

**16 February 2017**

**Early Help 0-19 Locality Delivery Model**

**Ward(s)** All

**Portfolios:** Councillor Burley

**Executive Summary:**

This report provides an overview of the current Early Help offer and the proposed future 0-19 Locality Model including the delivery of youth provision. Early Help Services provide early intervention and prevention services for children and young people within their family context. The services are provided to children and young people 0-19 at the point of need. The proposed model of integrated delivery will align services better on a locality basis and improve how single agencies work with families in a more coherent and co-ordinated way.

**Reason for Scrutiny:**

An overview to inform the panel of the current and proposed Early Help 0-19 Locality model

To provide panel Members with opportunity to:

- scrutinise and challenge Children's Services arrangements for ensuring children, young people and families receive the right help at the earliest stage possible, and that it has a good impact on improving outcomes for children and young people;
- seek assurance that Partners are collaborating well in the development and delivery of high quality Early Help services and securing good outcomes for children, young people and families across Walsall.

**Recommendations:**

**That:**

The Panel scrutinise and challenge the content of the report, the proposed 0-19 Early Help 'whole family' locality delivery model and the outcomes of statutory consultation undertaken

The Panel scrutinises and challenges the proposals which include the alignment and integration of Children's Centres and Youth services and the co-location of Health Visiting services.

**Background papers:**

Cabinet Report - Redesign of Children's Centre Services and Sites as part of a 0 - 19 Early Help locality model and Children's Centre South Contract – 8 February 2017

**Resource and legal considerations**

The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient Children's Centres to meet local needs and is required to conduct consultation when planning any significant changes to Children Centre services.

Existing national statutory guidance supports the reconfiguration of Children's Centres to cover wider areas and to deliver services to families who need them most.

The ongoing uncertainty about the future scope of Children's Centres and the fact that statutory guidance and the related regulatory framework have been under review nationally now for over 12 months, with Ofsted inspections suspended since April 2016, has seen many Local Authorities review and reduce Children's Centres Services or align them with either 'Health Visiting' or wider family support to create an '0 - 19 Whole Family' approach.

The proposed changes contribute to the budget saving proposals of the Council, which, following a budget consultation period, will make decisions on in February 2017.

**Citizen impact:**

The effective delivery of a high quality Early help Offer has a direct impact on the welfare and well-being of Walsall's children and young people, improving their life chances and reducing the demand for specialist/crisis services or statutory social care intervention.

**Environmental impact:**

There is no direct environmental impact of this report.

**Performance management:**

The Early Help Steering Group and Walsall Safeguarding Children Board both actively monitor the performance of the Partnership on the effective delivery and the impact of Early Help Services across the Borough. The Children and Young People's Partnership receives regular reports to monitor and challenge performance and the Strategic Partnership Group help support the delivery of the Strategy.

**Equality Implications:**


All relevant equality implications and impact assessments have been assessed as part of the development of the 0-19 Locality Model. The Strategy supports many disadvantaged communities and families in Walsall.

## **Consultation:**

The development of the Early Help 0-19 locality model has been subject to budget consultation and statutory consultation on change in Children Centre delivery between October and December 2016.

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## **Report**

### **1. Early Help: an Explanation**

- 1.1 Early Help is provided for children and young people at risk of harm who have not yet reached the 'significant harm' threshold and for whom preventative services would reduce the likelihood of that risk of harm escalating;
- 1.2 Early Help is multi agency integrated support – practical advice, support and direct casework to children , young people and their families to prevent an escalation of needs into acute and more costly services, that would be to the detriment of children and families welfare;
- 1.3 It requires collaboration from all agencies, including schools, and is a key area for assessment in Ofsted's Safeguarding Inspections of Children's Services;
- 1.4 Every Local Authority should have an Early Help Strategy to ensure that problems and difficulties for children and families are identified early and responded to effectively as soon as possible to manage and de-escalate the level of risk.

### **2. Key Drivers for the development of the Early Help 0-19 Locality Model**

- 2.1 The Council's 'Early Help Strategy' (**Appendix 1**) identifies that it is the Council's shared responsibility with all partners and all single agencies, to work with children, young people and their families to keep them safe, build on strengths, reduce risk and prevent problems from escalating. The Strategy outlines the progress since the last publicised strategy in September 2015, gives an overview of data related to Early Help and sets out the Strategic priorities to ensure that the Early Help support for children, young people and families in the Borough is effective and builds on the strengths of existing provision. Over the last 12 months significant progress has been made to develop the Council's partnership response including investment from Schools Forum to develop locality working.
- 2.2 To inform thinking on proposed delivery models going forward, a comprehensive review of all open Early Help cases was undertaken in July 2016 which aimed to:
  - Develop a joint understanding of the children and families currently receiving Early Help; what is working for them and what is not and needs to change;
  - Ensure all cases are relevant and assessed at the right level to be supported by Children Centre Family Support teams;

- Get an overview of the interventions being delivered by staff and capture good practice to inform the Council's menu of services to be communicated to parents, social workers and partners; and
- Consider changes to structure and delivery processes that will enable support to be more effective.

2.3 Over a 4 week period, 791 children's cases that were supported through the 0-19 locality teams (including Children's centres) were reviewed and reflection with partners undertaken. The full report can be found at **Appendix 2**. The review has provided assurance that family support staff in Children's Centres are working at the right level with the right families and that high quality support is having good impact and preventing the need for statutory interventions.

This comprehensive exercise also identified areas for improvement related to a more joined up approach between different partners and by improving communications between professionals. The review identified that where families had children of different age ranges there could be a number of workers supporting the family, duplicating work which in some cases overwhelmed families, sometimes leading to disengagement.

2.4 The integration of direct delivered Targeted Youth Work activities and provision within the 0-19 Family Support locality Teams has been developed. Childrens' Services Targeted Youth Work has had a significant reduction in budget over the last year and therefore the remaining resources is focussing on those most vulnerable young people across the Borough and targeted programmes to reduce Anti Social Behaviour and improve young people's well-being. This works aligns closely with the aims and objectives of the Early Help Strategy.

### **3. Early Help 0-19 Locality Model – Current delivery**

3.1 The Early Help Hub, integral to MASH, provides a single access point for advice, information sharing and brokering of support. This has strengthened the arrangements to co-ordinate, deliver and oversee Early Help support for children and families that do not meet the threshold for social work intervention.

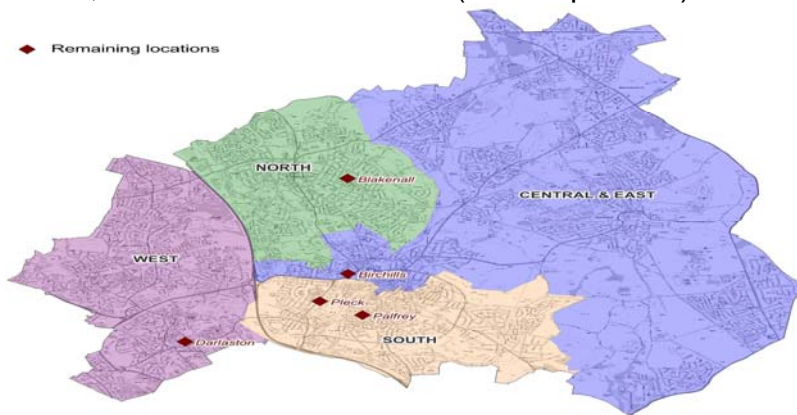
3.2 Walsall's Early Help partnership locality model, aligned to school clusters and driven by the investment of £750,000 by School Forum, has resulted in the establishment of four locality partnerships and associated locality panels.

The locality panels include representation from schools, education support, health, housing, police, social care and the voluntary sector. The panels work to plan services to address local need, share expertise to resolve complex cases and support professionals to identify and access the right support for families. To inform this work, locality profiles have been developed using our learning from the Troubled Families Programme to assist the Council's understanding of needs and challenges. This is used to proactively help with the identification of vulnerable families and the monitoring of impact, of interventions.

Through this partnership infrastructure we have delivered a coordinated and targeted programme to meet identified need which has benefitted our most

vulnerable children, young people and families. The programme has included Truancy Patrol, Summer Patrol, CAMHS interventions, parenting workshops, Holiday Kitchen, targeted play scheme and positive diversionary activities.

- 3.2 Walsall currently has 4 Children Centre areas with teams based at Palfrey, Birchills, Blakenall and Darlaston (see map below).



- 3.3 From April 2016, through a service redesign, we have based additional workers with the teams, with skills and experience of working with older children. This has enabled us to provide a Whole Family approach and has enabled us to better coordinate the interventions and services that we offer families. The positive impact this approach has made was recognised through the comprehensive review of Early Help in July 2016.
- 3.4 Work is underway to co-locate Health visitors in each of the four 0-19 teams as per requirement of the newly commissioned 0-5 healthy child programme. This will drive forward improved joint working between Family Support workers and health visitors.
- 3.5 In February 2017 work started with 'One Walsall' (previously known as Walsall Voluntary Action) to identify external funding opportunities and targeted VCS capacity building activities to build innovation in the delivery of Early help across the localities. 'One Walsall' are well engaged and working well with the Council on the Early Help locality delivery model.

#### 4. Consultation on the Early Help 0-19 Locality Model

On 27 October 2016 Cabinet approved to commence a period of statutory and budget consultation, to seek views on plans to review current arrangements for Children's Centres and Youth Services to align and integrate services as part of the development of a Children's Services 'Early Help 0-19 locality model'.

The proposals outlined a new way of working aiming to achieve following benefits:

- Retain and integrate skills and expertise within a locality team to deliver a whole 'family approach' that sustains improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Build on locality working model that enables us to better understand local needs and provide local solutions.
- Retain activities and programmes targeted at young people in need of additional support.

- Improve the way we work and engage with partners to enable professionals to coordinate services and get the right help for families.
- Increased availability for 2 year old places and Early Learning opportunities for children.

**5. Outcomes of the consultation and proposals going forward for Cabinet decision in February 2017:**

- 5.1 Bring Children's Centre Services and youth services into 'Whole Family 0-19 Locality hubs', targeting those families most in need through a whole family approach and a clear menu of targeted activities and interventions.
- 5.2 Implement the newly defined 0-19 locality Reach areas as of April 2017 to include Children's Centres and youth services to better align with 0-19 partnership locality areas and school cluster arrangements so that professionals can work better together. Services will be delivered on a four locality model as shown in **Appendix 3**.
- 5.3 Changes in buildings to create 3 'hubs' with community and outreach: it is proposed that 3 'hub' buildings will remain in areas of greatest need with the majority of support being delivered in the community; 'a hub and spoke model'. As part of this we propose to change the use of the Birchills building to childcare and early learning because there is unmet need in the area for free entitlement to early learning.

## Early Help

# Walsall's Early Help Strategy

'Walsall children...Safe, Happy, Learning Well...'

Refresh January 2017



Early Help in Walsall means providing support as soon as possible to build family resilience and well-being

Support is evidence and needs led and can occur at any stage in a child or young person's life. It is our shared responsibility – all partners, all agencies – to work with children, young people and their families to keep them safe, build on strengths, reduce risk and prevent problems from escalating.

Document Owner: Early Help Steering Group  
Document Author: Isabel Vanderheeren  
Date of Approval: January 2017  
Date of Review: September 2018

## Foreword

I am pleased to present the refreshed Walsall Early Help Strategy for 2017. Informed by a comprehensive case review and consultation undertaken by Walsall's Multi-Agency Early Help Steering Group in 2016, this document sets out our aims and ambitions for continuing to support Walsall's children, young people and their families to have the best life chances.

Early Help is about tackling issues as they emerge, preventing them from escalating and providing families with the support and tools to succeed and achieve. Early Help is an essential part of supporting positive outcomes for Walsall's children, young people and their families, and meeting the aspirations they have themselves defined as:

**'I want a better life for me and my family' and**

**"keep me safe from harm and make my life better for me"**

In 2017 we will continue to focus on expanding and strengthening the partnership. We remain committed to the principle that, to be effective, Early Help must be everybody's business. That's why we are seeking to develop partnership working not only with statutory agencies but with the private sector, the voluntary and community sector and with families and communities themselves.

Our ambition is that all agencies, organisations and communities across Walsall work together to deliver the right help, in the right way at the earliest opportunity.

I am excited to be taking on the Chair of the Steering Group at a time when the strategic focus is on supporting communities to be better engaged in shaping and delivering Walsall's Early Help offer. This inclusive approach will help partners to capitalise on the capacity that already exists within communities and agencies, and build greater capacity where it's needed through shared resource.

By building a stronger and wider partnership, inclusive of the communities we serve, we can make further progress in supporting children, young people and their families to remain safe and healthy, and reduce their need for statutory service intervention.

**Alex Boys**

**Chair of Walsall's multi agency Early Help Steering Group  
Chief Executive, One Walsall**



## Glossary

Term	Meaning
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, managed through children's Social care and provides a coordinated point of contact for all referrals to children's social care.
MARF	Multi Agency Referral Form. The document used to refer an issue or concern to the MASH.
Early Help Hub (EHH)	Is linked to the MASH, managed through children's Social care, the EHH provides a coordinated point of contact for all referrals to early help as well as providing advice and guidance. The service operates on an 'ask anything' basis.
Family Information Service (FIS)	Integrated in the Early Help Hub FIS provides free and impartial information to parents and carers.
SEND/SENDI	Special Education Need and Disability and Inclusion
FRIENDS	Evidence Based Programme focussed on building children and young people's resilience
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
Children's Safeguarding Board Thresholds	Children and young people have different needs and will need different types and levels of support to ensure that they meet their full potential both as children and later as adults. The threshold diagram describes the four levels of need and support that children, young people and their families in Walsall might experience. More information can be found using following link <a href="http://web.walsall.gov.uk/wscb2/professionals-volunteers/thresholds/">http://web.walsall.gov.uk/wscb2/professionals-volunteers/thresholds/</a>
Lead Professional	One key contact for children and young people and their families who coordinates support to meet their needs.
Early Help Assessment	Walsall's tool used to assess needs with the family to ensure they have the right package of support to meet their identified needs.
Outcome Star	Tool used as part of the Early Help Assessment to help children, young people

	and families to identify areas of needs and how they have improved as help and support have been put in place.
Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)	The voluntary and community sector (also known as the <i>third sector</i> ) is diverse and covers everything from community groups such as neighbourhood watch groups to national charities such as Barnardos, and everything in between. The term also includes faith-based organisations and groups. There are two types of people that you will find within the sector; paid staff and volunteers. Community groups tend to be run by volunteers and voluntary groups usually have a mix of paid staff and volunteers.
Locality Panels/Locality Partnerships	Multi Agency Locality Panels are operating in Walsall to ensure an effective joined up early approach to children, young people and families in need of Early Help. Each locality panel sits every 4 weeks and includes a range of partners as panel members- such as schools, police, voluntary sector services, police, school health, health visiting, CAMHS, fire services, housing providers, Money Home job and area partnerships.
Police TIPT (targeted and Intervention and prevention tool)	Tool used by the police in proactively identifying families with children who benefit from support through Early Help or other services.

