards.

***“The Young Inspectors were impressed with the values and the ethos of the service and organisation. It was extremely clear that the service respects the opinions of children and young people, and taking these opinions into account is intrinsic to the running of the service.***

***The staff that we met were great and you could tell from their enthusiasm that they loved their work and we are sure this will come across to the young people.***

***The evidence that was presented was very well organised and constructed and allowed us to gain a better understanding of the service and showed that listening to the views of service users means the service continually assesses its working practice and strives to make the services better for its users. We as the Cardiff Young Inspectors team make the recommendation that the service is achieving all seven areas of the National Participation Standards.”***

Overall Conclusion from Inspection Report, Cardiff Young Inspection Team, April 2016



The following case studies illustrate how the Team Around the Family and Freephone processes work and the benefits that they can offer the families involved.

## TAF CASE STUDY 1

An Education Welfare Officer made a referral to Team Around the Family for a family with a 15 year old. They made the referral because of the son's poor attendance at school. He was attending 51% of the time and Mum was struggling to manage this. There were also additional needs within the family: Mum is disabled and the family were struggling financially, with a daughter in college in need of enrolment fees.

When TAF began working with the family they said that they were being prosecuted for the son's low attendance and were due to go to court. The family agreed for the TAF worker to refer them to SNAP Cymru. TAF and the SNAP Cymru keyworker visited the family to discuss what support SNAP could offer in relation to the court case. SNAP Cymru agreed to speak to the son's school directly to try to gather as much information as they could to support the family with their case. The TAF worker contacted the Personal Support Unit (PSU), a voluntary organisation offering practical and emotional support to people attending court. The PSU offered to support the family on the day of the hearing, even though the hearing was due to take place in a court where they would not usually provide support. Prior to the court case, Mum said that she felt more confident about attending due to the additional support she had received.

The family's finances were another area where they identified they needed support. Due to cuts in their benefits, they were left with little food on two occasions so TAF provided them with two foodbank vouchers. The family washing machine had broken 6 months previously but the family had been unable to replace it due to financial difficulties. The TAF worker made a successful application to Buttle UK, who granted the family a new washing machine. Both Mum and her children were overjoyed to have a new washing machine as it meant they no longer had to wash their clothes by hand. The son was largely responsible for this as his mother found it difficult to perform the task due to her disability.

For support with managing finances and accessing appropriate benefits, the family were given information on the Advice Hubs. Mum met with the Citizens Advice Bureau who gave her some useful information regarding her finances. In addition to this, letters were written to the daughter's college regarding the family's financial difficulties and the college agreed to allow the family to pay the enrolment fees that were due at a later stage.

The family continue to receive support. Mum is considering options for accessible counselling. The daughter will also be accessing counselling through the college and YMCA young carers will be working with the son.

### **What has changed?**

The family feel more supported and more informed about where they can go for support in the future.

Each family member benefitted from the practical support (i.e. new washing machine) and this has had a positive effect on their emotional wellbeing.

## TAF CASE STUDY 2

A referral was made to Team around the Family (TAF) by a social worker with the Child in Need team at Children's Services. The referral was originally for a Mum and her young son. The family were living with Mum's two younger sisters and their mother. TAF worked with Mum and son for a couple of weeks and wrote a supporting letter to the council in relation to the family's current housing situation. Mum and son felt that housing was their main need and that they did not need any other services brought in to support them. Mum had mild learning difficulties and was already working with an advocate from Advocacy Matters.

However, TAF began working with the other family members more intensively after this, as one of the sisters had a number of needs relating to education and wellbeing. The sister had not been in school for approximately eighteen months but wanted to be able to go onto college. In order to be able to go to college she needed to complete her GCSE exams.

An Education Welfare Officer had been involved with the family for a number of months and the mother had been fined by the courts for her daughter's poor attendance at school. It was difficult to engage with the young person at first as she refused to come downstairs during TAF visits to the family home, but she eventually agreed to meet with the TAF practitioner. They discussed what she wanted in terms of her education and she advised that she did wish to return to school but that she had found it difficult. Before TAF involvement, she had said a number of times that she would go to school but then would not go on the day. During visits, the TAF practitioner talked about possible services that could be brought in to support her with her educational needs. The young person decided that she would like a referral to SNAP Cymru for support with educational needs. She also wanted to access counselling through the charity Cardiff Concern. The TAF practitioner made referrals to both services.

The family were allocated a worker at SNAP and a TAF meeting was arranged at the young person's school. The young person and her mother attended the meeting along with the TAF practitioner, SNAP worker and volunteer, the Education Welfare Officer and the head of the English Department at the school. The meeting focused on the young person's needs and goals. She decided that she wanted to return to school for the full 5 days a week and study English literature, English language, maths, double award science and geography. The first arrangement agreed did not work and so the TAF worker arranged a further meeting. At this meeting, the young person was able to share why she had not felt comfortable with the first plan and a new plan was agreed. The plan was that the young person would only go to school during the periods where the teacher was not teaching so that she could have dedicated one-to-one tutoring. All other work was to be completed at home. Both the school and the young person were happy with the new arrangement and the young person attended school as agreed.

### **What has changed?**

The young person has re-engaged with education and has a plan for achieving the GCSEs she needs in order to go on to college.

The young person and the entire family have all said that they are 'better off' as they are all feeling more positive about the young person's education and about the future.

## **FREEPHONE CASE STUDY 1**

A call was made to the Families First Freephone from a member of staff at a Children's Centre in Croydon regarding an Asylum Seeking Family who were being moved to Cardiff. Following this, the family were contacted to arrange a one-off visit to explore their needs and identify if they required additional support through TAF (Team Around the Family).

The JAFF (Joint Assessment Family Framework) was used as a tool to direct conversation and explore fully what has been happening for the family. Those living in the family home are Mum, 12-year-old son and 4-year-old daughter. Mum's eldest daughter and 1-year-old granddaughter were placed in temporary accommodation elsewhere.

The Freephone practitioner used Restorative Approaches to lead the conversation. Mum felt able to speak openly about their circumstances, focusing on her thoughts and feelings to identify the family's needs. The practitioner also spent time with the family as a whole to gain the perspective of the children. The family were moved to Cardiff by the Home Office and had no knowledge of the area. The children needed to be registered in school and were eager to get back to their education and make new friends in the area. They were finding being at home difficult with very few toys and no TV to keep them entertained. The family's Asylum application is currently pending: with no recourse to public funds, they receive financial support from the National Asylum Support Service.

Mum's eldest daughter and granddaughter have been placed in separate accommodation. Mum has concerns regarding this because her daughter had previously suffered from fits. Mum was also concerned about her daughter's mental health if she felt isolated away from the family. Mum was trying to get proof of the difficulties her daughter faces from the GP in Ghana and is currently waiting to receive this before providing to the Home Office to reassess the housing situation. Mum feels that her daughter does not always act rationally and suffers from high blood pressure. Mum would like for them both to live together with the family but this is not currently possible as they have been placed in a two bedroom flat.

As needs were identified in several areas of the JAFF including Education, Finance, Community and Housing, Mum felt that a referral to Team Around the Family would be beneficial for both her and the children with the option to engage with her eldest daughter through this process as part of the family.

### **What has changed?**

Mum felt it beneficial to talk to someone face to face regarding the concerns she held for her and her family and now feels she has a way forward with the support of TAF. As the family are very new to Cardiff, it has enabled them to access the most appropriate support in order to meet their needs.

## **FREEPHONE CASE STUDY 2**

Mum contacted the Families First Freephone - she was very distressed and looking for help. She and her two children moved to Cardiff about 5 years ago after fleeing their home and coming to live in a Women's Aid Refuge. The family had experienced sustained violence and abuse from Mum's husband and the children's father.

Children's Services and Primary Mental Health Services have been historically involved as the family were involved with MARAC and the family needed police protection. Mum and her children have all been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and her son has been diagnosed with sensory processing disorder.

The family have resettled in Cardiff and all services had finished working with the family. Mum has been home educating her children for 2 years and all has been going well. She is still dealing with her mental health issues on a daily basis but is coping quite well with this.

When Mum contacted the Freephone service, she advised that she had recently had her disability benefit cut as part of her employment support allowance (ESA). From now on she will be transferred to the 'work related activity' benefit, which means she would regularly have to attend work-related activity interviews and prepare for training to eventually get back into employment. This was causing her a great deal of distress and had heightened her PTSD. Anna was extremely distressed on the phone (and was having to leave the phone every now and then as she was retching from the stress). The Freephone service offered to visit in order to see which support package would be most appropriate for her.

During the visit, a JAFF was completed which identified clearly her strengths, needs and goals. Mum explained more about her health conditions and said that it was one of her goals to be in long-term employment but she felt this wasn't the right time for her. Mum often found it difficult to leave the house due to her anxiety levels. She did not have any additional support from family and friends locally to help her. During the visit, the Freephone worker explained that Diverse Cymru could support her to make an appeal against the benefit decisions. Mum said she thought this would be a good idea.

Following a discussion with TAF Service Manager the family were offered a second (and final) visit to further explore Mum's mental health needs to see if there was any additional support she could potentially access in the future regarding this. She had said repeatedly that this issue 'had knocked her right back' so it was important to explore this element of the JAFF in more detail.

Mum talked about the benefit of the Freephone service in that she didn't have any current 'support workers' to give her this information so quickly and on a face to face basis. The Freephone service worked well because they were able to offer a home visit. In this case, information provided over the phone wouldn't have been enough to meet Mum's needs and was making her feel more stressed.

### **Learning Points:**

- Sometimes, the TAF team may start working with a family in relation to one situation but other issues often emerge when they start to engage with the family – the TAF model gives the team the flexibility to respond.
- Issues around education and attendance are some of the most frequent presenting issues for families – support from TAF can help to improve this situation.
- There are increasing numbers of families in Cardiff who need food from the Food Bank.
- The TAF team and Families First services can be particularly important for families who have moved to Cardiff in difficult circumstances and do not have other support.
- Managing the Freephone service alongside the TAF team enables those families who need a higher level of support to make a seamless transition.
- As well as giving advice over the phone, it is important that the Freephone service is able to make home visits to those families who need it.
- It is not only services that are specifically funded by Families First that need to help families – other services, including statutory services and services not funded by Families First, need to help as well.



## 4. EARLY YEARS

The Early Years package provides a range of support for families with babies or young children (under the age of 8) and for pregnant women. This package is led by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and works closely with health and early years professionals. It also makes very good use of volunteer and peer support through services like Home Start.

The Early Years package provided support for families across the whole of Cardiff and is complementary to the Flying Start provision, which is available only in certain areas. Services on offer include:

- Parenting support for parents of children under 8
- Support for mothers experiencing post-natal depression
- Stay and play and targeted childcare
- Support for speech and language development
- Dietetics support for good nutrition in the early years
- Support for families affected by domestic violence
- Welsh language activities for families with young children

During 2015-16, services provided very valuable services directly to parents who were struggling to cope with their young families. However, a very important part of the way in which the package operates is to provide training and support to improve the skills of the early years workforce in certain areas. This included training in nutrition and healthy eating, speech and language support and motivational interviewing.



*Postnatal depression service*

There were a number of particular achievements within the package during the year:

- Additional funding had been allocated to the Home Start projects in 2014-15 for training to help staff and volunteers to deal with parents experiencing mental health problems. As a result, they reported in 2015-16 that 167 parents needed mental health support and that, of these, 79% reported that they felt better able to cope as a result of the support they received.
- The specialist midwife who provides support for pregnant women with a diagnosed mental health problem was shortlisted for a national nursing award for her work. This element of the Early Years package has demonstrated the importance of preventative support for this vulnerable group of women to lower the risk of difficulties arising during pregnancy and after birth. As a result, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board have allocated additional funding to extend the support from their own resources.
- Action for Children Parenting Service started to develop close links with Cardiff prison. They are now taking part in a special visiting session. This is a new pilot, which was developed by Cardiff prison with support from external funding. Prisoners with children under one year of age are able to spend two hours with their partners and babies. Practitioners from the parenting service attend the session and offer 45 minute of family activities for those who wish to actively engage, plus support and assistance for the duration of the session according to need. In these particular circumstances, the service is unable run a parenting group. However, sessions cover similar topics and all activities undertaken as part of the sessions (baby massage, first aid, rhymes, etc) are recorded in prisoners' personal files, which are used to assess eligibility for parole. This particular element of work has started to fill one of the gaps that Welsh Government have identified for new commissioning post March 2017.

During the year, it was agreed that Families First would no longer fund FAST (Families and Schools Together). However, Save the Children are still delivering FAST in Cardiff with alternative funding.

There was also further review of the elements within the package to prepare for a reduction in funding from Welsh Government in 2016-17. Following this, it was agreed that SOGS training for Health Visitors would no longer be needed because this could now be incorporated into core provision.



GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Caerdydd a'r Fro  
Cardiff and Vale  
University Health Board



# Early Years Package Performance 2015-16

## How much did we do?

**131**  
programmes and  
clubs delivered

**23**  
Services

**5984**  
participants

**923**  
1 to 1 support  
sessions delivered

## How well did we do?

**98%** 😊  
satisfied with their service

**96%** of participants  
completed their  
service intervention

**152**  
parents reported improved  
family relationships

**585**  
parents reported  
improved parenting skills

**515**  
parents more confident in  
using Welsh with their children

**366** parent reported an improvement  
in difficulties present after  
receiving an intervention

**110**  
children and 79 pregnant women in  
situations of domestic violence  
have an increased feeling of safety

**309** families benefitted  
from support from  
Home Start

**89%** saying they noticed and  
improvement in their  
children's wellbeing

## How is anybody better off?

2015/16 figures



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## CASE STUDY 1

### Safe AS

Case D, a five-year-old child, was referred to Safe AS by social services. D's mother had been involved in a physically and sexually violent relationship with a re-offending perpetrator. In addition, D had also witnessed on-going emotional and psychological abuse between her mother and father, and her maternal grandparents. All of this was affecting her emotional wellbeing. D was placed on the Child Protection Register for emotional abuse between July and October 2015. Her name was removed from the register in October 2015 but she was named as a Child in Need.

The Safe As practitioner completed an assessment with D's mother, gathering information to identify D's experiences of domestic abuse and related support needs. Once most of the necessary information was gathered, the practitioner was introduced to D. The Safe As practitioner gave D the option of whether to meet at home or school: she chose to receive support in school.

Following this, she developed a support plan. D was regularly scratching her hand and chewing clothes due to anxieties. She displayed low self-esteem and confidence in both educational and social situations. Mother, teacher and other professionals had all raised these concerns with Safe AS. These behaviours indicated a high level of insecurity and were having a severe impact on her emotional wellbeing. In addition to this, D's teacher also raised concerns that she displayed inappropriate knowledge of adult health and death, regularly worrying that people will die. Practitioners believe this is linked to D's own chronic illness and her mother's brain condition.

Safe AS have completed eight 1:1 sessions with D to date. The practitioner used creative, interactive and therapeutic intervention methods to address support needs in an age-appropriate manner. They completed activities to address safety, emotional literacy, self-esteem and confidence building.

D is transferring to a new school in the near future, therefore addressing her low self-esteem and anxieties has become a priority. Safe AS has also provided advocacy for D during Child In Need meetings and other professional forums. The Safe AS practitioner used support sessions to gather her views and wishes to raise at these.

The practitioner conducted a further five parenting support sessions with D's mother. These have been less structured and were based on her anxieties and worries about how she could support D to overcome her experiences of domestic abuse. This support has also included raising mother's awareness and signposting to other sources of support and services. In addition to the 1:1 sessions with D's mother, the practitioner had had a lot of contact over telephone and via text, at times when mother has required reassurance or support in responding to D's needs.

### What has changed?

Mother said she has noticed a change in D's behaviour: she appears more outgoing and happy, no longer withdrawn. She has reported an improvement in D's sleeping pattern and routine. There have been no recent incidents of self-harm/injury reported by school or family.

School considered that the child's anxieties and worries about death had seemed to decrease.

Mother is accessing essential support/intervention for her own recovery and needs, which is increasing her ability to support her daughter.



***Tool used by SafeAS project in work with children***

## **CASE STUDY 2**

### **'Get Cooking' Course at Shirenewton Gypsy and Traveller Site**

The Level 1 Agored Cymru Get Cooking – Cooking for Health course is an 8 week course developed to increase confidence in cooking healthy meals and knowledge around food, nutrition and food safety. This particular course was run in partnership at the Gypsy and Traveller site in Rumney, in the East of Cardiff. Two members of the Families First dietetic team led on the sessions and the course was developed so that the sessions were 3hrs in duration run over 5 weeks.

The team recruited four learners were in total, all teenage girls with poor or no cooking skills. The girls were aged between 11 and 15 years of age and none attended mainstream secondary school.

The need for this course came about from partnership working with Flying Start where they were running Get Cooking courses for the mums with children under 4 years of age. It was highlighted that the young teenage girls also would benefit from the same course.

Each Get Cooking course can use A3 flipchart teaching resources and recipe stands that have been developed on an All Wales Public Health Dietetic basis. The site's kitchen was very basic so cooking equipment was supplemented with stock.

Each learner received two Time Credit notes per session they attended, as well as an A5 recipe book each. At the end of the course, they cooked for other members of the site and invited friends and family to taste and try what they had made as Christmas celebration.

There have been benefits on several levels –

**Individual/Group** – All learners felt they had learned something they did not know about food and nutrition as a consequence of the course. They said that the most important thing learnt was “how to make healthy foods” and “how to make new things”. They all felt more confident to shop and prepare a healthy meal. Some had not had chance to make changes to their own diet but one individual highlighted she and her family had. They had increased how much fruit and vegetables they eat as a family and decreased the amount of high fat/sugar foods eaten, saying, “because it’s more healthy for us”. They are keen to start using their time credit vouchers in the local leisure centre.

**Community** – From the evaluations, one of the individuals felt it helped them with “how to get along with people better”. Others highlighted that they felt they made new friends in class. They enjoyed providing food for their friends on the site at the end of the course.

**Service** – The team say that continuing work with this vulnerable group is very rewarding. At present, they do not have any other formal education on their Gypsy Traveller site and the girls only attended primary school. They do not attend secondary school and they are not having any home tutoring at present. From attending this Get Cooking course, and completing all the work and assessments, they will gain an Agored Level 1 qualification. Continued links with Flying Start work being done with mums with young children under 4yrs of age and also work done on other sites.



*Get Cooking course at Shirenewton*

## CASE STUDY 3

### **Support Service for Young Families**

A young family were referred to the Support Service for Young Families at the end of January. The family had a young baby of 6 months and were living in a hostel. A home visit was conducted to introduce the worker and to complete the initial assessment. The project worker completed a well-being web and a questionnaire with the family. This incorporates a scoring system 1-10 to help identify a family's needs and wishes. In this case, the areas identified were primarily Education, Employment & training, Housing and self-esteem and confidence issues.

When offered group support, the couple refused. They explained that they did not have the confidence to attend groups. 1-1 sessions were offered as an alternative to manage this and to improve confidence in readiness for potential group work in the future. The couple explained that their main wish was to move out of the Hostel and to acquire a home. The baby was growing fast and their limited living space was affecting their emotional wellbeing. They found it particularly difficult that washing facilities had to be shared with other residents of the hostel. This was causing tensions between the young mum and fellow residents. Mum also reported that the hostel could be quite loud which was disturbing for her and the baby also. She said that she was experiencing anxiety and depression, which her GP was helping her to manage. Their housing conditions were the main cause of her anxiety and moving to a new home would help this enormously. In response to this, 1-1 sessions focused on supporting her housing needs and wishes, confidence and preparing the family to become "group ready".

The worker contacted Housing to ensure that the family's voice was heard. Mum had identified a potential property so SSYF enquired about the property. Shortly afterwards, she contacted the worker to say that she had been allocated the property, which she and her young family were delighted with. As they had no essential items to take, such as kitchen white goods, SSYF worked with the family to apply for a suitable Grant together.

Since SSYF have been involved, both young parents and their young baby have attended group and crèche facilities. They say that their self-esteem and confidence have improved considerably since being referred to the service.

Both parents have also made friendships with other young parents in the group and have even offered to give another young mum some baby items.

The young family are now looking forward to moving into their new property and the outcome of their grant applications.

### **What has changed?**

Since, SSYF involvement both parents' self-esteem and confidence have improved considerably and they are attending group sessions, despite initial resistance to this. The family now have a new home, which was their main source of tension. Living in a hostel, with very little space for them and their growing baby, was impacting on their emotional well-being.

### **Learning Points:**

- **When families experience difficult situations, different members of the family may need different kinds of support to help them to cope. It is important to meet the needs of everyone in the family – adults and children, even very young children.**
- **Sometimes services need to be flexible in order to respond to opportunities that arise to provide the right kind of help. Good working relationships between different services and programmes can open up these opportunities.**
- **As well as helping parents to develop skills and confidence, services can also offer practical support to resolve situations that are having a serious impact on emotional wellbeing.**
- **A little bit of the right kind of help at the right time can help people to cope better and stop situations getting worse.**
- **Establishing good patterns while children are very young will help families to cope as they get older.**



## 5. CONNECT 8-25: Child and Youth Engagement

Connect 8-25, the Child and Youth Engagement package provides a range of services to make sure that children and young people do well in school, college or work and get the support they need from their families. This package is led by City of Cardiff Council's Education Service and involves delivery by seven different organisations as well as a wide range of schools across Cardiff.

Services provided included:

- Support for Parenting through the Parenting 8-25 services delivered by Barnardo's and Action for Children across the city with special provision for younger parents
- Youth mentoring and Learning Coach projects to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training
- Bespoke education provision for young people run by Cardiff & Vale College
- Advice for homeless young people through Llamau's service in the Basement@33
- Support for families who have English as an additional language

### *Project Hero: Community Focused Schools project*



Good parenting and a stable home situation are essential for ensuring that children and young people attend school or college and are able to learn effectively. To help with this, Connect 8-25 projects work with both adults and children in families.

Parenting services are a central element in the Connect 8-25 package. During 2014-15, a review of parenting provision had identified certain actions that would improve delivery. The central team allocated additional funding for 2015-16 to increase the capacity of the services to be able to respond. As a result, the parenting services introduced a 'triage' system, which enabled them to identify the most appropriate offer of one-to-one support or group work, depending on the parents' needs. They also started to offer evening and weekend groups to suit parents who could not attend during the working day.

The other important element is support for young people, especially those who are at risk of disengaging from education, employment and training [EET]. Cardiff Youth Service manages the Youth Mentoring (for under-16s) and Post-16 Learning Coaches projects as part of Connect 8-25. These projects work closely with Careers Wales as part of Cardiff's strategy to encourage as many young people as possible to remain in EET. During 2015-16, they developed stronger links with high schools across Cardiff through use of a Vulnerability Assessment Profile. This enables schools to identify and refer students for additional support. This area of work is a high priority for Cardiff and will be strengthened through additional funding from the European Social Fund in 2016-17.

This package took a decision to end a number of elements in response to notice of reduced funding from Welsh Government in 2016-17. The most significant of these was the support provided for Cardiff's Community Focussed Schools programme. This provided small annual grants to schools that were part of the programme. Education Services provided the schools involved with support to explore other sources of funding. City of Cardiff Council will also now be looking at a new business model to sustain the Cardiff Outdoor Activity Team, which is based at Storey Arms.

***"The Connect 8-25 package has shown us some great examples of how to involve children and young people in decision making and development of the services from across the package and how they adhere to the National Participation Standards."***

Cardiff Families First Young Ambassadors Inspection Team, Inspection Report,  
March 2015

# Child and Youth Engagement Performance 2015-16



## How much did we do?

**1420**  
sessions delivered

**16**  
Services

**7** Community focused school clusters delivered  
**37** projects to **1361** children

**7451**  
participants

**224**  
over 16's received support from learning coaches

## How well did we do?

**96.6%** 😊  
satisfied with their service

**93.8%** of participants completed their service intervention

**190** 👤 👤  
parents (91.7%) parents felt more confident in their parenting ability

**170** young people accessing bespoke education provision 85% progressed into education, employment or training

**633** 📅 👤 👤  
pupils with maintained or improved school attendance

👤 👤 👤 **392** parents improved their relationships with their child's school

**722** Young people improved their engagement in education, employment or training opportunities

## How is anybody better off?

2015/16 figures



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## CASE STUDY 1

### Post 16 Learning Coaches

J had been referred to Post 16 Learning Coaches at panel through Careers Wales. During a home visit, the Learning Coach was able to establish that J was NEET (i.e. not in education, employment or training), and that he was living at the address provided. Unfortunately, J would not get out of bed during this initial home visit.

