

**West Dunbartonshire Parenting Review and
Improvement Group**

Report of 'Support for Parents' Provision

In West Dunbartonshire Council

Executive Summary

June 2014



Parenting Review and Improvement Group:

Shona Crawford – Chair (Principal Educational Psychologist)
Laura Hughes McCormack – Secretary (Assistant Psychologist)
Ellen Moran – Depute Principal Educational Psychologist
Judy Ormond – Section Head Early Years, WDC Education
Jane Forey – Head of Centre, Ferryfield Early Education and Childcare Centre
Anne Ritchie – Lead Officer, Child Protection CHCP
Leslie Cameron – Team Leader Children and Families, CHCP
Marie Hickman – Team Leader, Parenting Support, Health (YFSS)
Heather Irving – Integrated Strategy and Planning Officer, CHCP
Yvonne Milne – Project Team Leader, HCP Mental Health
Karen Ferguson – Consultant Clinical Psychologist, WDC, HCP, CAMHS
Mags Simpson – Practice Development Nurse, CHCP
Meg Thomas – Social Work Team Leader, Clydebank
Josephine Bona – Social Work Team Leader, Dumbarton
Dominique Haggerty – Cedar Project
Sandy Rinky – NSPCC
Gillian Kirkwood – Manager, Y Sort It
Carolyn Callaghan – Action for Children
Joe Traynor – Libraries and Culture

Author: Laura Hughes-McCormack (Assistant Psychologist)

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Compiled in collaboration with The West Dunbartonshire Parenting Review and Improvement Group (RIG). Chair – Shona Crawford (Principal Educational Psychologist) – Membership of Parenting RIG 2014-15.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of parenting activity in West Dunbartonshire Council during the period April 2013 to the end of March 2014. This report aims to update the previous 'Support for Parents' report (April 2013)¹, compiled by the Parenting Review and Improvement Group (RIG),² and will go into details about achievements made against goals set in the previous report, summarised around four main questions, including;

1. What did we say we would do?
2. What have we done?
3. What is the evidence of impact?
4. What do we need to do next?

An introduction to parenting support in West Dunbartonshire, and highlights of the evaluation follow.

In West Dunbartonshire we are committed to ensuring that all of our children get the best possible start in life. In June 2011 West Dunbartonshire developed a parenting strategy with the aim to improve the co-ordination, integration and delivery of parenting programmes. The strategy sets out how West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership works to enable parents to raise healthy and achieving children and young people (i.e. those aged 18 years or younger) through the provision of a comprehensive suite of parenting interventions. At the core of our local approach is an emphasis on supporting and reinforcing attachment and resilience and emphasising opportunities for nurturing throughout a child and young person's development. In keeping with the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), the West Dunbartonshire model aims to improve integration, co-ordination and delivery of parenting programmes and to offer a consistent level of support and interventions across West Dunbartonshire. The model is a West Dunbartonshire wide approach across all agencies involved in parenting support and brings together a number of mutually supportive parenting programmes that all emphasise the importance of enabling attachment and building resilience amongst both parents and children.

Within West Dunbartonshire parenting support is provided by:

- Education Services;
- Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP);
- Community Learning and Development; and
- The Third Sector.

¹ Report available at www.wdchcp.org.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=83983

²The RIG is the Integrated Children Services Strategy group with responsibility to oversee parenting and detail parenting activity within West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC).

What Did We Say We Would Do in 2012-13?

In the previous 'Support for Parenting Report' (2012-13), the RIG set out to achieve a number of core goals for parenting throughout 2013-14, including building capacity of staff, publicising parent support services, developing the evaluation of parenting approaches, developing the 'Request for Support for Parenting' process and enhancing the involvement of parents and the community in the development of parenting support.

What Have We Done in 2013-14?