# 1. Introduction

This strategy is our second refreshed version of the original strategy drawn up in November 2013. The 2015 refresh strategy identified a number of key issues which needed to be addressed in order to ensure that Early Help support for children, young people and families in the Borough is effective, building on the strengths of existing provision.

This refreshed Early Help strategy provides:

- A broad summary of progress since September 2015
- An updated overview of our data from the Early Help score card and the Comprehensive Case review
- Overview of learning from the Comprehensive Case Review
- An updated overview of our strategic partnership priorities

To inform the 2016 refresh, in July 2016 we undertook a whole system review of the help and support we provide to children, young people and their families across Walsall. We called this our Comprehensive Case review and it consisted of us undertaking a multi-agency review of 892 children (502 families) that were in receipt of an Early Help offer. The review consisted of:

A concentrated case reflection on all cases involving the practitioner, the senior practitioner, an Early Help Group Manager, Early Help School Support Advisor (chair of locality panel), the Parenting Coordinator and a Social Work Development Coordinator over a four week period of time. This provided an opportunity to develop a joint understanding of the children and families currently receiving Early Help, what has worked for them, what hasn't and most importantly, what needs to change. We have been able to provide an assurance that all cases met the right thresholds as identified in our Children's Safeguarding Board threshold document and we have been able to consider changes to improve processes and add value so that families receive the right support at the right time.

- Data gathering exercise by partners including Children's Services, Police, Health, Youth Justice, Beacon and Supported Housing through the completion of a Matrix to identify Adverse Childhood Experiences, presenting needs and interventions. This provided a rich picture of the children and their families to inform our understanding of demand, provision and future partnership working.
- Finally, seven half day multi agency case reflection workshops were scheduled throughout August and September to explore current service provision across partners, lessons learned and good practice to take forward in future partnership delivery with a specific focus on long term neglect, Child Sexual Exploitation and Toxic Trio (domestic abuse, parental mental ill health and parental substance misuse). We have engaged over 40 practitioners from across Children's Services including (Family Support, Social Care, Early Years and Integrated Behaviour Support), Beacon, Police, Schools, probation, School Health, Health Visiting, Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group, children's Services Commissioning, Youth Justice and Sandwell Woman's Aid.

The evidence gathered through this Comprehensive Case Review has informed our understanding of the demand for help, identified good practice and the areas we need to improve to deliver better outcomes for children, young people and families. A summary of the findings can be found on page nine of this document, or the full report is available at <http://www.mywalsall.org/walsallearlyhelp>.

We are committed to embedding an effective early help model, owned across the partnership and underpinned by strong evidence of what works. This includes ensuring that our collective services are of the highest standard with clear pathways to a range of effective interventions for our most vulnerable families.

The strategy has been developed and will be driven forward by the Early Help Steering Group, who are the multi-agency group of strategic and service managers which oversaw the development of the original strategy and have a role in working with Walsall's children, young people and their families.

The Early Help Steering Group includes representatives from:

Youth Justice Service
Caldmore Accord Housing
Community Rehabilitation Company
Department of Work and Pensions
One Walsall (Voluntary Sector)
Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group
Walsall Council – Children's Commissioning
Walsall Council - Communities & Public Protection
Walsall Council - Crime & Disorder Intervention
Walsall Council - Early Help
Walsall Council - Early Help & Strengthening Families
Walsall Council - Early Help / Troubled Families
Walsall Council - Early Years and School Readiness
Walsall Council - Education Welfare
Walsall Council – Money Home Job
Walsall Council - Public Health
Walsall Council - Strategic Regeneration
Walsall Health Care – School Health
Walsall Healthcare Trust
Walsall Housing Group
Walsall Police

## 2. Strategic vision, principles and pledges

### Early Help Vision

Our vision is to make Walsall an “Early Help” place by helping families at the earliest point, improving children and young people’s life chances and reducing demand for specialist / crisis services.

### Early Help Principles

Our vision is underpinned by a number of Early Help principles developed and agreed with partners.

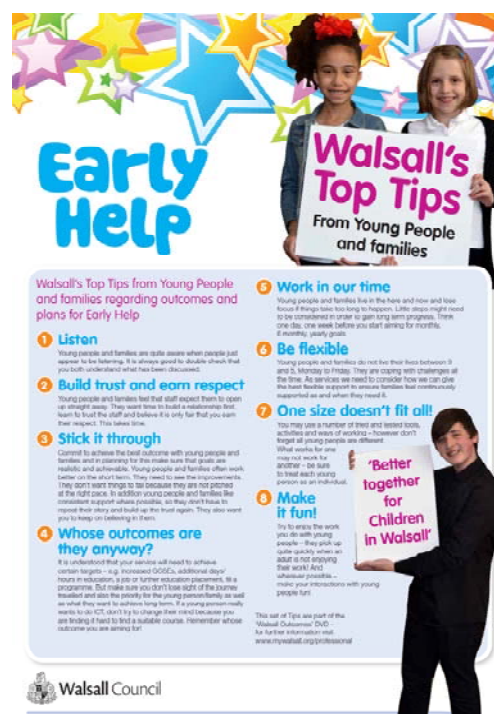
Early Help:

1. is **everyone’s** business – at first point of contact all agencies are committed to responding to the needs of families whether that need falls within their immediate area of expertise or not
2. is about **empowerment** – families are central to defining and addressing the problems they face and are equal partners in the process. The voice of the child will be sought at all stages with appropriate respect for age, developmental stage and levels of understanding
3. is about intervention at the earliest stage of identification and is inclusive for children and families of **all ages** from birth onwards

### Walsall’s Early Help Pledges – Our promises to children, young people and their families

As part of the development of our Early Help Strategy in 2013 children, young people and their families were involved in sharing their stories about service provision. We continue to commit to the multi agency pledges to children, young people and their families developed in response to their stories

- Every contact will count.
- We will not pass the buck.
- Assessments will be uncomplicated and robust.
- Services that are needed will be easy to access and respond in a timely way.
- Families will be involved in drawing up goals
- “Nothing about us without us”



## 3. Progress

The Early Help Steering Group has made significant progress against the priorities as set out in the 'Early Help Refresh Strategy' published in September 2015:

### **Workforce development**

We established the MASH model, inclusive of the Early Help Hub and Family Information Service in October 2015, providing effective and timely access to advice, guidance and support and this has strengthened joint working and engagement between Early Help and Social Care.

We have continued the delivery of a training programme to ensure all professionals have a good understanding of the Early Help offer, pathways and processes available in Walsall. Training has included threshold training and MARF completion, Early Help Assessment and Lead Professional, Outcome Star, FRIENDS (cognitive behaviour programme), motivational interviewing and parenting programme, CAMHS pathway training, SEND awareness workshop, sexual harmful behaviour workshop.

To date, 95 schools have taken up the six weekly supervision support provided to Early Help staff in schools, giving them advice and guidance regarding children who are vulnerable or where school is the early Help Lead, support conflict resolution on threshold decisions where appropriate and aid with brokering solutions on issues that the school workforce feels stuck on.

We disseminated the learning of the Early Help Comprehensive review across the partnership in November 2016.

We have refreshed the Service Guide for Lead Professionals, giving them access to up to date information on what services are available and how to access them in supporting vulnerable children, young people and families.

### **Integrated locality working**

Our Early Help partnership locality model –aligned to school clusters and driven by the investment of £750,000 by School Forum has resulted in the establishment of four locality partnerships and associated locality panels.

Through this partnership infrastructure we have delivered a coordinated and targeted programme to meet identified need which has benefitted our most vulnerable children, young people and families. The programme has included Truancy Patrol, Summer Patrol, CAMHS interventions, parenting workshops, Holiday Kitchen, targeted play scheme and positive activities and 'Friends' programme.

### **Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Engagement**

The Comprehensive Review identified that more work is required to engage and work with the VCS and faith sectors and we are now beginning to include the VCS as a key partner in the development of the Early Help offer within the four locality partnerships..

One Walsall, the support organisation for the borough's VCS has recently been engaged as a key member of the Early Help Steering group to provide increased representation and links to the diverse VCS and faith organisations within Walsall.

### **'Toxic Trio '**

The Comprehensive review has given us a good understanding of the families affected by a combination of domestic abuse, parental mental ill health and parental substance misuse ('toxic trio') and enabled us to understand and identify what levels of support and services are required to meet needs. We have designed a better response to families needing our help because of these issues through additional investment, the up skilling of the workforce, the adoption of a more joined up and integrated approach across the system and the commissioning of specialist services to meet identified gaps.

### **Outcomes and Impact Measurement**

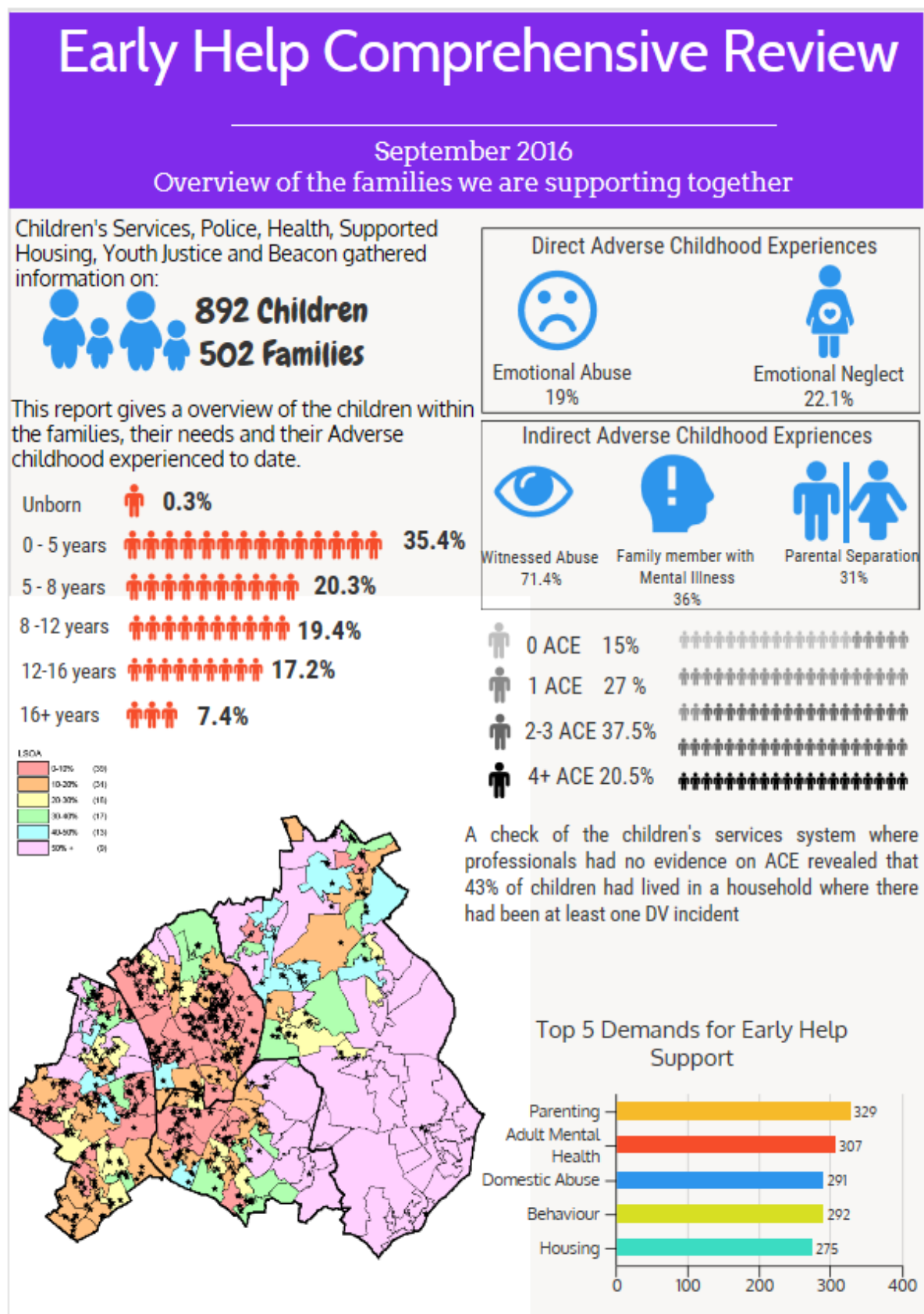
We have further developed our Quality Assurance Framework for Early help which includes:

- Understanding of demand and need
- Timeliness in brokering Early Help Support
- Uptake of Lead Professional Role
- Quality of Early Help Assessments
- Reasons for closing Early Help cases
- 'Distance travelled' by Child or Family through Outcome star
- Re-referral rates to Early Help
- Customer feedback

## 4. Analysis of data

### 4.1 Comprehensive Early Help Partnership review

Through the Comprehensive Case review undertaken in July 2016, we have been able to gather a wealth of information and data to inform our understanding of the early help offer and this is identified below.





# Early Help Comprehensive Review

September 2016  
Overview of partnership involvement

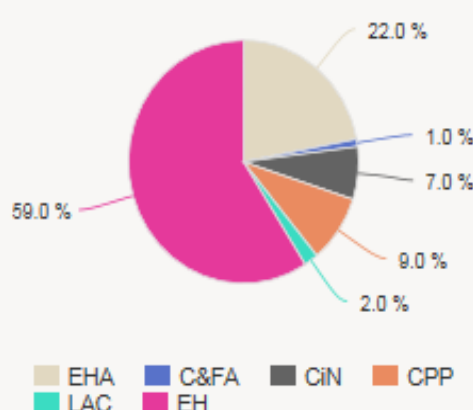


**892 children**  
**502 Families**

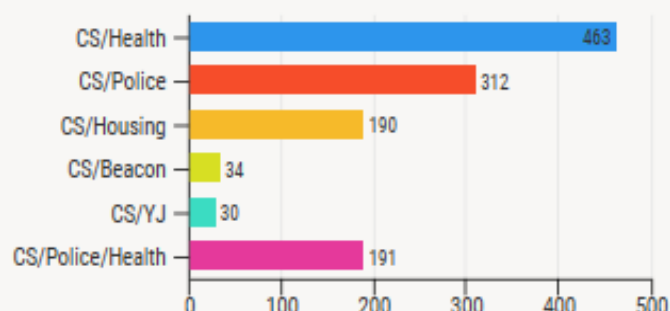


Children's Services - Family Support **841**  
Police **339**  
Youth Justice **30**  
Health **500**  
Supported Housing **201**  
Beacon **45**  
School **638**

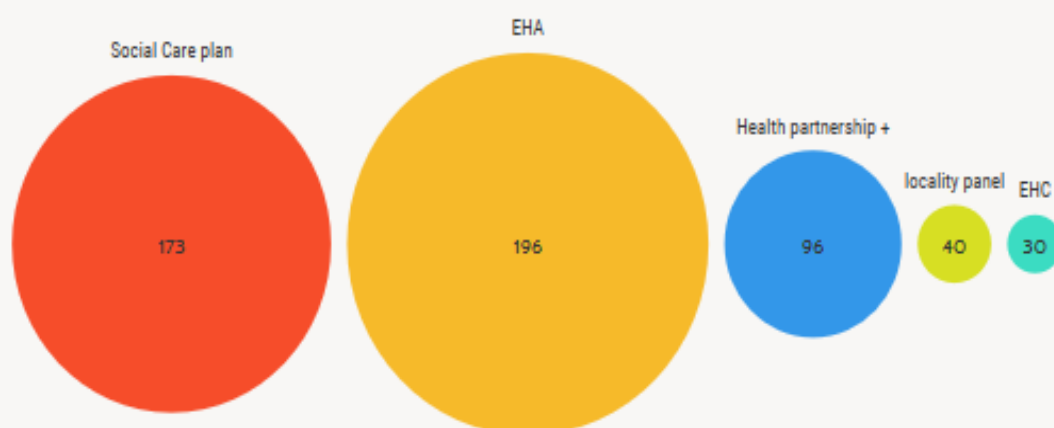
At what thresholds are the children ?



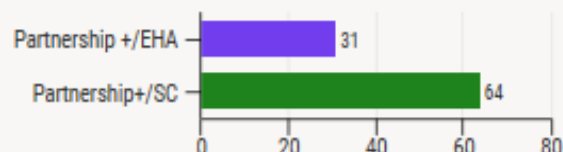
## Joint knowledge



## Assessments and plans



## Duplication of Assessment



The Early Help Assessment, the Health Partnership + assessment and social care assessment are all using the triangle of need as a tool to assess.

The table on the left shows the number of children that had two live assessments at the time of the review.

# Children's Services Early Help Case review

## Toxic Trio - Overview

### Toxic Trio Overview

Of the 791 Children reviewed in Children's Services Early Help there were:



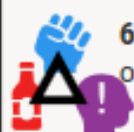
**332 children (42%)** live in a household where there had been at least one incident of DA



**334 children (42.2%)** live in a household where there is one adult who has a mental health need.



**114 children (14.4%)** live in a household where there is an adult with an alcohol and substance misuse issue.

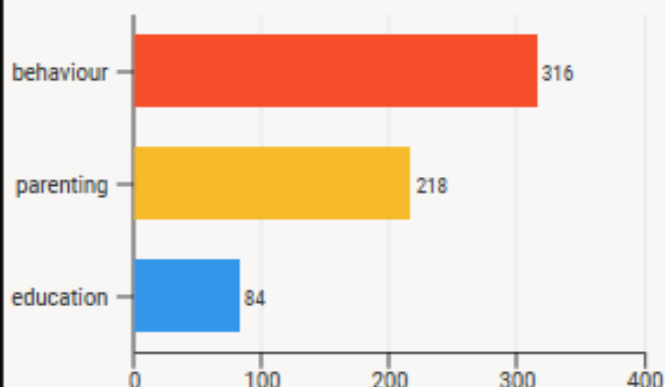


**6%** of children live in a household where all of the Toxic Trio factors are present.

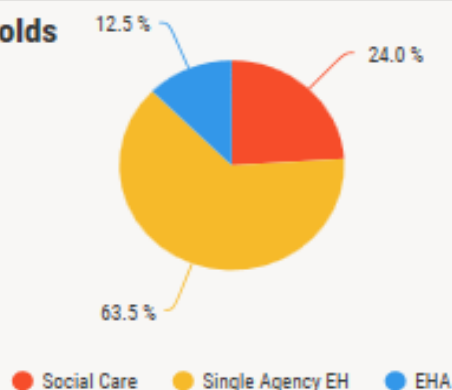
### Breakdown of children affected by DA

0-5 years		139
5-8 years		70
8-12 years		78
12-16 years		36
16+ years		9
SEND		42

### Top demands for help where Toxic Trio has been identified



### Thresholds



### 0-19 Family Support - interventions offered to children and families affected by DA

Freedom Programme - 33.9%  
 One to One parenting - 50%  
 Group Parenting - 7%  
 (mellow or PPP)  
 Referral to specialist DA provider - 18.5%

The Early Help Comprehensive review identified a series of findings for the partnership to consider in helping to inform future collaborative working to secure better outcomes for children, young people and their families and prevent long term high service costs

### **1. Smarter use of partnership information to secure early change**

Both the data and the reflection demonstrated that each agency had some information on the family often focussed on one area. Bringing information from across the partnership together has enabled us to understand the context of families better and therefore, has helped to inform an effective route of engagement so that issues identified could be tackled in a more robust way.

### **2. Identification of 'root cause' to secure sustainable change**

The case reflection helped us to identify that too often agencies respond in a reactive way to a presenting need/issue at a moment in time, rather than planning and providing intervention on a more considered basis.

The partnership needs to consider how we can move to a more responsive approach (in line with restorative practice), meaning practitioners take time to thoughtfully evaluate the situation, are encouraged to have conversation, or challenge and determine how best to respond. This is considered in the Early Help Training plan for partners

### **3. Better communication of Services and pathways**

The review demonstrated that there are lots of effective, quality services and interventions available to support children, young people and families. However, practitioners were not always aware of the services or how to access them for families and therefore did not pull them in to support families effectively.

The review identified too many referral pathways for different services, and therefore, it becomes hard to navigate and secure access to services. The different pathways and their related criteria can provide a barrier to enable practitioners to secure and synchronise the right interventions.

Practitioners raised particular issues in understanding pathways and securing the right support for children with disabilities, including transition support, help for children with mental health issues and services around adult mental health.

### **5. Relationships are key in doing the right thing**

The review has helped us to realise that taking time to build relationships with children, young people and families is really important in ensuring we are working **with** them. The case reflections highlighted the need for practitioners to have 'a curious' approach to families to enable us to gather valuable information on family context and root cause.

As well as building relationship with families we recognise that we need to have time to build relationships with colleagues, including the third sector providers. We need to have a network of support services and practitioners that feel they work together in a high support, high challenge and reflective environment to help to secure sustainable change with families.