However, J called the Learning Coach the next day saying that he would like to join a construction course with ACT training provider. An appointment was arranged for him to meet the Careers Adviser, who could make the referral. The Learning Coach met with J beforehand. J revealed that he had not completed school and held no qualifications. He also said that his mum had been in and out of prison, so he had lived with his grandparents from an early age. J also had other siblings, but they lived with other members of the family elsewhere.

An interview at ACT secured a place with the training provider at engagement level. Following this, J's father got in contact with the Learning Coach saying that, now he was in college, J was looking to move in with him. They wanted some guidance about any benefit entitlements for them both. The Learning Coach contacted the local job centre in order to signpost J and his father to the right service for them.

J found it difficult in college at first, but without any qualifications he was restricted in what he would be able to do in future. After a couple of weeks, things did improve for him and he worked well towards gaining a qualification. After a couple of months with the training provider, the Learning Coach visited ACT to enquire about his progress. They reported that, although he had had a difficult start, he had settled and was doing extremely well. They were pleased to report that J had been awarded Learner of the Month for his perseverance and commitment! J is still doing well, and is enjoying the course.

### What has changed?

J had a difficult start with the training provider, but once settled he engaged really well, and was awarded Learner of the Month for having shown such great improvement. His confidence increased. He had opportunities to work towards some qualifications and looks forward to attending the course. He no longer has problems getting up in the morning! Partnership work enabled quick progression into a suitable training provider.

## CASE STUDY 2

### **Families Learning Together (ESOL) project - Cardiff and Vale College**

The Families Learning Together (ESOL) project goes into schools for one term for ½ day or a full day and targets parents of EAL [English as an Additional Language] pupils. It is intended to increase their English usage and knowledge of how their children learn in schools.

One adult teacher (ESOL trained) and one children's teacher (Primary trained) run the sessions. During the adult session, the teacher concentrates on improving the English of the parents through a theme that links to the joint session run by the children's teacher. The children's teacher works with small groups of children to work on areas to develop language skills.

The joint session is based on a storybook and introduces the parents to games and activities that can be made and used at home, further enhancing the idea of learning at home.

In one group, held at Adamsdown Primary School, we were able to reach a diverse section of the local community, including mothers who were unable to speak English. Two were from Syria. One was on an educational programme, studying education in the UK. They shared a commonality in that they were all mothers of children at Adamsdown Primary and during the course became comfortable in each other's company, gaining confidence along the way.

#### **What has changed?**

Parents gained confidence in coming into the school and speaking with the head teacher and other key staff, who work with their children. They learned how to support each other and translate for others when necessary. The regular attendance by the mothers helped the newly-arrived pupils settle into the school environment quickly.

The project enabled the school to build bridges with the mothers and the school feels that they are now part of their own children's learning.

100% of participants achieved an Agored Cymru unit.



*Participants in Families Learning Together*

## CASE STUDY 3

### Teulu – City of Cardiff Council Education Services

M, a 12 year old girl, was referred to the Teulu project by her social worker. She was on the Child Protection Register for Emotional Abuse and Neglect. There was a history of domestic violence and alcohol misuse within the family. M was watching violent and graphic films.

Her relationships in school were breaking down. She was violent towards other young people, and had poor attendance and punctuality. The school were aware of the family context and were using 'internal exclusion' in an attempt to manage her behaviours.

M was very unhappy. She felt that she did not belong and was self-harming cutting herself. Her mother was recognised to have mental health issues and there were housing and domestic issues.

Teulu's intervention was at home and in school to work with the family to deliver an integrated and bespoke intervention for the family:

- Teulu's specialist teacher worked with the school and child to plan for progress, offer advice and support. The school provided the environment for their work.
- Teulu liaised with the social worker to explain their work and worked with her to make the intervention as effective as possible.
- There were weekly home visits from the Family Liaison Officer offering advice and support. This focused on rebuilding the relationship between parent and school, meeting the family's needs in terms of their housing and domestic circumstances, and offering parenting advice.
- A Paediatrician had met with both parent and child respectively to share long-term medical history and to investigate any underlying medical issues. There was also an assessment by the team's paediatrician regarding M self-harming and then a referral onwards to CAHMS for direct work.

The Family Education Worker and Specialist Teacher focused on weekly sessions with M. They used the 'Re-Tracking' programme to build resilience, enable the student to self-assess and ultimately to reskill. They also used this as an assessment tool. They worked with the school's ELSA team to recognise the specific nature of M needs and plan an appropriate intervention.

There have been very positive outcomes following Teulu's intervention:

- No further internal exclusions since November
- Improved attendance at 94% and good punctuality
- No incidents of aggression reported in school and less conflict with peers
- M no longer self-harms
- Student presented as more confident and engaged within her learning, school and peer group
- Student participated for the first time in extra-curricular sporting activities
- The mother developed a good working relationship with senior management staff. She felt able to contact school with concerns at an early stage rather than escalating to confrontational levels.
- The mother engaged in appropriate parenting.
- The domestic situation was improved: they have a working cooker and the house is now secure.
- The children in the family are no longer on the Child Protection Register.

### **Learning Points:**

- **Young people may find it difficult to engage in education when there are other things going on in their lives. Helping individuals and families to address wider issues can help young people to start attending and learning more effectively.**
- **Successful projects often involve other services to be able to meet families' needs effectively – where a family does not meet the criteria for working with the TAF team, the Families First service that they are working with can make sure that the right services get involved.**
- **There is a range of Families First services so that families' needs can be met through work with individuals and families on a one to one basis or through work with groups of young people and parents.**



## 6. SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

The main purpose of the Sustainable Employment package is to provide help for adults in families who want to get back into work or into better-paid jobs. This work is central to the Families First aim to address family poverty.

This package had gone through substantial changes during 2014-15 to ensure that it was delivering this support effectively. The original package involved a number of partner providers but through the restructure, the service focused on the intensive mentoring element run by the Lead Provider, Sova, with other support and services engaged as and when parents need it.

The Intensive Mentoring team firmly embedded these arrangements during 2015-16. The new model has developed closer working links with Communities First clusters, with members of the team based in cluster offices for part of the week. This arrangement ensures that there is a range of services on offer for parents but without duplicating. However, the service also covers the whole of Cardiff, which means that any parents who need it can access help and support to get back into employment. For instance, over 11% of service users came from Cardiff North where there are no Communities First services.



The package works closely with Job Centre Plus and the Hubs across Cardiff to help parents to reach the point where they are 'work ready'. Many of the parents and carers who have started to work with the services on offer have needed a great deal of confidence building before they have felt able to access services.

### ***Sustainable Employment Participation Event***

The other elements of the provision include:

- A Discretionary Access Fund, which can support provision of training, childcare or transport costs if these cannot be met via other sources.
- Participation groups for service users to be able to influence how the service meets their needs.

## How much did we do?

**16** training courses

**292** parents and carers on low incomes received intensive mentoring support

**213** accredited qualifications achieved

## How well did we do?

**97.3%** of professionals felt engaged in the TAF process

**79%** of participants completed their service intervention

**146** people reported and improvement in their life due to accessing the service

**117** people secured employment

**75** maintained their tenancies

**127** reported increased confidence in their ability to gain employment

**96** people gained qualifications

## How is anybody better off?

2015/16 figures

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## CASE STUDY 1

### **Sova intensive mentoring**

The Job Centre referred Participant A to Sova for intensive mentoring. He originally wished to work part-time, possibly in customer service. He had previously worked in several call centres, and on cruise ships. His last job, a cleaning position, had ended because he couldn't provide the documents his employer required to prove he is allowed to work in the UK.

Participant A is a dad-of-three, and during the intervention, social services were involved with his family. His ex partner had custody of the children – two biologically his and one he has brought up since the child was a baby – and he was fighting for custody of the children as there were concerns over their mother's ability to cope.

Participant A needed support to gain employment, as well as support with his family situation that shifted and developed throughout the intervention. Participant A found his family situation distressing, and also the number of hours he wished to work changed as court cases and social services involvement altered how much childcare he would be required for.

Sova met with the participant on nine occasions to provide mentoring, support with completing a CV, Universal Job Match support, and assistance with applying for jobs. Participant A also had several appointments booked in that had to be cancelled or postponed due to childcare commitments and other emergencies. Sova also provided support for the participant over the phone regularly during the intervention.

Participant A completed several courses financed by Sova, along with several courses run by the Into Work Services in Marland House, and STAR Communities First.

### **What has changed?**

As a result of mentoring, Participant A gained employment working 24 hours a week in a nightclub. He has also gained skills in CV writing, application forms, job searching and interview skills which he can use to gain his next position and progress his career. At the beginning, Participant A did not know how to apply for jobs via email, and how to explain to potential employers why his last job ended without damaging his employment prospects. When these barriers were overcome, and the participant learned how to sell himself and his transferable skills and experience in job applications, he gained a number of interviews and it was only a matter of time before he was offered a suitable job.

Participant A also benefited from emotional support from his mentor during a particularly stressful and upsetting period in his life.

## CASE STUDY 2

Job Centre Plus referred Participant C, a single mum of eight children, to Sova in February 2015. She had recently been placed onto Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) from Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and was looking for work.

At the initial meeting, she disclosed that she had been through a traumatic relationship and suffered from depression and anxiety. Seven of her eight children were living at home. Areas identified at the initial meeting were that she needed support to improve her confidence. She also wanted to understand what support services were available to help her. She said that she struggled with mental health issues and needed some additional support in this area. She also had debts and fines that were getting out of control and this had an impact on her anxiety and stress levels.

Participant C was referred to a number of services for extra support so Sova could concentrate on employment and training-related support. This enabled her to have a clear action plan with Sova at a time when her life was quite chaotic.

Services involved included:

- Gingerbread
- Cardiff Mind
- Team Around The Family
- Citizens Advice

### What has changed

Working with Sova has enabled Participant C to be able to increase her knowledge of support services and also to access them to increase her mental well-being. As a result of using the Sova project, she felt confident enough to source and sustain some voluntary work in her local Church.





*"I really enjoy our sessions as I always leave feeling good about myself."*

*"I feel I am able to cope better knowing I have your reassurance and support."*

*"I feel more positive now."*

### **Learning Points:**

- **Communities First and Families First work closely together to give families the opportunities they need.**
- **However, parents who need support to gain employment can come from all parts of Cardiff.**
- **There are services that can help people get back to work but sometimes they need help to build confidence before they can access these.**
- **Volunteering provides an excellent way to build up a CV and get a good reference.**



## 7. HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

The Healthy Lifestyles package provided a range of services which helped families to deal with things like diet, exercise, smoking and sexual health and to live healthy lives. Cardiff and Vale University Health Board lead this package. Public Health Wales are also an important partner and ensure that interventions are evidence-based.

### 7.1 Delivery in 2015-16

The services on offer over the past year included:

- The MEND project (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do it!)
- Healthy Lifestyles projects, promoting play/activities and healthy eating for 8-13 year olds and 13-18 year olds
- Sexual Health Education through supporting Sex and Relationships Education [SRE] in schools and the C-Card scheme and Sexual Health Outreach Team for young people
- ASSIST smoking prevention project in schools
- The Strengthening Families Programme – helping parents and children work together to build strong and healthy relationships
- Ty Gwyn Summer Scheme providing play and respite for young people with complex disabilities



*Member of Cardiff Families First's Sexual Health Outreach Team*

One of the most important achievements of the Healthy Lifestyles package during 2015-16 was a leading role in the Summer Holiday Enrichment Programme [SHEP]. School holidays are a time when families affected by poverty find it hard to manage. This gap in provision has rapidly become known as 'Holiday Hunger' but the issues extend beyond nutrition to include inequalities in summer holiday learning loss and the economic impact of childcare to families and the wider economy.

'Food Cardiff' facilitated SHEP. This is a partnership between City of Cardiff Council Education Catering, Sport Cardiff, and Cardiff and Vale UHB (Public Health Nutrition and Dietetic Department and Public Health Team). The program was delivered in partnership with schools and community groups across 5 settings in the Community First areas of Cardiff.



***Making healthy snacks at Moorland Primary***

SHEP ran for three days a week between 9.30am and 12.30pm for four weeks. It provided children with a morning snack followed by fun activities including sport delivered by Sport Cardiff, creative and educational play, food and nutrition skills training mapped to the National Curriculum. It was developed and supported by Cardiff and Vale UHB Nutrition and Dietetics team and City of Cardiff Council Education Catering provided a hot lunch. Parents and siblings were also invited to join the children for lunch once a week.

The success of the pilot was clear in the evaluations from children and parents, but it has also received three awards:

- PS100 Food and Nutrition Award for contributions to Public Health at the Cost Sector Catering Awards
- Public Health England award for contributions to Public Health at the Advancing Healthcare Awards
- The Footprint Awards for Social Impact and Diversity

The project also been shortlisted for an NHS Wales Award.

This is a massive achievement for everyone involved in the development, delivery and funding of SHEP in Cardiff, including the Families First teams. Following on from the success of the pilot, they are continuing to engage with stakeholders to build momentum and extend the programme. The project has also started to influence policy more widely.

As a result of the success of this Cardiff pilot, the scheme is included in the Labour party manifesto and a roll out programme is planned supported by WLGA.



A partnership has evolved between the Welsh Local Government Association [WLGA], DECIPHer (the Centre for the Development and Evaluation of Complex Interventions for Public Health Improvement) and Food Cardiff to support the development of a Wales pilot this summer with a total of five Local Authorities (including Cardiff). An Independent Advisory Board, with members from Welsh Government, WLGA, a Health Board, a Local Authority and Cardiff University, will oversee a fully evaluated programme.

***SHEP participants at Hywel Dda Primary School***

The pilot involved five schools, but summer 2016 will see an even bigger programme with 11 schools and an expected reach of 200 children in Cardiff.

Another important development during 2015-16, was the extension of the sexual health project delivered by the YMCA to develop additional work to address Child Sexual Exploitation. Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation is an important priority for Cardiff. Although it affects a relatively small proportion of young people, the impact on their lives can be massive. The Families First project provides the early intervention element in Cardiff's wider strategy, which is led by Children's Services. It aims to provide support and information for young people who may be at risk to prevent them from becoming exploited.



GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Caerdydd a'r Fro  
Cardiff and Vale  
University Health Board



## Healthy Lifestyles Package Performance 2015-16

### How much did we do?

Worked with  
**114**  
Schools

**32**  
programmes and  
clubs delivered

**16341**  
condoms distributed  
to young people

**110**  
adults took  
part in MEND

**8**  
Services

**3514**  
participants

**1404**  
pupils in schools received sex  
and relationship education

### How well did we do?

**99%** 😊  
satisfied with their service

**83%** of participants  
completed their  
service intervention

**2348**  
improved knowledge  
about staying healthy

**83** eating  
more  
healthily

**94** individuals taking part in the  
Strengthening Families Programme  
decreased risky behaviours

**387**  
improved physical activity

**96%** in schools reported they felt  
more confident about accessing  
sexual health services

**83%**  
saying they noticed and  
improvement in their  
children's wellbeing

**1352** pupils increased knowledge  
through sex and  
relationships education

**74%** of the children taking  
part showing a  
reduced BMI

### How is anybody better off?

2015/16 figures



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## 7.2 Inspection against the National Participation Standards

The Young Inspectors team (which is part of the Young Commissioners project) inspected the Healthy Lifestyles package during the year. They wanted to see how well the service involved service users and whether they met the seven participation standards. The young people involved in the inspection were very positive about the way in which projects worked with service users and concluded that they were achieving all seven standards.

*“The package has shown us some great examples of how to involve children and young people in decision making and development of the services from across the package. We met with and heard evidence from, services users themselves, support workers on the ground delivering face to face work and the package lead, it was also great to visit one of the sessions that was being jointly run with another of the services in another package, some really good partnership working. It was very clear that the young people were really enjoying the session.*

*We got to meet many different people during the course of the inspection, and got to visit various services in their settings. Looking around all the services we met and receiving a tour of their facilities was fantastic. It is quite clear that all the services in the package have strived to adhere to the National Participation Standards and that it has been clearly embedded on a package basis.*

*When meeting all the various workers and staff across the package it was clear that the services take C & YP opinions seriously and have ways that these can be acted on. They do not change things for the sake of change but will try things out. It was interesting to see that some of the programs were national programs and couldn't easily be changed on the ground, but where possible young people's suggestions were acted upon.*

*We recommend that the Healthy Lifestyles package be awarded the National Participation Standards Kite Mark as they clearly come up to the standard and are listening to and acting on what C & YP tell them across their services.*

*Such a great service to inspect. Well done to all those involved”*

Overall Conclusion from Inspection Report, Cardiff Young Inspection Team, September 2016

## CASE STUDY 1

### Strengthening Families – City of Cardiff Council Children’s Services

The family self-referred to the Strengthening Families Programme early in January 2016. They had decided for themselves that they would be suitable for the programme and would benefit from it because of the specific issues being faced by the son. At the time, he had recently made the transition to secondary school and had been suffering from a loss of confidence for a range of issues associated with this transition. This loss of confidence was partly associated with his non-inclusion in sporting events. Additionally, his lack of confidence in dealing with the changing workload and expectations had affected his academic performance in early tests and reduced his participation in classes. During the transition he had also had to deal with being bullied at school, which resulted in health issues.

The Strengthening Families Programme is a 7-week programme for any family living in Cardiff with young people aged between 10 and 14 years of age. Over the course of the programme, parents/ caregivers and young people are separated into groups and attend interactive sessions that build on a range of skills. For young people, these sessions focus on their ability to deal with peer pressure (and in particular, to say no to alcohol and drug pressures), their understanding of the perspectives and responsibilities of their parents/ caregivers, and their understanding of how the choices they make impact upon their future goals.

The specific benefits they can expect to see from attending the programme are as follows:

- Helps them develop skills in handling peer pressure and building a positive future
- Support PSE (personal & social education) in preparation for teen years
- Build their confidence
- Helps them build skills to avoid problems with drugs and alcohol
- Aids transition into secondary school
- Helps them and their parents identify each other’s positive qualities and strength

During parent/caregiver sessions, skills and strategies shared include how to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries, how to communicate effectively with their children, and acknowledge that problem behaviour at this age is part of normal development.

The specific benefits they can expect to see from attending the programme as follows.

- Helps them build on their strengths in showing love and setting limits
- Increases their confidence in setting boundaries
- Helps them and their young people identify each other’s positive qualities and strengths
- Helps them set goals for their future and support goal achievement
- Supports them in helping their young people have a good experience of their teenage years

After parents/ caregivers and young people attend their respective sessions, they come together in a joint family session where these skills are reinforced through family activities.

### What has changed?

The programme that this family attended took place at Ysgol Glantaf. Six families took part in all, all of whom completed the course in its entirety. A range of measures were gathered to evaluate the change that had occurred as a result of the programme. These assessed the behavioural tendencies of individuals (parents/ caregivers and young people) in relation to the skills they had shared on the programme, before and after it took place. Each measure in this evaluation reflected an improvement in the likelihood of individuals to engage in positive behaviours, most importantly, young people's ability to deal with peer pressure. The majority reported engaging in these positive behaviours most of the time after the programme.

The family considered in this case study reported to the programme coordinator that it had had a positive effect on the young person and on the parents. According to the parents, the effect on their son following the programme was significant. He became considerably more communicative, more confident, and demonstrated more appreciation for his family.



**Activity from Strengthening Families Programme**

*"... thank you for running such a fab course! You and all the staff are so welcoming and friendly. [My Son] and I look forward to it every week. I just never expected it to be such fun!"*



## CASE STUDY 2

### Sexual Health Outreach Team YMCA Cardiff

Young Person (B) aged 16 was referred to the SHOT Project in May 2015 by a college pastoral worker. The pastoral worker identified that SHOT was the best project to signpost to following a disclosure made by B, regarding unprotected sex. The pastoral worker also believed that the young person had more complex needs, and that they needed greater support to address the issues.

On the first initial meeting, B looked at the floor whilst the pastoral worker explained why she had asked the team to come to meet them. It was evident that the young person had very little confidence, low self-esteem and was feeling very awkward. After the team explained about the SHOT project, the young person agreed to meet with an outreach worker to talk about things that were happening, and wanted to receive help and advice on what to do next. They appeared relieved that they now had SHOT support.

The outreach worker met with the young person and work began on understanding the importance of communication, confidence and knowledge of how to stay safe when engaging in sexual activity. B started to disclose more about their mental state over the weeks and later 'Came out' about feelings of being 'born in the wrong body'. This had been the cause of their anxiety and depression. The young person admitted to having sex with a boy to stop the bullies and to please their family. They also felt unable to dress or style themselves in a way that expressed their 'true self.' Work activities related to self-esteem and 'getting to know you,' helped them feel able to open up more about their emotional state and feelings about themselves. Following this, the SHOT worker supported B to attend the Young Person's Sexual Health Clinic for a full sexual health screening and a chat with the health advisor. Fortunately, a week later, all tests were negative and there was no further action needed in relation in this respect.

After 8 weeks of working together, the young person stated with full confidence that they were ready to formally identify themselves as a Transgender Male, and would like to use the pronoun 'he'. He no longer wanted to answer to his female birth name, and wanted to start living as the young man he felt he was meant to be. The young person had been feeling this way since the age of 11. Work continued during this time, covering consent, respect, protection against STIs and Peer pressure. Communication was important, and it was agreed that, with the outreach worker's support, the young person would start to involve his family. The outreach worker had also introduced the young person to support groups in his local area who might provide further support.

After 12 weeks of working together, and following a supporting letter to CAMHS explaining the work that the young person had been engaging in with SHOT, the young person has now been referred to The West London Gender Identity Clinic and will soon be starting his transition journey. He is also being supported in college, and all records have been changed to recognise his chosen name and male identity.

B is still receiving support on an 'as and when needed' basis regarding his sexual health, and has been signposted to all relevant supporting agencies.



*Families who have been involved with the MEND project*

### **Learning Points:**

- **Access to activities and healthy food can be a real issue for families experiencing poverty, especially during school holidays.**
- **When tackling things like healthy weight and exercise it is good to work with all the members of the family – children and parents – to establish healthy practices**
- **Schools provide a good way to reach and work with families**
- **Reducing the rate of teenage conceptions is an important indicator in breaking the cycle of poverty - everyone working with young people can ensure that they get the sexual health support that they need and sign up for C-Card training**



## 8. CADARN – Emotional & Mental Health and Wellbeing

“Cadarn” is the emotional and mental health package for children, young people and families across Cardiff. The package supported children and young people to look after themselves but also helped others around them to develop positive approaches to children and young people’s mental health.

The package provided a range of services for all age groups of children and young people:

- Ely and Caerau Children’s Centre supported families to emotionally support very little children
- Pyramid project provided clubs for 7 – 14 year olds to have a good time, learn how to worry less and be happier
- Bounce Back supported older young people reaching the end of their time in school



**Work from Barnardo’s Transitions Project**

Their package also offered services to particularly vulnerable groups:

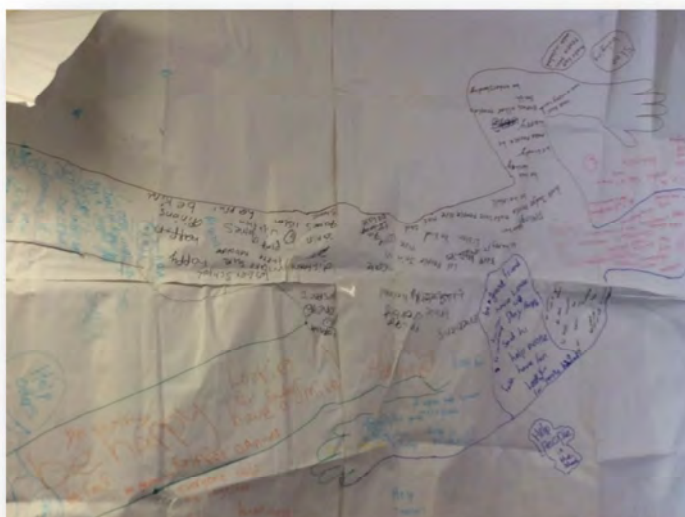
- Cardiff Against Bullying helped children who are being bullied but also worked with schools to make sure that bullying doesn’t start
- Gofal i Chi provided special support for young carers
- There was support for Asylum Seekers and Refugees some of whom have been through traumatic experiences
- The Transition project supported young people with mental health problems in the transition from CAMHS [the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service] to adult mental health services
- The bereavement service helped families which have been devastated by the loss of a family member

In addition to their important work with young people, one of the strengths of the Cadarn project has always been the learning that they share with other practitioners. During 2015-16, they led a Families First Practice Exchange conference for Practitioners working with primary school aged children and their families in schools, youth and community services, and early intervention and prevention services. *Knowing Yourself Inside Out – Positive Psychology and You* took place in November 2015.