- **Staff training was provided to 211 frontline workers** across local services in West Dunbartonshire in five separate parenting programmes including Triple P, Families and Schools Together (FAST), Play@Home, the Webster Stratton Incredible Years programme, Mellow Parenting Programmes, in addition to training in the Solihull Approach.
- **Parenting programmes/groups were accessed by 486 parents**, including Triple P, Handling Teenage Behaviour, Incredible Years and Mellow Babies, indicating a **steady increase** in parents supported from 2011-14, in particular Triple P provision for parents across a three year period (from 2011-14). Since developments were made to the 'Request for Support for Parenting' process, a more diverse range of agencies, and individual parents requested support in 2013-14,
- **Survey and focus group methods were used to consult with parents in the community** to gather quantitative and qualitative information about parent's experiences of support, and to explore what parents want from support services. Results indicate there may be complex barriers experienced by 'vulnerable groups' of parents in relation to accessing support, and provide suggestions for future developments.

What is the Evidence of Impact?

Staff training was reported as 4 (very good) or 5 (excellent) by 97.5% of participating workers, who indicated feeling they had benefited from the various training and were able to highlight areas of their practice they feel will improve, including utilising approaches/programmes in their own practice.

Parent groups/programmes were given the two highest possible ratings by 99% of parents in relation to satisfaction with the support service they received. More than half of parents who completed evaluations reported increased use of other services/activities or supports since previously accessing the service (51%; n=86). Increased numbers of evaluations of impact were completed by parents in 2013-14 in comparison to previous years, since the introduction of a standardised measure across services for gathering feedback from parents about services.

What Do We Need to Do Next?

- ***Build Capacity of Staff*** through the development of a quality assurance model based within supervision and review processes for staff delivering regulated parenting programmes.
- ***Work On Parental Engagement & Engaging Hard to Reach Parents*** through innovative pre engagement activities which will be evaluated through small tests of change (PDSAs), and a change to the terminology to advertise parent programmes/groups to 'Opportunities for Parents' instead of 'Support for Parenting', as the term 'Support' has been identified as a disincentive among parents, associated with negative perceptions and stigma of services.
- ***Continue to Include the Involvement of Parents in the Development of Parenting Activities*** through further audit and survey of parents in the community to seek their views and suggestions for developing parenting groups/programmes.
- ***Develop the Evaluation of Impact Processes*** through use of small tests of change to increase evaluation numbers and begin to engage with children on their views of the impact of groups/programmes and collect follow up evaluations of parent programmes/groups to explore the longer term impact and outcomes for parents, children/families.
- ***Review the West Dunbartonshire Parenting Strategy in Accordance with the National Parenting Strategy*** to update and explicitly incorporate fathers into the parenting strategy for West Dunbartonshire.
- ***Discuss the potential risks to parenting support across West Dunbartonshire with strategic managers.***

In Summary

Findings indicated that services for parents in West Dunbartonshire are providing high quality support which is having a positive impact on wellbeing outcomes for parents, children, families and the wider community. More parents have accessed evidence based support in 2013-14, through parenting groups/programmes and other support services for parenting in comparison to previous years. There are year on year improvements in numbers of parents accessing support since the introduction of the West Dunbartonshire parenting strategy in 2011. Evaluations of support made by parents have increased in 2013-14, in comparison to previous years, since the introduction of a standardised measurement tool for use across all parenting services in West Dunbartonshire. The findings of this evaluation will shape the new Work-Plan for the RIG (2014-15), which will include aims to build capacity of staff delivering parenting programmes, targeted through supervision and review. In addition we will aim to reduce the barriers to engagement in services identified by 'vulnerable' groups of parents by exploring innovative pre engagement activities evaluated through small tests of change (PDSAs). There will be a move away from the use of 'Support for Parenting' as terminology to advertise parent groups/programmes in West Dunbartonshire to help reduce perceived stigma of accessing parenting support services and present parenting as more of a 'universal' support. Finally, the parenting strategy will be updated during 2014-15, in line with the national parenting strategy, which will result in more focus being placed on fathers in services for parents in West Dunbartonshire