## 4.2 Early Help Assessment and plans

During April 2016 – December 2016:



## 5. Priorities

The Early Help Partnership is committed to taking forward the following priorities over the next 12 months:

### **5.1 Further strengthen information sharing across the partnership to ensure early identification and partnership actions in supporting vulnerable children and young people.**

- Further development of the locality panels process to include proactive identification and planning of support to vulnerable children, young people and families. This will include consideration on how we can effectively embed the use of Troubled Families and Police Targeted Intervention and Prevention Tool (TIPT) process.
- Explore the opportunities for multi agency delivery and co-location across the localities to strengthen our collaborative approach to provide the right help to children, young people and their families.
- Explore effective use of current data base systems and case recording systems across the partnership to facilitate better information sharing and communication between agencies enabling effective coordinated support.

### **5.2 Strengthen the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in the delivery of Early Help.**

Working in partnership with One Walsall:

- Taking on a leadership role in driving forward the Early Help Strategy through taking on the Chairing responsibility of the Steering group.
- review Early Help processes in consultation with the VCS to ensure they support increased VCS involvement in Early Help delivery
- To develop and deliver a programme of training to the VCS which improves knowledge, build capacity and confidence within the sector to take the lead on Multi Agency Early Help
- To improve information flow and representation of the VCS at Locality panels
- To encourage, support and empower more residents to take up volunteering roles which support Early Help priorities, and develop a framework in which parents and young people can play an active role in the development and delivery of early help across the four localities.
- identify funding opportunities and target VCS capacity building activity to build innovation in the delivery of Early Help

### **5.3 Strengthen the uptake of Lead professional by Health Professionals**

- Health professionals are one of the main referrers into the MASH and Early Help Hub. However, only 2% of our children and young people have a health practitioner as their lead professional. Therefore, we will work with public health and CCG to increase the number of midwives, health visitors and school health practitioners to take on the lead professional role where appropriate.
- We want to engage with General Practitioners, as a key partner to identify needs early, in the delivery of the four Locality Partnerships.



#### **5.4 Strengthen the early help offer to children who are affected by adult mental health, disability and child mental health.**

- Work with adult Mental health, SENDI, Children with Disability Team and CAHMS to clarify and increase pathways of support.
- Provide training to practitioners across the partnerships around pathways so that they feel confident in how to access the right and timely support.
- Streamline the Early Help Assessment and Education Health and Care plan pathways to prevent duplication in assessment and secure the right package of support at the right level for children who have a special educational need or disability.
- Secure representation of adult mental health and adult social care on the Early Help Steering group. This will help effective sharing of information in supporting the safeguarding of children and identify needs early and offer the right package of support to secure positive outcomes for children affected by their parents having an identified need.
- Secure representation of adult mental health and SENDI on locality panels to ensure effective sharing of information, early and proactive identification of children and families in need of help and support and secure positive sustainable outcomes.

#### **5.5 Build the workforce across the partnership to be able to respond effectively to the findings as indicated by the comprehensive case review**

- Continue to develop our borough wide multi agency Early Help training plan to include Lead Professional training and reflective workshops, restorative training and 'persistence assistance' training.
- Develop a locality training plan for each of the localities to enable practitioners to respond to local needs providing proactive and effective support to children, young people and families within the communities they live.

## 5. How will we measure success?

Our key indicator to test if our Early Help strategy is effective and making a difference is when children, young people, families and carers confirm that the Early Help and support they receive has made a sustainable difference to their lives and life chances. Our key indicators to measure the difference we make to children and young people will be

- % of children reporting positive 'distance travelled' through the use of outcome star scoring at the beginning and end of early help multi agency offer.
- % of Early Help Cases closed due to 'need being met'
- % of re-referrals and early help re-assessment within a 12 month period of time reduced
- % of children who need to be escalated into statutory services reduced.
- % of children and young people reporting their Lead Professional has provided an effective service through the use of customer satisfaction survey.

The partnership has also committed to undertake a further comprehensive review in June 2017 to continue to understand the demand and the progress we have made against findings in the 2016 review.

In addition, the multi agency Early Help Steering group, locality groups and Walsall's Safeguarding Children's Board will continue to monitor the progress and impact of this strategy and identify actions in response to issues and risks.

Appendix 1 outlines a detailed outcomes plan with key indicators for measuring success for each of the priorities as part of this Early Help Strategy. This will be monitored by the Early Help Steering group on a quarterly basis.

## Appendix 1 Outcomes plan January 2017

This outcome plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis using the Early Help Score card.

## 1. Overall success measures

<b>Outcome:</b> Children, young people, families and carers confirm that the Early Help and support they received has made a sustainable difference to their lives and life chances		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Impact</b>
More children, young people and their families and practitioners recognising positive change as a result of a Early Help Offer	% of outcome star showing improvement across all areas  Increase of cases being closed due to 'needs met' from 60% to 80% by April 2018	Children and young people and families are empowered to identify positive change needed and secure sustainable outcomes
The Early Help Offer secures a sustainable change for children, young people and their families	Decrease in re-referrals rates within a 12 month period of closure from 33.2% to 25% by April 2018  Decrease in re-assessment rates within a 12 month period of closure from 6.6% to 5% by April 2018	Improved outcomes Families empowered to help themselves Less likelihood of statutory interventions
Children, young people and parents report in the customer satisfaction survey that their Lead Professional has provided an effective service.	Increase of number of parents telling us the Early Help Support have made a difference to their children from 68% to 80% by April 2018	Improved outcomes Less likelihood of statutory interventions
Timely, well coordinated and high quality Early Help offer	80% of all Early Help Assessment and plans are judged as being good or outstanding through audit activity  90% of cases having an allocated LP within five days by April 2018  85% of cases have an assessment and plan in place and these have been completed within timescales by April 2018  85% of cases have regular reviews by April 2018	Timely, high quality assessments and plans lead to better engagement and improved, sustained outcomes

## 2. Success measure linked to each Strategic Priorities

<b>2.1 Outcome:</b> Further strengthen information sharing across the partnership to ensure early identification and partnership actions to support vulnerable children and young people.		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Proactive identification and early support to vulnerable children, young people in their communities	Reduced contacts leading to NFA in MASH Number of referrals to locality panel and positive outcomes (evidence through locality tracker)	More young people full time in school, including reduction in fixed term and permanent exclusions. Reduction in ASB More Troubled Families are making sustainable progress.
Effective use of Troubled Families system and doc manager to effectively share information.	Targeted for Troubled Families claim reached	Better information sharing. Better evidence of impact of partnership interventions



<b>2.2 Outcome: Strengthen the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in the delivery of Early Help.</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Number of VCSEs taking up EH training offer	Set baseline 2017	Building confidence of resource across the VCS to lead on Early Help. Children, young people having more choice of who their LP can be. Relationship based early help
Number of VCSEs reporting good understanding of process	90% of VCSEs surveyed report good understanding by April 2018  80% of early help assessments and plans are judged to be good or outstanding by April 2018	Children and young people receive the right help and support
Number of VCSEs acting as Lead Professional in EH cases	10% of Early Help Assessment led by VCS between January – April 2018	Children, young people and families having more choice of who can be their Lead Professional.  Relationship based early help offer.
Funding secured from external sources to support increased EH provision from VCSEs	Min of £75,000 per annum secured from external source	Increase capacity to community based organisations so that there is increased engagement and empowerment of families to seek self help in their community in order to secure sustainable outcome.
Increased number of young people and parents taking an active role in the delivery of Early Help	Number of volunteers signed up – baseline April 2018 Number of parents involved in delivery of universal parenting courses – baseline 2018 Number of residence signed up and engaged in mentoring support- baseline 2018	Increased capacity for early help delivery Self help within the community

<b>Outcome: Strengthen the uptake of Lead Professional by Health Professionals</b>		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Number of Health Professionals taking up EH training offer	100% of Health visitors and school health practitioners trained as Lead Professionals by July 2017  Increase of health leading on early Help increases from 3% to 15%. – by Dec 2017	Increase capacity for Early Help support. Children's needs being identified and met early on.
Number of health professionals report good understanding of processes	90% of health professionals surveyed report a good understanding of how to undertake EH assessments – by Dec 2017  80% of early help assessments and plans are judged as good or outstanding – by Dec 2017	Children and young people receive the right help

**Outcome:** Strengthen the early help offer to children who are affected by adult mental health, disability and child mental health.