Feedback suggests that as thresholds for statutory intervention increase so does the workload and level of stress experienced by front line staff working with children and families in primary care service areas. The conference aimed to support those on the front line to consider the overarching themes of well being and resilience in relation to their own development and practice. It provided good practice examples of 'off the shelf' evidence-based approaches that were able to assist them in understanding and managing the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of children in need of emotional support and intervention.

***"The Cadarn package has shown us some great examples of how to involve children and young people in decision making and development of the services from across the package. We met with and heard evidence from, services users themselves, support workers on the ground delivering face to face work and the package lead. We got to meet many different people during the course of the inspection, and got to visit various services in their settings. Looking around all the services we met and receiving a tour of their facilities was fantastic. It is quite clear that all the services in the package have strived to adhere to the National Participation Standards and that it has been clearly embedded on a package basis. "***

Cardiff Families First Young Ambassadors Inspection Team, Inspection Report,



***Art work from Buddies project run by Cardiff Against Bullying, Cadarn project***

# CADARN Package (Emotional and mental health)

## Performance 2015-16

### How much did we do?

**62** programmes and clubs delivered

**2732** participants

**14** Services

**1824** sessions delivered

**450** hours of counselling given

### How well did we do?

**95.6%**  satisfied with their service

**91.2%** of participants completed their service intervention

**51** young people better able to deal with risks

**926** participants reported improved emotional health and wellbeing

**137** young people improved relationships

**38** young carers reported improved mental health

**41** pupils improved attendance

**37** families accessing the bereavement service 100% reported an improved understanding of trauma, bereavement and loss and were better able to cope

### How is anybody better off?

2015/16 figures



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## CASE STUDY 1

### 16-25 Transitions Service – Barnardo's

Service-User B was referred to the Transitions Service by CAMHS while she was still 17 years old. She had a diagnosis of psychosis and depression. She also had mild learning difficulties and found it difficult to trust people, particularly men. This was due to having been sexually abused as a child. B had a young daughter aged approximately 12 months by her boyfriend, with whom she was still in a relationship. B was due to end support at CAMHS and move to adult services.

The 16-25 Transitions Service met with B and her Mum to assess her needs and draw up an action plan collaboratively. B requested family sessions and for her Mum to be involved with her support. B wanted to get back into doing a course. She wanted to improve her wellbeing (both physical and emotional) and we identified small steps that she could take to achieve this. She also wanted to improve her trust with her boyfriend and improve her knowledge of healthy relationships.

The Transitions worker facilitated B to go to the local swimming pool by taking this in small steps, empowering her to be able to go independently e.g. first driving, then catching the bus. The Transitions worker also took B to meet her new Psychiatrist in Adult Services to become familiar with the building before her first appointment there. They completed some sessions together around trust and healthy relationships. Not long after this B broke up with her boyfriend and appeared to have a clearer view of what was healthy behaviour in a relationship. 16-25 Transitions liaised with a Learning Coach and B started going to Itec to complete a course around Business.

B started coming to the social groups run by the Transitions Service and built up a new network of friends, who she kept contact with outside of the social groups. She also engaged in the art therapy groups run by an art therapist bought in by Barnardo's.

In reviews, B showed improvement in her emotional wellbeing and had not had thoughts of harming herself for a long time.

B is now utilising her safety plan confidently and has completed final outcomes showing improvements in many aspects of her emotional wellbeing.

#### **What has changed?**

B reported improved scores using the YP-CORE and also the Outcomes Sheet throughout her engagement with the service. This is outstanding given that B had several concerning events happen throughout this time. Although there have been times when she has had a mental health crisis, she has been able to utilise her safety plan with the support of her Mother, to keep herself safe. She has also 'bounced back' more easily. Her mother has reported an improvement in B's social interaction and confidence. B completed all actions on her action plan.

B will continue to attend the social groups, as a tool to aid her networks and isolation.

## CASE STUDY 2

### **Barnardo's Child and Family Bereavement Service**

A 7 year-old girl was referred to the service following the death of her younger sibling. The family were signposted by professionals at the University Hospital of Wales Cardiff. The family made initial contact through the telephone advice line, requesting to meet with the Child and Family Bereavement Service to ensure that they were supporting their daughter the best that they could, whilst they were grieving themselves. They also wanted to give their daughter the opportunity to talk to someone in the team about her grief.

After an initial meeting with the family, they were offered two simultaneous interventions:

- 1-1 support for the young person with a member of the team with knowledge of therapeutic play. During these sessions the young person used a range of creative materials to explore grief, which involved decorating a photo frame in memory of her brother (using a photo frame, stickers, and pencils and paper). The young person also used feelings cards to help her express her feelings non-verbally, in addition to creating a 'self-care box' in which she wrote self-affirming messages and ideas of coping strategies for when she is feeling sad, whilst still remembering the happy times she spent with her brother.
- Sessions for the young person's mother and father to explore their grief, how this impacts on parenting, and to explore ways of supporting their daughter's grief. Empowering the young person's parents with strategies to support their daughter was important to provide a long-term impact from the intervention and would strengthen the family's cohesion.

During her time with the project, the young person also attended the 'Coping with Christmas Group' which enabled the young person to meet other young people who have experienced bereavement and engage in creative activities such as decorating a bauble in memory of the person who died. The day focused on coping strategies for grief during special occasions, and the young person reported that she enjoyed meeting other young people and had found it beneficial to learn that there were other children going through a similar situation.

The young person's mother and father also attended 'Mindfulness in the context of loss and grief' to meet other adults who had been bereaved, and to engage in an activity that aims to help families cope with difficult feelings.

### **What has changed?**

The young person completed Young Child Outcome Rating (YCORS) scales during her 1-1 sessions. When she began sessions, she reported feeling 'miserable and angry' and at the end of sessions reported feeling 'bright' and 'happy like the sun', which was also reflected creatively on the young person's YCORS. Having the opportunity to explore her feelings has helped the young person to feel happier and she is now able to understand and talk about her feelings.

The young person's parents attended three parenting sessions with a member of staff to enable them to talk about their grief and the impact this can have on parenting a bereaved child. They also stated that the 'Mindfulness Group' was 'useful' and that it helped 'talking to other bereaved parents'. The family stated that the session has enabled them to use Mindfulness as a way to cope.



### CASE STUDY 3

#### Pyramid Clubs – City of Cardiff Education Services

X was identified as one of the shy and anxious children at Bishop Child's school in St Mellon's. He was referred to Pyramid and took part in an 8-week Pyramid Club. Every week the same children and volunteers got together after school and used circle time to discuss feelings, issues and topics. They also had an arts and crafts activity, which they got to take home, healthy snacks and finished with a game.

On the first week of the club, X was very shy. He struggled at first to get involved with the group activities. He did not take his turn to speak during circle time, seeming too anxious to contribute. When they laid out the healthy snacks, he didn't want to eat anything.

The following week he started to come out of his shell a little bit more. He ate a few snacks and was joining in with the games. He gradually began to contribute during circle times: his anxiety level lessened and his confidence grew.

By the last week, he was getting involved with everything, even leading some of the games. He was eating food alongside the rest of the group and was chatting away to all the children and volunteers. He seemed a lot happier in himself and school said he has come such a long way

A class teacher supported the group. He described the difference Pyramid Club had made for X. The teacher said that he was a lot happier in school and gets involved in lessons and playtime more. He had formed some lovely friendships from the club and has even recently been involved with the Christmas concert, which before Pyramid Club he had refused to do.

On the last week, X's mum came to pick him up, and before they left she told the Pyramid workers, "This club has literally changed his life! Before he would come home from school and would never talk about school and now he comes home and talks all night about school and what he did." Mum was very grateful for all the help from the club and said she was glad X was picked to be part of such an amazing intervention.





*Work produced in Pyramid clubs*

### **Learning Points:**

- **Therapeutic group work can help young people who are feeling sad or anxious to feel better about themselves and to cope better with their situation – it can also help the adults in families to deal with family life and their parenting role more effectively**
- **Bereavement affects every member of the family – parents need to be able to look after their own mental health and wellbeing in order to be able to help their children effectively**
- **Practitioners also need to be mindful of their own mental health when they are dealing with family members who are going through distressing experiences**



## 9. DISABILITY FOCUS

All the packages in Cardiff Families First programme have to ensure that their services are accessible for disabled family members – both children and adults. However, the Disability Focus package provides additional specialist help for families who have a disabled child. This can provide key working as part of the Team Around the Family approach for those families who need it (the Disability TAF). Action for Children as the Lead Provider works closely with the team of specialist providers in the package to provide a coordinated response.

### 9.1 Delivery during 2015-16

The package uses a family-led approach, working with them to assess their needs and develop a family plan. Key workers work with families to identify the services that might be able to help them and then to co-ordinate support providing a Disability TAF team. This team uses the same Joint Assessment Family Framework as the generic CTAF team to ensure consistency in work with families. Over 1000 families received support from services within the Disability Focus package as a whole during the year. Of these, the key working team worked with 104 families to complete a JAFF and provided Team Around the Family support.



#### ***Members of the Manga Group, which is part of the Cathays Integrated Youth Provision***

The key working team who provide Disability TAF support have also been sharing their expertise with the JAFF pilot, which has been taking place as part of the implementation of the Early Help Strategy.

Key workers draw on any services that the family needs, but the package has also offered:

- Direct 1:1 support or group work for young people who require support – safe access to community resources, independent living skills, learning about self-care. This is delivered in a safe environment, tailored to each young person’s needs.
- Support for parents through direct 1:1 support or group work to support them with any areas they are struggling with, including parenting skills, letting go, being informed and being involved.
- An integrated youth provision
- Specialist support for BME families coping with a disabled child/children
- A welfare and benefits advice service which has provided information, advice, support and advocacy to support families with a child with additional needs to maximise their income and sources of support

#### **Disability TAF Families (key working) – Main Sources of Referrals**

<b>Type of Organisation</b>	<b>Number of referrals</b>
Health visitor	135
Children’s Social Services	54
Self-Referrals	37
Third Sector	29
Schools/Education	18
Other primary care providers	17
CAMHS	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>

During this year, Cardiff committed to delivering a Disability Index for disabled children. The Index will be delivered through the Family Information Service in Cardiff and has been established in partnership with the Family Information Services in the Vale of Glamorgan to provide information on services across the region. In addition, the Index will be able to provide information on the needs of those registered which will help inform the delivery of regional services.

The launch of Dewis across the region has seen an improvement in the frontline information services available to families across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Both Family Information Services have been integral to the initial development and start up of Dewis.

The information and signposting service provided by Cardiff and Vale Parents’ Federation has linked closely with the development of Dewis. The service has an ongoing membership database of families and people with Learning Disabilities and regularly sends out information to members. They also maintain a website of specialist disability services and signpost parents and carers to services. The Parents’ Federation website and *Where You Stand* booklet, which provides information about services for disabled children and young people, is available here: [www.wherestand.org](http://www.wherestand.org).

Information and advice is a crucial element for families with disabled children. This is particularly important for families who may be just receiving a diagnosis. An effective element of support has been the 'Better than a Booklet' stand and targeted small groups which the Disability TAF service have started to run at St David's Hospital. The stand at the hospital has provided an excellent access point for families who may be waiting for or have just seen a paediatrician. The stand combines information with advice and support from a knowledgeable practitioner and is often the starting point for families.

## 9.2 Inspection against the National Participation Standards

The Young Inspectors team (which is part of the Young Commissioners project) inspected the Disability Focus package services during the year. They wanted to see how well the service involved service users and whether they met the participation standards. The Young Commissioners Officer provided training for young people from the integrated youth provision to ensure that disabled young people had an opportunity to be involved. These young people will also now be involved in other pieces of work related to the wider Families First programme.



***Young Inspectors talking to service providers during the Inspection***

The young people involved in the inspection were very positive about the way in which service providers worked with service users and concluded that they were achieving all seven standards.

***“The Young Inspectors were impressed with the services and what they stand for. It was extremely clear that the service respects the opinions of children and young people and taking these opinions into account is central to the running of the package.***

***The staff that we met were great and you could tell from their enthusiasm that they loved their work and the Young Inspectors are sure this will come across to the young people that they are working with.***

***The evidence presented was very clear and easy to understand and allowed us to get an understanding of the work they do with young people and how they listen to their views in their organisation.”***

Overall Conclusion from Inspection Report, Cardiff Young Inspection Team, May 2016

# Disability Focus

## Performance 2015-16



2015/16 figures

 Families First Free Phone 0808 800 0038
  Website [www.cardiffpartnership.co.uk](http://www.cardiffpartnership.co.uk)
 Twitter #FamiliesFirst

### **9.3 Developing more effective support for disabled children and their families**

The Disability Focus package is complementary to statutory services. During the delivery of Families First, the Disability TAF team have made strong links with Children's Services to ensure a coordinated approach for those families who no longer need statutory support or whose needs escalate into Child Health and Disability Teams. This coordinated approach has enabled families to receive the right support, at the right time.

The Disability Focus package provides services, including key working and Disability TAF support, for families whose children have been assessed as moderate levels of need but whose needs can be met below the threshold for statutory care and support services.

Some services within the Disability Focus are open to all, such as information and signposting, welfare advice and advocacy.

One of the most important factors affecting this package from the outset of the Families First programme delivery has been the internal restructure of the Child Health and Disability Teams. This has resulted in a higher demand for services from the Disability Focus package, including key working, than had been anticipated originally.

During 2015, Cardiff commissioned a review of integrated opportunities across the Cardiff and Vale Region. As a result, an Integrated Change Manager, hosted within Cardiff, has been recruited to a 3-year post to lead the development of integrated service delivery for disabled children, young people, young adults and their families. The Integrated Change Manager leads the Integrated Joint Programme Board and oversees the review of provision across Cardiff and the Vale, including opportunities for joint commissioning and driving forwards the transformational change agenda to support an integrated approach to services. The Integrated Programme has identified a number of key areas for developing consistent service delivery and opportunities across the two local authority areas and in partnership with Cardiff and Vale UHB. Through this Integrated Programme, additional funding has been secured via the Intermediate Care Fund.

This funding supports the extension of some services within Cardiff's Family First services. This includes the Independent Living Skills service to include those young people with neurodevelopmental conditions. In addition, enhancement of '*Better than a Booklet*' sessions delivered at St David's Hospital will increase to a 5-day a week provision to target more families at first point of contact.

## 9.4 The future of Disability Focus services

Provision for disabled children and young people is particularly important in Cardiff because of the relatively high numbers. Cardiff is a capital city and is an attractive place to settle. As a result, the population is increasing and anticipated to continue increasing. At present, our special schools are at full capacity. However, there is a strong commitment to regionalisation of some services to maximise the resources available. This supports a sustainable approach to delivering high quality services to disabled children and young people during times of financial challenge.

Welsh Government has recognised the importance of support for families with a disabled child and have ring-fenced the disability funding. However, Cardiff has always allocated a higher level of funding because of the level of need identified in the city. From the beginning, this package has worked with higher numbers of families than had at first been envisaged. The review of services and funding across the whole of the Families First package that took place during 2014-15 identified this package as one of the areas where additional resource was needed to improve capacity. As a result, increased funding was allocated for 2015-16, which enabled an expansion in the central Key Working team.

There was also a reorganisation of the way in which some of the services are managed. The Lead Provider, Action for Children, now delivers the specialist service for BME families, previously delivered by ABCD Cymru, to maintain this vital support for these families. The families named this new service 'Hope 2 Shine'. The key working team also now includes parenting support for families where there is a child with emerging special needs (previously in the Early Years package). This provides better integration of support as families are linked in to the other specialist services.

In line with the direction from Welsh Government, this ring-fenced disability element did not receive a reduction in funding for 2015-16. Welsh Government has also confirmed that the same ring fencing and priority will remain in the second Families First programme (to be commissioned during 2017-18). However, there will need to be a new tendering process and this will take account of the work that the Integrated Change Manager is doing. It will also be informed by the Population Needs Assessment that is currently underway as part of the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.



*Young people from Cathays Integrated Youth Provision*

## CASE STUDY 1

### Hope 2 Shine – Action for Children

A family consisting of a mother and two children, aged 4 (child A) and 2 (child B), were referred to the Disability Team Around the Family (DTAF) - Hope 2 Shine project. The family needed support as child A is profoundly autistic. They are from a BME background, and are seeking asylum in the UK. They described feeling extremely isolated. Mother was suffering from depression and high levels of stress. There were also some concerns around the family's hygiene, supervision and the overall safety of the children.

The family were allocated a key worker who worked alongside the family and all the other professionals involved. During the first visit, Mum stated that she is HIV positive. She also said that she needed support with parenting and understanding autism. From this visit and all the information gathered from the JAFF assessment completed by the Disability TAF team, a number of issues were identified that required key-working and co-ordination. Initially this was to reduce the stress levels of the family, but the outcome over time was to help mum to find solutions/strategies so that she felt better able to manage.

The family were given 1:1 support to access the services that would benefit them as a family and would make a difference to their well-being. This involved Joint working with the following services:

- Health (Special Needs Health Visitor, Community Paediatrician, Consultant, GP)
- Barnardo's
- Child Health and Disability Team (CHAD) to support the assessment process
- Caudwell Children
- School (Ty-Gwyn)
- Migrant Help
- Clear Springs (housing)

### What has changed?

Mum's confidence has grown and she is able to cope better with her situation, engaging well with all professionals involved. The children are enjoying access to different leisure activities.

Mum is attending English courses and has made friends, whilst both children are attending school.

Child A has received a sensory pack from Caudwell Children.

Mum's parenting skills have increased. There are no longer any concerns around issues relating to hygiene, or the safety and supervision levels of the children that were identified on referral. Mum also reports a greater understanding of Autism following work carried out.



## CASE STUDY 2

### **Cathays Inclusive Youth Provision**

A partner organisation, Barnardo's Community Links Team, contacted Cathays Inclusive Youth Provision about hosting a group of young people who have a common interest in Manga drawing, film making and film reviewing. The group had been meeting monthly, but the funding to facilitate them had run out, and the worker was unable to carry on supporting the group. All of the group have additional needs, mainly associated with ASD [Autistic Spectrum Disorder]. However, as individuals they are quite independent.

It was suggested that the group meet at Cathays Community Centre, alongside the open access provision. They were allocated their own space in a meeting room that has a projector for showing films.

A third year Youth and Community Student from Cardiff Metropolitan University took on the mentoring and development of the group as part of his fieldwork placement. The student on placement (Mark) immediately developed a good rapport with the group; he is himself a fan of manga drawing and films.

The group sourced funding to buy a good quality video camera and drawing materials. They were also then able to meet weekly instead of monthly.

As well as meeting as a social group they now plan to attend events such as Comic Con and film premiers, also to open the group up to new members.

### **What has changed?**

The eight original members have been joined by two new members and have had visits from non-disabled young people. So far, there have been six sessions, with the group planning to continue meeting - visits to events are also planned. The group will plan and research trips and visits, i.e. bus and train times, show times and costs.

One new member, who was referred by a partner organisation, had not socialised with other young people for some time and rarely left his bedroom. However, he felt comfortable with the group and was able to share his drawing skills. His parents were amazed at how much he enjoyed the sessions.

Members from the open access provision have "dipped in and out" of the group and learned new skills. Three of the Manga group have got involved in activities within mainstream youth club, thereby some integration has taken place.

It is planned that this group will continue for the foreseeable future and will become more integrated into mainstream/open access youth provision.

## CASE STUDY 3

### Disability Team Around The Family

J was referred to Disability Team Around the Family in March 2015 for key-working and parenting support as at the time J was presenting with challenging behaviour.

The Disability TAF team completed a JAFF to identify what the family wanted and needed and to put together their family plan. Following this, the key-working role focused on referring to SNAP, Barnardo's parenting support, Tenancy Support and communication with school and St David's Hospital regarding medical appointments.

The Key worker liaised between Mum and the various professionals in St David's regarding changes in J's sleep and behaviour and rescheduled appointments.

**NURTURING PROGRAMME Parents' feedback**

Week number: 10 Date: 1/12 Group: .....

	<i>Great</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Awful</i>
How do you feel about today's session? (Please tick)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How do you feel about the Programme? (Please tick)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What thoughts or ideas will you take away today?

*Feel great and learnt a lot*

Within the Disability Focus Package, Mum was able to contact SNAP Cymru to share her concerns regarding education and get advice.

Another package service, Barnardo's, provided specialist disability 1:1 parenting support. They worked in the home implementing family rules and consistency in parenting. Following this, Mum attended Barnardo's Disability Parent Nurture Programme for 11 weeks.

### **What has changed?**

Mum now has a toolkit of parenting strategies to draw on when J displays challenging behaviour. Mum grew in confidence throughout her attendance at Parent Nurture Programme and developed a peer network. The project also told Mum about local community groups that she can access with the other mothers in the group. In addition to Mum attending Parent Nurture Programme, J's brother attended PNP crèche. This was his first ever experience of Crèche and he also grew in confidence over the 10 weeks and is now more prepared for when he starts Flying Start nursery later this year.

The family, including J's grandmother, went to Swansea on an Action for Children Early Years outing and accessed the leisure centre, which was a great family bonding trip out for all children.

All children in the family benefited from the 1:1 parenting support and responded well to family rules.

*"Very pleased with all of the help I received, there was never a doubt in my mind that anything more could be done. Very pleased with quick decision and glad no face to face medical assessment was required."*

Service user from Welfare Benefits Advice project

*"I am over the moon to let you know that she actually left the house today for the first time since end of January."*

Parent accessing Disability TAF service

### **Learning Points:**

- Support for the whole family is particularly important where one of the children is disabled
- There can be significant challenges in parenting a disabled child, especially if the disability leads to very challenging behaviour - it is important that Parenting support is specially designed to meet the needs of parents in this kind of situation
- It is really important for disabled young people to have the skills that they need to become as independent as possible when they become young adults.

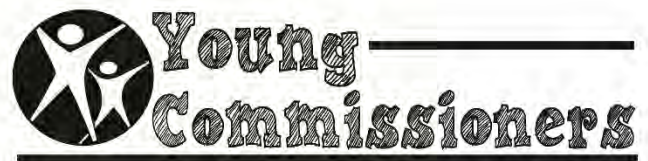
# 10. SUPPORTING THE PROGRAMME

A number of other elements helped to support the quality of services in 2015-16.

## 10.1 Involving Young People

The Young Commissioners group that took part in the commissioning of services is still involved to make sure that providers involve children and young people in the planning and delivery of services.

The second year evaluation of Families First carried out on behalf of Welsh Government by Ipsos MORI noted the Young Commissioners work in Cardiff as an example of good practice.



### Young Inspectors Group

One way in which the young people have played a very important role is in making sure that Families First services demonstrate good practice in involving their service users. Over the past year, the Young Commissioners Officer has prepared 39 young people to become Young inspectors, with 19 of them going on to be involved in inspections during the year. Eleven of the new inspectors were members of Cathays Integrated Youth Provision.

All the young inspectors go through an in-depth training programme lasting over 10 weeks in total for each course. During the training, they learn about the National Participation Standards, Confidentiality, Safeguarding and Children's Rights. Each of the young people has engaged in over 100 hours of contact time during the inspections and training.

Three full inspections were carried out in 2015-16: the Healthy Lifestyles package, the Disability Focus package and the Team Around the Family service. They all passed, with the young people rating them as achieving against all of the seven participation standards.



**Young Inspectors enjoying a reward activity at Cardiff White Water Rafting**

*“I was nervous going into meet the team, I wasn’t quite sure what to expect. Lee had explained to us but I couldn’t visualise it in my head. It seemed a bit strange going into a service such as this and effectively scrutinising the worthwhile work that they do, but is all for the benefit of the project itself. Am confident that the service has passed with flying colours and that this whole process will be of benefit to the young people accessing the services”* Saed, who was involved in inspection of the TAF service

## Young Commissioners

The involvement of the young people in the commissioning of the first Families First programme won a national procurement award. The central Families First team will make sure to follow this good practice and will be working with them again to commission the next programme during 2016-17. The team has already started the review of the current programme, and will use the information and recommendations from the inspection reports as part of the evidence base.

The Young Commissioners are also acting as consultants in the engagement that is taking place as part of the Population Needs Assessment, (which is part of the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act). They are helping to prepare young person friendly questionnaires and supporting focus groups with young people.

### CASE STUDY

#### **Chloe Burrage – My Story**

Chloe is 15 years old and is currently a student at Whitchurch High School. She is from the Gabalfa area of Cardiff.

Chloe first became involved in the Families First work over a year ago, responding to a recruitment email sent out and came along to the very first information session. Since then Chloe has gone on to become one of the young inspectors and most recently one of our lead young inspectors and peer mentors to the newly recruited inspectors. She has passed on her knowledge, skill and experience of carrying out two inspections, and offered support and guidance, as well as being a sounding board for the other young inspectors that have most recently been trained. Chloe recently came along and helped to train our most recent group at a training residential in the Gower with young people who have additional support needs from the Integrated Youth Provision.



***Chloe ready to take part in an inspection***

Chloe said:

*"I have gained various new skills such as interviewing skills, investigation skills as well as developed a knowledge in children's rights and participation. So far I have carried out over 2 inspections on two very different services and I am looking forward to supporting the new young inspectors with their upcoming inspection".*

Since being involved Chloe, has also become a member of Cardiff Youth Council and has been working hard on the Curriculum for Life priority with other members of the youth council. They are currently developing a toolkit that schools can use in PSE lessons. This came about after CYC ran a consultation with over 1000 young people to ask them about what and how PSE is taught and how better it could prepare them for life once they had left. The consultation was carried out with both current and ex pupils in schools across the city.

As well as attending regular meetings, Chloe has also represented Cardiff in a youth exchange with our sister city in Stuttgart back in October 2015. During the visit, CYC members had a meeting with the Stuttgart Youth Council, where Chloe presented the young inspectors program of work and her experiences since being involved.

Chloe has also been one of the first groups of young people to receive time credit for all her work that she has been involved in and Chloe said:

*"I think time credits are a great idea for recognising the contributions and commitment that young people show when being involved in such projects. I have received a number of time credits recently and I have been using them to spend time with my friends by going swimming and using the local leisure centres. I am look forward to earning more and spending more time with my friends doing stuff we love to do."*

## iSay Participation Toolkit



The iSay participation tool kit provides a set of work plans and materials that can help providers to involve young people. It is available in both English and Welsh on the [Cardiff Partnership website](#). Families First providers have been using the tool kit when preparing for visits by the Young Inspectors.

## 10.2 Providing Information

Availability of good information about services is crucial, both for practitioners working with families and for family members themselves. One of the consistent recommendations coming from the Young Inspectors is for providers to improve the availability of information about their Families First services.

### Family Information Service and Dewis Cymru

Provision of information about services and support is also a crucial element in the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014.

The **Family Information Service** [FIS] already has a statutory responsibility to provide information for families. Since the start of the programme, FIS have made sure that they carry information about the Families First programme on their website.



However, during 2015-16, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan partnerships have agreed to use the Dewis website as the main source of information about services, especially preventative services.

The Family Information Service are now playing an important role in Cardiff in making sure that the information from their database is transferred to Dewis. From a technical point of view, the FIS website will now provide a 'skin' that will provide access to the information stored on Dewis. This arrangement means that providers will not have a number of different websites to update or have to provide the same information numerous times. The focus will be on keeping Dewis up to date and this will then provide access to consistent and comprehensive information for other websites.

## TheSprout

It is important that young people also have access to information about the services available for them, and in a format that they like.

For this reason, Families First also supports **TheSprout, Cardiff's Youth Information Website**, to provide information, advice and links to services for young people to make sure that they get the help they need. ProMo Cymru provide this website. They make sure that information is presented in the way that young people want. Young people are involved in the editorial board and regularly contribute articles.



Sprout logo providing link to website

There were some significant changes for TheSprout during 2015-16. Originally, TheSprout provided the local element of a national website, Clic Online, which Promo Cymru also provided. However, Welsh Government ended funding for Clic and so TheSprout was developed to make sure that it could still provide up to date information for young people in Cardiff. This also provided a great opportunity to update the look of the site.

The next stage of development was to make sure that, as for the FIS, TheSprout would provide a 'skin' through to Dewis. Once again, this would ensure access to consistent and comprehensive information.

### HEADLINE FACTS ABOUT THE SPROUT

- TheSprout had nearly **140,000** visits during the year (not hits, but visits, in other words real people using the site and staying on for a significant time).
- TheSprout was voted into the **Top 200 most influential tweeters in Wales** (in between Katherine Jenkins and Penderyn Distillery) by Wales Online – they now have nearly **6,000** followers
- **456** new users registered with the site.
- **Just over 500** articles were submitted – **75%** of these by young people.
- **88** young people were involved in the editorial board of TheSprout.



TheSprout also provides workshops in schools to inform young people about where to go for information about services. These workshops also help to get people interested in writing and encourage them to contribute to the website.

During 2015-16, TheSprout held workshops in the following schools: Bishop of Llandaff High School, Corpus Christi High School, Michaelston Community College/Glyn Derw High School, Fitzalan High School, St Illtyd's High School, Cantonian High School (SEN Unit), and Radyr High School.

The experience of one young person who first heard about TheSprout through one of these workshops is set out in the Case Study below.

## CASE STUDY

### Jack's Sprout Experience

I discovered TheSprout in Year 8 when they ran a workshop during one of our PSE lessons in School. I remember being captivated by the way you could write articles and have them seen by young people all over Cardiff. I had just decided that I aspired to be a journalist, so the website seemed like a Godsend!

After the workshop, I spoke to the representative from the website, who had run the session, to enquire about writing articles. They suggested that if I was really interested in progressing my writing I should look into joining the Sprout Editorial Group, or SEG. Intrigued by this suggestion, I went along to a meeting a few months after I started writing articles for the website. The welcome I received could not have been warmer, from when I arrived to when I left. I truly felt as though I belonged after just one meeting.

As the months progressed I started to notice improvements in my writing, and I can only really see this being down to the support I received from TheSprout. Any questions I had about my articles were well answered, and I think it helped boost my confidence.

As well as being the official correspondent for the website, I also author the Sprout News Series, and I contribute regularly to the website. I have been provided with exciting opportunities, including travelling to London to attend a press launch at Hamleys Regent Street. The main reason for my continued contribution is the friendly community that are always ready to give their views on what ever you write about, and provide constructive criticism. I feel that TheSprout has helped me develop my style and my maturity within my writing.

Equipped with the skills that I have learnt (and continue to learn!) from the website, I feel confident I can go into my chosen career path full of confidence and with valuable experience that I could not have gained without TheSprout.

**Feedback from theSprout Satisfaction Survey:**

*“I believe that a forum like theSprout is so useful for youth participation and cohesion. I have met so many great people and have learnt so much from other young people on it. The comments are very well-moderated, so it's an amazingly safe space to discuss sensitive issues and get support. So many articles and organisations listed on theSprout have helped me to understand my own mental health issues, for example, and I must say that it is the warmest, most supportive place.”*

*“The Sprout allowed me to promote my mental health awareness campaign and gain valuable support.”*

*“My support worker was jealous when I was telling her the stuff I've been doing for TheSprout. She said she wish she knew about it when she was young enough. She could've been doing that instead of a degree in writing. Also she says mental health wise I seem to have been more confident lately, so I think doing stuff for TheSprout has definitely been helping mental health wise 😊”*

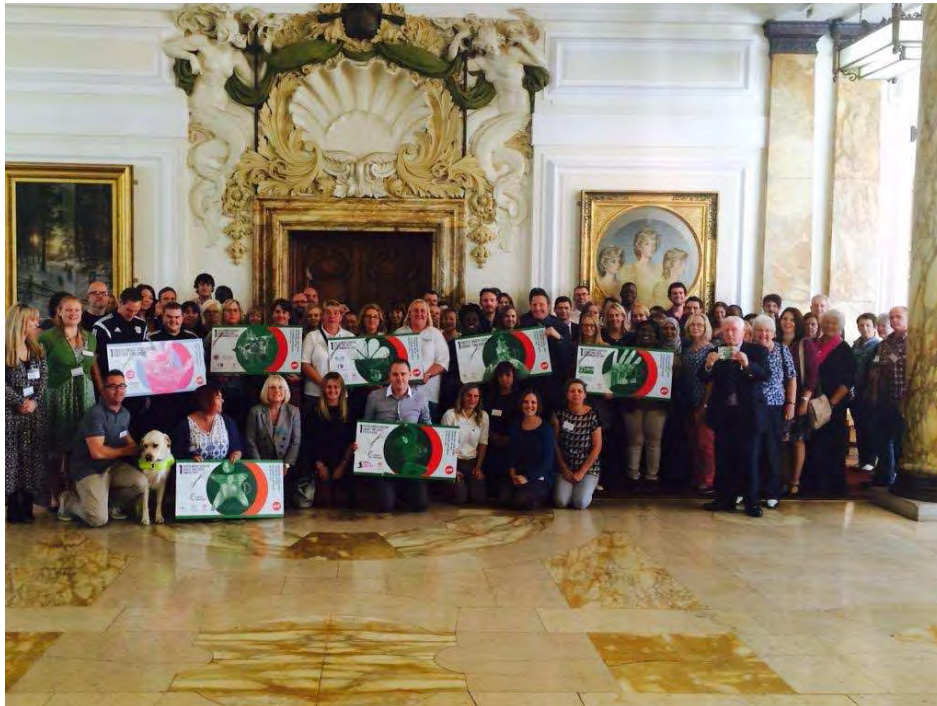


Materials produced during a Sprout workshop

*“It helps me talk about my bullied experience and hopefully can help other people all around the world gain confidence and know that they're not the only ones getting bullied there's also loads of people who they can talk to x.”*

### 10.3 Time Credits

An important development for the Families First programme during quarter 2 of 2015-16 was the introduction of Time Credits. Communities First areas were already working with the SPICE organisation to deliver Time Credits, but the involvement of Families First enabled the scheme to be rolled out across the whole of Cardiff.



***Launch of Cardiff-wide Time Credits at Cardiff City Hall***

Time Credits are a great tool for building communities. People can earn a Time Credit by donating an hour of their time by doing something positive for a participating group or organisation. In return, they then receive one Time Credit, which can be spent at a range of community, leisure and cultural venues across Cardiff and beyond. The benefits are huge: more people volunteering more often, who then get to spend Time Credits on their families, increasing their own wellbeing.

The Time Credit programme only really started within Families First during the second half of the year, but during this time, it made great progress:

- 16 Families First groups joined the network, including Team Around the Family and the Young Commissioners
- This resulted in 189 members of the Time Credits network
- 3035 hours were earned through Time Credited activity from August 2015 – April 2016

Families First is now an established part of the wider Cardiff Time Credit programme. This is starting to show great benefits.

- People in Cardiff are reporting that Time Credits are having a positive impact on quality of life with 31% saying that Time Credits have improved their quality of life a lot compared to 17% nationally
- There are very strong statistics around people becoming more connected - 78% say they know people in the community better, 82% spend more time with others as a result of Time Credits, 80% know more about services and support available to them, 64% have shared their skills with others, 64% feel less isolated.
- It also results in health impacts being reported - 45% claiming less need to visit the doctor compared to 30% nationally, 50% reporting less need for social care services and 57% better able to manage independently in their own home.
- Time Credits are helping people move closer to the workplace with 61% gaining new skills, 30% gaining work experience and 5% moving into employment.

Time Credits really are 'Strengthening Cardiff; one Hour at a time!'

## CASE STUDY

Spice and MEND, a Families First provider, have teamed up to see how Time Credits can support people to live healthier lifestyles.

The new initiative has allowed the families who voluntarily undertake the course to earn Time Credits for the time they participate, enabling families to access sport and leisure activities through Spice's generous Spend Network. Families have been able to use their Time Credits to keep active in many ways including climbing at Boulders, gym facilities at any of the Council gyms and in their final week all the young people were taken to spend their well-earned Time Credits at Cardiff International Pool. One parent who attended MEND with their child commented "I wasn't aware of the time credit system prior to attending MEND. It is a real incentive to attend the group in order to gain the time credits as it helps us to continue with the exercise that MEND recommends"

With the support of Time Credits families have continued to attend the MEND physical activity sessions and have formed their own community group, supporting each other to keep up their healthy lifestyle changes.

## Feedback from services using Time Credits



*“Utilising time credits has been invaluable to the development of our children and young people's group. It is a lovely way of empowering children to do more things in the community. Our February trips were fantastic - thanks for your help Becky!”*

*““In December 2015 I had the opportunity to meet Becky from Spice and she told me about the Time Credits. I now use Time Credits as a way of thanking my volunteers for giving their time to help run the Ti a Fi groups. I have now managed to find a volunteer to run Ti a Fi Grangetown a’r Bae. The session now runs with structure and routine. There are set activities for the kids each week, story time and singing. There is more excitement and enjoyment with Megan running the session and welcoming the families each week, having set activities each week for the children to do with their parents.”*”

## 10.4 Using Restorative Approaches

One of the main aims of Families First programme is to transform the way in which services work with families. Restorative Approaches is the Framework that we use in Cardiff to drive and underpin that transformational change. It provides a common approach, language and ethos that support consistent multi-agency work and collaboration: working *with* families, not doing things *to* or *for* them.

The restorative mind-set requires active listening, reflective practice and self-awareness from practitioners. It requires them to deliver a high level of support *and* challenge to families, enabling and empowering families to identify their own needs and the strategies to address them, and to take the actions necessary to improve their situation. This is achieved through a simple model that develops, maintains and repairs relationships and that is easy for families to engage with and emulate.

The workforce development programme for Families First during 2015-16 provided further opportunities for staff to access training in Restorative Approaches:

- 43 staff attended three three-day 'Introduction to Restorative Approaches' courses held in September and November 2015 and in March 2016
- 27 staff attended 'call back' refresher training in November 2015 and February 2016
- 11 staff attended a one-day Restorative Approaches Senior Leadership course held in February 2016 – this is the first time that Families First has offered this course

This training builds on the work that has taken place over previous years to develop Restorative Approaches within schools and education, communities and the justice agencies in Cardiff. This is also helping Cardiff's journey to become a Restorative City: one of the aims in Cardiff's Single Integrated Plan, *What Matters*.



Cardiff Team Around the Family team has embedded Restorative Approaches as its ethos from the outset and there are examples across the programme of good and consistent practice. Cardiff Families First team are working with a research fellow from the university, Dr Annie Williams, as part of a national study to examine the benefits of restorative practice in work with families.

***Restorative work with a family as part of the Strengthening Families programme, Healthy Lifestyles package***

## 10.5 Supporting Parenting: Cardiff Parenting Framework

Parenting programmes are an essential element of support for parents and carers within the Families First programme. They can play a particularly important role in providing early help for families that are finding it difficult to cope. There has been a steady demand for parenting services since the programme started in Cardiff.

Parenting providers use validated programmes to ensure that they are effective. They can do this in either a group or one-to-one setting. The Parenting Coordinator oversees and supports parenting services by providing a central point to access up to date information regarding best practice and the delivery of evidence-based parenting programmes, a menu of evidence-based programmes was developed and agreed by a multiagency group of stakeholders to form a central part of the Cardiff Parenting Framework.

- **929 parents completed evidence-based parenting programmes** as part of Families First in Cardiff during 2015-16.
- **95% of them said that their experience had helped them to be better parents.**



Cardiff Families First adopts the definition of parenting from the Welsh Government Parenting Action Plan:

***'An activity undertaken by those who bring up children, this includes mothers and fathers, foster carers and adoptive parents, step-parents, and grandparents. In some cases, siblings also undertake a parenting role. All of these play a crucial role in giving the children in their care a flying start in life, providing the best basis for children's and young people's growth and development. Local authorities also act as corporate parents for children and young people in their care.'*** (PAP p.7)

Parenting Programmes and Parenting Services serve a distinct function to support the acquisition of parenting techniques in parents/carers to strengthen family relationships and family resilience and to reduce family breakdown. An updated Cardiff Parenting Framework and new action plan was launched on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2015. This outlines a structure for the further development of parenting programmes and forms part of the wider strategy for Early Intervention and Prevention in Cardiff. The Framework provides information about good practice and recommends evidence-based parenting programmes that should be used in Cardiff. It has been developed in line with the Welsh Government's Parenting Action Plan.

A Directory of the parenting services available in Cardiff (including parenting provided by other services as well as Families First) accompanied it. The Directory has proved very popular. It was reprinted and updated in the autumn of 2015. The Framework and Directory can both be found on [Cardiff Partnership website](#).

The Parenting Coordinator supported the development of the Framework and the Directory. She continues to work with relevant providers and organises regular meetings of the parenting managers. This group maps parenting services to ensure families receive the most appropriate service and the best use of resources across the programmes and Children's Services. During 2015-16, the Parenting Coordinator went on maternity leave but Children's Services continued to support the group in her absence.

Because of the high level of demand for parenting services, there had been issues around the capacity of providers to respond. In 2014-15, the Families First team commissioned the Institute of Public Care [IPC] at Oxford Brookes University to carry out an external review.

The review noted a number of very positive developments in parenting provision. In particular, key services had started to widen the provision of services originally agreed to be delivered in areas of deprivation across Cardiff under Cymorth, to the provision of a Cardiff-wide offer for parents and families according to need rather than according geographical area. It is hoped that this key development will remove unnecessary barriers to families in need accessing early help.

The Review report also identified some key issues:

- A current imbalance in relation to the availability of group parenting programmes compared with one-to-one parenting support
- Too many families are getting one-to-one parenting support when they might benefit more cost-effectively from a group parenting programme
- Some families with additional needs wait too long for parenting support

The Families First team and the key providers responded positively to the recommendations in the report, with additional funding being allocated to parenting for 2015-16 to help providers address some of the capacity issues.



There was also agreement of a joint 'triage' to prioritise families who need parenting support via a Red/Amber/Green rating. This 'RAG' rating system provides the basis for an appropriate response in relation to group work and/or one-to-one support. There was also a new offer of evening and weekend provision to meet families' needs. Parenting services reported that this had led to a more effective response to parents' needs in 2015-16.

In addition, the parenting services in Action for Children and Barnardo's have been part of a pilot working with the Money Advice Service. They have been trialling a new element of the Parent Nurture Programme, which they also helped to design. This gives parents strategies for talking to their children about money and how to handle it.



***Members of Cathays Integrated Youth Provision***

# 11. SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

## 11.1 Summary

Cardiff Families First programme made a great deal of progress during 2015-16:

- Families First providers delivered support and services for 22,681 children, young people and families, almost 2000 more than in the previous year.
- Over 300 of the families accessing Families First services benefited from support to complete a Joint Assessment Family Framework (Family Plan) and build a Team Around their Family.
- The generic and disability TAF teams are supporting the JAFF pilot to start to train practitioners in other services to work with families to complete a Family Plan. This is part of the implementation of Cardiff's Early Help Strategy.
- The Families First Freephone service continued to be an important central point of information and support to access services, which was used by professionals and families. Around half of calls came from families themselves. Of the services that called, Health Visitors were the ones that used the Freephone service most.
- One of the services in greatest demand was parenting. Parenting Services implemented a new triage system to ensure that families receive the right kind of service to meet their needs.
- Cardiff Parenting Directory was updated. This provides information about the validated parenting services available across the city.
- Young people carried out inspections of two Families First packages, Healthy Lifestyles and Disability Focus, as well as of the TAF team – these inspections concluded that they were all meeting the National Participation Standards in the way in which they deliver their services.
- The Families First programme introduced Time Credits and helped to take the Time Credits scheme right across Cardiff. Families First participants earned over 3000 hours of credits.
- Towards the end of the year, Welsh Government gave notification that there would be a reduced budget for 2016-17. The guidance said that the TAF team and the Disability work should be maintained. However, the central Families First team worked with providers to incorporate the reduced budgets with as little impact on services to families as possible.
- At the same time, senior managers within City of Cardiff Council decided that management of the Families First programme should move to Children's Services. This move recognises the importance of the role of Families First in early intervention and prevention.

## 11.2 Next Steps

2016-17 is going to be a year of significant risks but also of new opportunities.

- The risks arise from the fact that this year is the last year in the current commissioned programme. The original contracts run until the end of March 2017. As a result, there is uncertainty about the future. This could lead to experienced staff moving to more secure employment. Further, providers may experience difficulty filling posts where they are only able to offer very short contracts.
- Staff vacancies might also mean that providers accrue underspend. Welsh Government are monitoring spend very closely. They want any underspend from unfilled staff vacancies to be returned to them, rather than used for other purposes.
- However, at the beginning of August 2016, the Cabinet Secretary with responsibility for Families First in Welsh Government confirmed that there would be another programme. National evaluation of Families First has confirmed the importance of Team Around the Family working and support for families with a disabled child. The new programme will retain both of these elements. However, the strategically commissioned projects will need to have a much clearer focus on support for parenting and young people. Certain types of service, such as childcare or support to deal with worklessness, will be delivered via other routes and not by Families First.
- Welsh Government have confirmed that, although they do not want to use a Combined Outcome Framework, they do want greater alignment of the Tackling Poverty programmes. In Cardiff, there will be a new group which will bring together the old strategic group for Families First, Communities First and Flying Start, with the group set up to minimise the impact of Welfare Reform, and the Supporting People programme. This new group could identify areas of joint working or even joint commissioning when the new programme is commissioned.
- Commissioning of the new Families First programme is also taking place in the context of implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the Wellbeing of Future Generations. Both Acts emphasise the importance of preventative services. Public Health are leading a population needs assessment that will form part of the 'analyse' stage of the commissioning process for the new programme. This will enable Families First to have a clearer role as part of the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance. It could also lead to opportunities for joint commissioning with the Vale of Glamorgan.

## 11.2 Next Steps continued

- The central Families First team have already started stakeholder engagement as part of a review of the current programme, to prepare for commissioning of the next. The Families First programme has delivered some excellent services, as outlined in these annual reviews. However, there are also things that could be done better, particularly the arrangements that we have in place for identifying when families need additional help and making sure that they get the right level of support. We also need to respond to the changing context. The aims of the next round of commissioning process will be to retain what has worked well and to introduce new arrangements and services that will help us to respond to families' needs even more effectively.
- Welsh Government have confirmed a 'transition' period for the move to the next programme. This will be taking place in 2017-18 and will give us an opportunity to work with providers and families to make sure that it is as smooth as possible. Commissioning plans will be taken to scrutiny and to Cabinet as soon as there is confirmation of the final guidance and funding levels for the new programme.



*Children taking part in the SHEP programme at Hywel Dda Primary, with their parents*



# Putting Families First in Cardiff

Are you a professional who would like more information about Families First services in Cardiff or for someone to visit a family you are working with to discuss Families First?

Would you and your family like to know more about Families First services or for someone to come and see you to talk you through what services there are and to help you access them?



## Families First Freephone

**0808 800 0038**

Free from landlines and most mobiles  
(Everything Everywhere, O2, Orange, 3, T-Mobile, Virgin and Vodafone)

## Freetext 80800

Always start your messages with: FamiliesFF

