

# FDAC

- The Family Drug and Alcohol Court helps families where children are put at risk by parental substance misuse.
- Proceedings in FDAC are care proceedings, issued by the LA in the usual way
- Proceedings follow the Public Law Outline, with some exceptions
- As with all care proceedings, the aim in FDAC is to complete cases within 26 weeks if the children will not be returning home
- The judge in court may grant an extension beyond 26 weeks if this would be in the interests of justice. Extension likely to be applied for and granted if more time is needed to test stability of the child's return home.
- FDAC is a problem solving court where the same judge reviews the case every fortnight and is supported by an independent multi-disciplinary Intervention Team. FDAC works with the whole family while keeping the child central. Parents are given 'a trial for change' that provides them with the best possible chance to overcome their problems. At the same time FDAC tests whether the family can make enough change in a timescale compatible with the children's needs.



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- the FDAC Intervention Team will help the parties agree a plan which is given the court's authority at the second Court hearing (Further Case Management Hearing FCMH) usually at the 2nd or 3rd week in proceedings
- The same District Judge, or one of a small team of District Judges, will oversee the whole process and offer support and encouragement. Non lawyer reviews – fortnightly review hearings, without lawyers present
- FDAC Intervention team is a multidisciplinary team, which includes: Child Protection Social Workers,, Substance Misuse Specialists There is also a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, an Adult Psychiatrist and Therapists attached to the team. a domestic abuse expert. FDAC will have named links in the Housing and Domestic Abuse Teams within the Local Authority and elsewhere



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Potential FDAC case identified by the Local Authority



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Parents are offered choice of having case heard in FDAC at first hearing



Assessment by team, intervention plan agreed with all relevant parties and agencies - becomes care plan



Parents sign up to FDAC

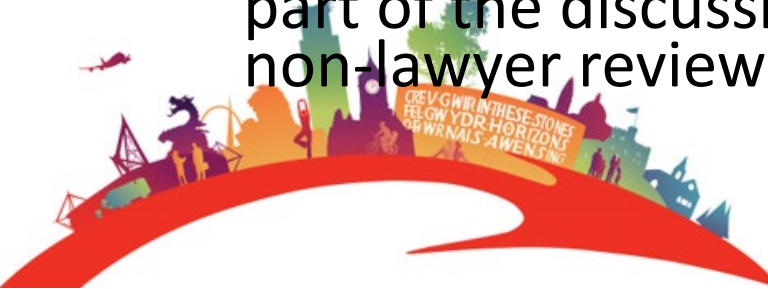


Trial for change begins - bi-weekly reviews with the Judge

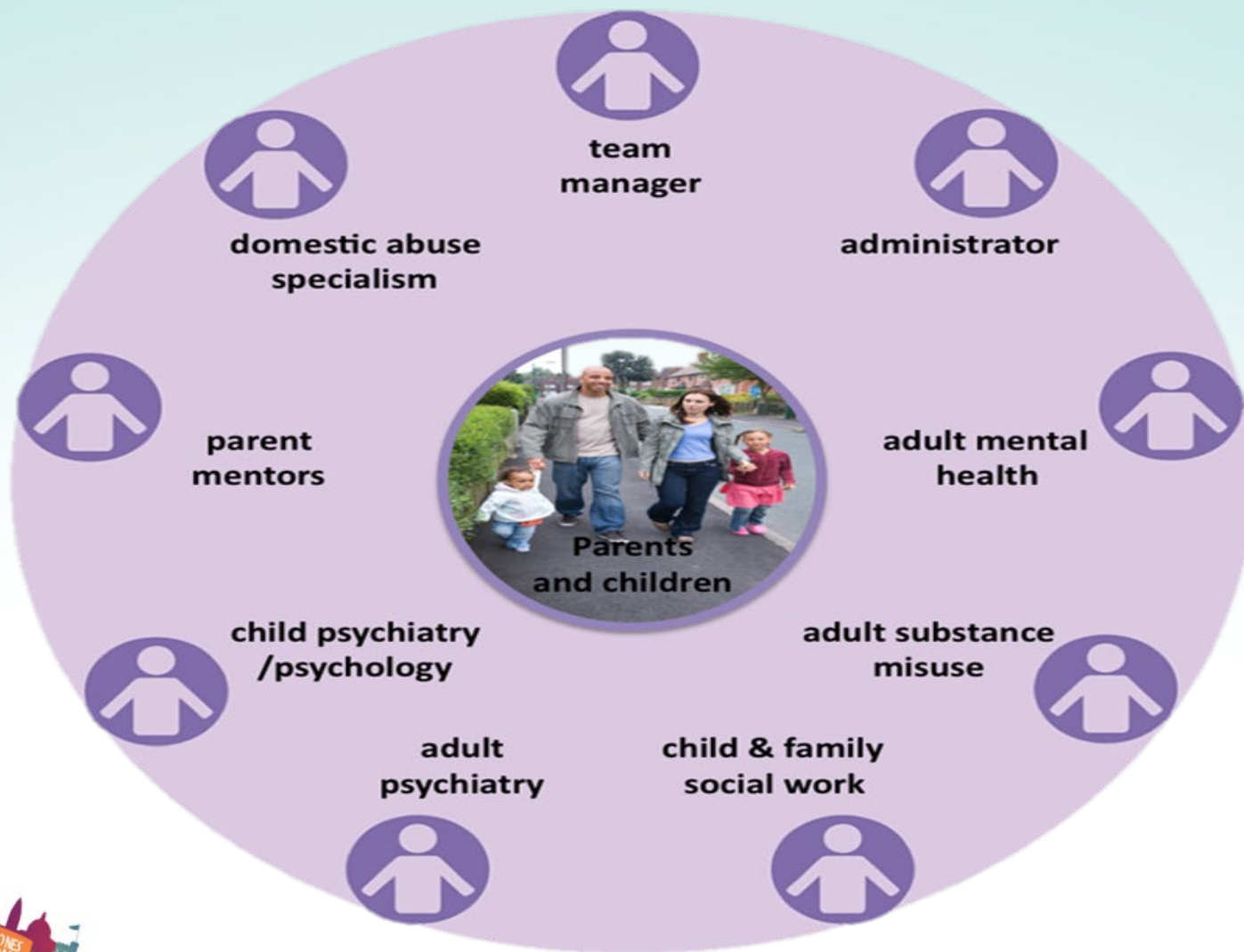


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- Local authority retains responsibility for the child, and the child continues to have own social worker.
- Social workers attend key FDAC planning meetings (IPMs), and court hearings (including the non-lawyer reviews).
- Lawyers represent the parties, as in standard proceedings, but once the case is underway they don't attend non-lawyer reviews.
- Guardians have their usual role, but should attend the initial IPM, to be part of the discussion about the intervention plan. They are welcome at non-lawyer reviews, though regular attendance may not be possible.



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- **Multi-disciplinary**
- The specialist team needs to have a mix of professionals with different backgrounds to deliver its intensive, psychologically-informed intervention
- **Co-Located**
- It is important that the team members are located in the same office in order to share expertise and work together on cases
- **Independence**  
Even though the team may be commissioned by the local authority, or located within it, it should have a degree of independence from children's social care
- **Joint Commissioning**  
Although children's services have tended to take the lead in commissioning the FDAC specialist team there is a strong case for joint commissioning with public health, CCGs and PCCs





# FDAC

- 2-year pilot, part-funded by Welsh Government
- Operational November 2021, practitioner training confirmed for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> November. Stakeholder event planned for November 2021
- Will sit alongside the existing IFST service
- Judge Parry is the lead FDAC judge. The dedicated court day is Friday
- Steering group and operational group providing governance and scrutiny
- Staffing model: Team Manager, Social Worker, Substance Misuse Worker, Mental Health Worker, Psychologist, Business Support
- Conversations occurring with the OPCC and National Lottery Wales
- CASCADE at Cardiff University have been appointed as independent evaluators