Indicator	Measure	Impact
Workforce in adult mental health, SENDI and CAMHS taking up early help training offer	Number of adult mental health, SENDI and CAHMS practitioners engaged in Early Help training	Better understanding of Early Help Processes and offer by professionals leading to earlier identification and securing the right support.
Work with partners in adult mental health, SENDI and CAHMS to clarify and streamline where possible pathways to services	Clear pathways in place Early help training to include briefings on pathways related to Adult mental health, SENDI and CAHMS	Improved accessibility to services
Full engagement of key agencies in the steering group and locality panel	Attendance at the early help steering group and locality panels.  Increase referrals through adult mental health, SENDI and CAHMS to locality panels	Early Identification of children young people and families in need of help – including young carers  Early interventions reduce the need for statutory support.  Better understanding of pathways and support on offer within these areas

**Outcome:** Build the workforce across the partnership to be able to respond effectively to the findings as indicated by the comprehensive case review.

Indicator	Measure	Impact
Develop an Early Help locality training plan to include Lead Professional, reflective workshops and motivational interviewing.	Uptake of training by a range of agencies  Agencies reporting improved confidence and skills in providing help and support to children, young people and families  Reduced number of early help cases closed due to disengagement from 18.6% to 15% by April 2018	Better support to children and young people leading to increased engagement. Reduced need for statutory interventions.



**WALSALL**

**Early Help Comprehensive Partnership Review  
Executive Summary  
September 2016**

## **Foreword**

In Walsall we are embracing the challenge to strive for an Outstanding Service to ensure children are 'Safe, Happy and Learning Well' against a back drop of reduced budgets and increasing demand.

There is compelling national and international evidence that early help, if implemented properly, can work to improve outcomes and deliver cost benefits. The 'Early Help, Early on' message has now been embedded in a number of key documents driving our partnership including the West Midlands Police Strategic Assessment, Walsall's Early Help Strategy and Children and Young People's Partnership Board priorities.

Over the last 12 months we have built strong relationships between partners and stepped up to the challenge of creating whole-system change through integrated locality working to ensure sustained improvements for Walsall's children and young people and their families.

For the first time we have undertaken a whole system review of the help and support we provide to children and young people across Walsall. The evidence we have gathered has informed our understanding of the demand for help, identified good practice and the areas we need to improve to deliver better outcomes for children, young people and families.

We are committed to embedding an effective early help model, owned across the partnership and underpinned by strong evidence of what works. This includes ensuring that our collective services are of the highest standard with clear pathways to a range of effective interventions for our most vulnerable families. We need to take our learning and consolidate what we know we are doing well, stop doing what isn't working and invest in new and innovative evidence-based initiatives. This is a real opportunity to change the way we are working and see sustained improvements for children and young people across Walsall.

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4. Overview of partnership involvement	p7
5. Overview of children affected by the 'Toxic Trio'	p8
6. Findings	p9
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## **Context**

Walsall's Strategic Partnership engaged in a workshop delivered by Accenture to identify key issues around improving the configuration of the Strategic Boards and the work that needs to be done to ensure public agencies work together to provide Strategic Leadership for Walsall Borough to deliver better outcomes for and with local people. The report produced By Accenture outlines a number of actions as a result of the workshop, which included 'To tilt the focus more towards people as opposed to themes, ie by incorporating more insight on individuals when making strategic decisions, start with sharing the findings of the ' Early Help 1000 case review'.

Children's Services completed a structural redesign in April 2016 of Early Help to create four locality 0-19 family support teams. The redesign purposely brought together skills and resources to enable more effective and timely whole family working and to ensure better, evidence informed help was available to those children and families who needed it most.

Children's Services committed to a comprehensive review of all open Early Help Cases at the time of the redesign (estimated to be around 1000 cases). This review consisted of a concentrated case reflection between staff and managers on a significant scale in order to:

- Develop a joint understanding of the children and families currently receiving Early Help, what's working for them and what isn't and needs to change
- Seek assurance that all cases are being worked at the right Children's Safeguarding Board thresholds
- Ensure that all cases are relevant to be supported by the 0-19 team
- Get an overview of the interventions being delivered by staff and capture good practice to inform a menu of services to be communicated to social workers and partners
- Consider changes to processes that are unhelpful, add no value or delay effective support to families

The Strategic Partnership identified the case review as an opportunity to get a better understanding of vulnerable families currently in the 'support system' to inform integrated partnership working and partners have worked with us to:

- Map the ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) factors for each child
- Map partnership involvement in the lives of the children/families
- Undertake thematic multi agency reflection on selected cases

## **Methodology**

- Over a four week period 47 Children's Services Family Support practitioners reflected on their open case files. The reflection discussions involved the practitioner, the senior practitioner, an Early Help Group Manager, Early Help School Support Advisor (chair of locality panel), the Parenting Coordinator and a Social Work Development Coordinator.
- Partners including Children's Services, Police, Health, Youth Justice, Beacon and Supported Housing also completed the Matrix with identified needs and interventions. This provided a rich picture of the children and their families to inform our understanding

of demand, provision and future partnership working (See appendix A for detailed data report).

- Finally seven half day multi agency case reflection workshops were scheduled throughout August and September to explore current service provision across partners, lessons learned and good practice to take forward in future partnership delivery with a specific focus on long term neglect, CSE and Toxic Trio (See appendix B for detailed findings on each multi agency case reflection).

40 practitioners from across Children's Services (Family Support, Social Care, Early Years, Integrated Behaviour Support), Beacon, Police, Schools, probation, School Health, Health Visiting, CCG, Commissioning, Youth Justice and Sandwell Woman's Aid.

This report outlines the findings and learning from the data analysis on 892 children, 502 families (data analysis only included the children about whom we received robust data) and the Early Help and multi agency case reflection meetings and sets out recommendations to be considered by the Strategic Partnership

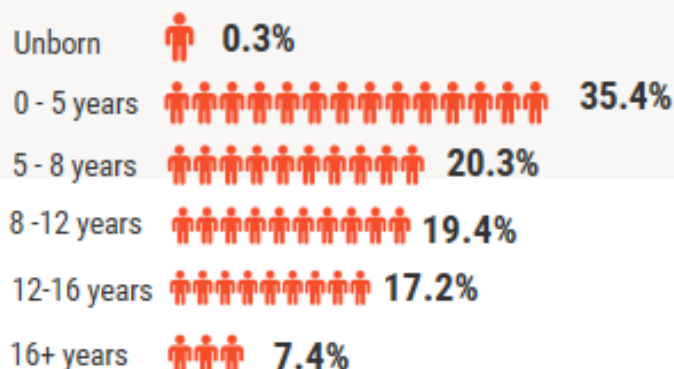
# Early Help Comprehensive Review

September 2016  
Overview of the families we are supporting together

Children's Services, Police, Health, Supported Housing, Youth Justice and Beacon gathered information on:

 **892 Children**  
**502 Families**

This report gives an overview of the children within the families, their needs and their Adverse childhood experiences to date.





# Early Help Comprehensive Review

September 2016  
Overview of partnership involvement

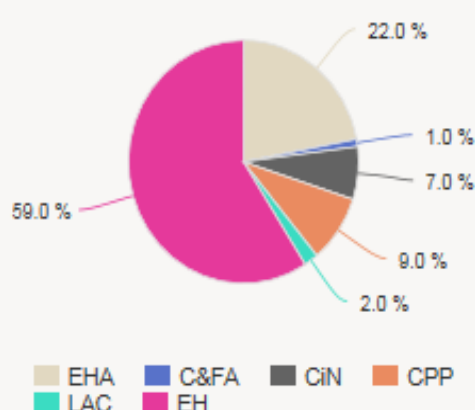


**892 children**  
**502 Families**

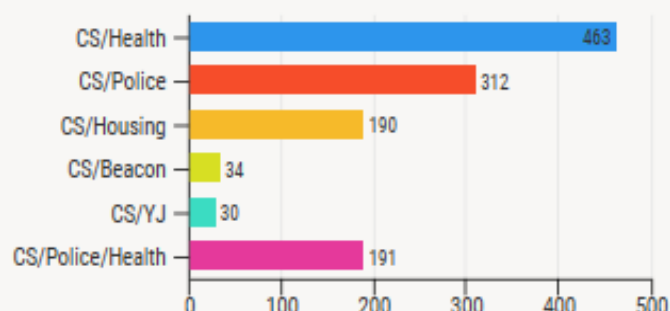


Children's Services - Family Support **841**  
Police **339**  
Youth Justice **30**  
Health **500**  
Supported Housing **201**  
Beacon **45**  
School **638**

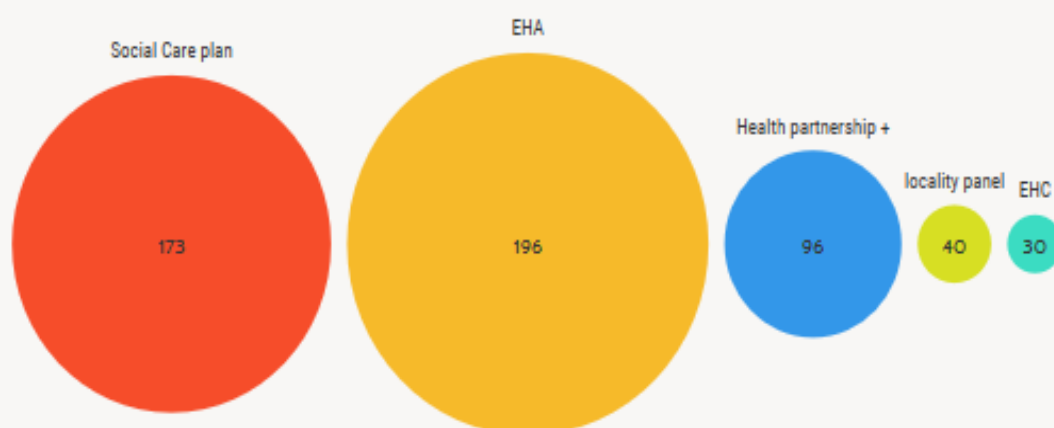
At what thresholds are the children ?



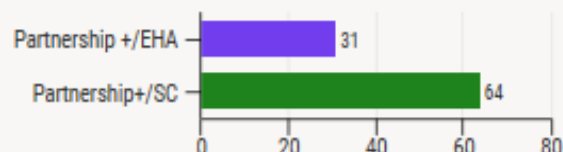
## Joint knowledge



## Assessments and plans



## Duplication of Assessment



The Early Help Assessment, the Health Partnership + assessment and social care assessment are all using the triangle of need as a tool to assess.

The table on the left shows the number of children that had two live assessments at the time of the review.

# Children's Services Early Help Case review

## Toxic Trio - Overview

### Toxic Trio Overview

Of the 791 Children reviewed in Children's Services Early Help there were:



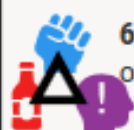
**332 children (42%)** live in a household where there had been at least one incident of DA



**334 children (42.2%)** live in a household where there is one adult who has a mental health need.



**114 children (14.4%)** live in a household where there is an adult with an alcohol and substance misuse issue.

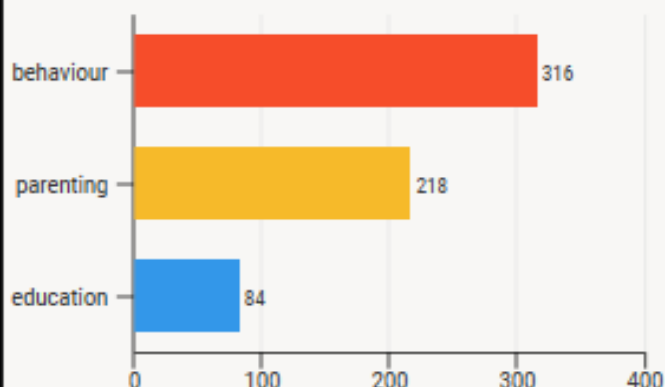


**6%** of children live in a household where all of the Toxic Trio factors are present.

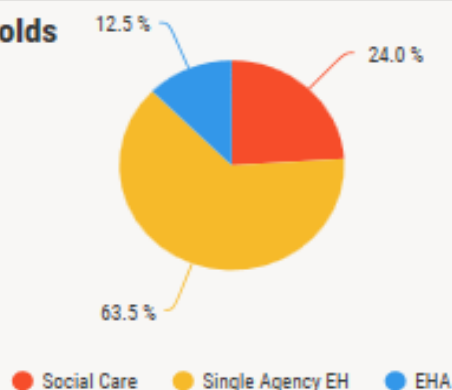
### Breakdown of children affected by DA

0-5 years		139
5-8 years		70
8-12 years		78
12-16 years		36
16+ years		9
SEND		42

### Top demands for help where Toxic Trio has been identified



### Thresholds



### 0-19 Family Support - interventions offered to children and families affected by DA

Freedom Programme - 33.9%  
 One to One parenting - 50%  
 Group Parenting - 7%  
 (mellow or PPP)  
 Referral to specialist DA provider - 18.5%

\* The above overview is an analysis of the data used for the Children's Services Early Help Review as this was the only set of data that included robust information on Toxic Trio that included presenting need at the Front Door, Identified Need and interventions offered.

## Summary of Findings

The review has identified a series of findings which will be useful for the partnership to consider in helping to inform future collaborative working to secure better outcomes for children, young people and their families and prevent long term high service costs.

### **1. Smarter use of partnership information to secure early change**

Both the data and the reflection demonstrated that each agency had some information on the family often focussed on one area. