



“We are committed to working with children and families in achieving their goals”

This month's newsletter sees the end of our first year of the implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model in West Berkshire!

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in making our journey so far so successful and we look forward to working with you in achieving further success! We currently have over 100 families we are working with under FSM, which is great, and this will only continue to increase!

This month we will be approaching you to tell us your good news stories and share how FSM has impacted on the work you do with the families of West Berkshire. We are hoping that some of you will help us to showcase FSM work in short films and presentations, similar to those produced by Hertfordshire.

Recruitment Update and Welcomes!!

We are pleased to announce that we have recruited to all of the specialist positions for the multi-disciplinary Family Safeguarding Teams!

West Berkshire Council has been successful in recruiting 2 Drug & Alcohol Recovery Workers, 2 Domestic Abuse Practitioners, 2 Mental Health Workers and a Clinical Psychologist! We have also recruited 3 additional Family Support Workers and 3 Social Workers. We will continue to work hard at recruiting an additional 2 permanent social workers, (which will bring us to a total of 5 additional social workers), until we have filled the posts created through the innovation fund.

Due to the Business Support Review we will now no longer need to recruit 2 additional administrators but

will utilise the posts and skills we already have within the current establishment to identify the staff required to support the teams. Our Senior Analyst post has been re advertised and interviews are in process.

We would like to give a warm welcome to **Vickie Keiller** and **Ian Dolearan**, the Domestic Abuse Practitioners who are joining the Family Safeguarding Teams. Vickie is going to work with the perpetrators, having joined us from Probation, and Ian, previously an IDVA, will work with victims. The Domestic Abuse practitioners will work across the Service undertaking work as and where needed. They will join the teams in April.

Also we give a warm welcome to our 2 Mental Health Workers, **Lucy Fazackerly**, who will be based in the West team and **Sally Chiguare**, who will be based in the East Team. They will join us at the beginning of May. A Clinical Psychologist has also been appointed and will work across the two teams.



WBC/C&FS/JK/0318





Evaluation – Update and Next Steps

Focus groups

On 8th February York Consulting (YCL) held Focus Groups with those directly involved in the FS Teams and who had completed the survey. They have provided this initial feedback:

“Overall, the focus groups were overwhelmingly positive and practitioners demonstrated a high level of commitment and motivation towards making FSM a success. Practitioners shared positive success stories of how the model was already leading to better outcomes for families and helping practitioners to work collaboratively. Two quotes from the focus groups particularly highlight the overall positive feelings about the model:

“This is why I do social work”

“We pulled together and managed to crack it”

Family Case Studies

A big thank you to everyone in the family safeguarding teams who have been involved in the visits and consultations being undertaken with the families chosen by YCL, to assist them in completion of the ten case studies that are being undertaken with **cohort one families**. Cohort 1 are those families transferred to the FS teams between October and December 2017, who are within the FSM model and have had issues identified in respect of the trio of vulnerabilities (AKA toxic trio). These families will be consulted again between April and June 2018.

A second round of case studies will be undertaken with **cohort two families** in January and March 2019, with follow up between April and June 2019.

Family Safeguarding Electronic Tools

Following attendance at the Family Safeguarding Team meetings and speaking with practitioners, we have undertaken some work on the Practitioners summary form that is completed and feeds into the Group Case Supervision. The template, which will be known as the **Monthly Case Summary** has been tested by some social workers, who were pleased with the alterations, and further testing will be undertaken by the family support workers. It will be ready to use by end of March for the FSW and the SW. Going forward we will also look at amendments for the adult workers.

As you are aware, the interim Family Safeguarding Workbook is the electronic tool being used to record our intervention with the families. This will not be required going forwards and will be replaced by the Intervention form, which is where you will write about the 8 modules work you are undertaking with the family. This will be ready in early April.

If there is any feedback or learning from the use of the FSM tools on Care Director, please let us know, and if amendments are needed we can explore this.

Training will be provided on the FSM tools in the forthcoming months. Should any FSM practitioners not have attended the Care Director training for the FSM tools please contact the FSM@westberks.gov.uk account and we will ensure that training is provided.





Motivational Interviewing

Motivational Interviewing has been rolled out across the family safeguarding teams with ongoing embedding sessions taking place every month. Alasdair Cant, our trainer was asked to provide some thoughts for our newsletter.

“Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet....Be curious...”

I'm not a particular fan of motivational phrases, but this quote from Professor Stephen Hawking resonates strongly for me. I had the privilege of meeting him a few times in Cambridge. He was not only an extraordinary human being, but surprisingly human, always enjoying a bit of mischief. He liked to question and disrupt the order of things.



In the Motivational Interviewing training in West Berkshire, curiosity has been an important theme. Curiosity is comfortable with the unknown, and is a neutral state, reducing point-scoring and defensiveness. Time and again in the MI training, I've been impressed with how willing and able practitioners are to let go of their agenda temporarily and focus on strengthening the connection with the client.

This allows us to challenge more productively when the time is right. Above all, it helps achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families. It takes courage, because after decades of a target-driven and sometimes punitive, adversarial approach a shift away can feel counter-intuitive.

The documentation and systems often lag behind. Right across the public sector there is still a defensive culture, driven at times by an anxiety to cover our backs by ticking boxes. Of course we have to be compliant, but also have the courage look up from the density of data and question how this is helping to improve outcomes. It is understandable that this will take time to shift, after decades of conforming to certain ways of doing things. But it is time for a major disruption in our systems too, to help practitioners “look up at the stars” and see new possibilities with clients, to help release them from the tyranny of wieldy documentation that makes us “look down at our feet”.

Alasdair Cant
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If you have any feedback, questions or suggestions on the **FSM programme** or would like to tell us about your experience of implementing the model please email FSM@westberks.gov.uk or contact Jacqui Keohane, Innovations Manager on (01635) 519785 (external) 2785 (internal) Mobile: 07557845046

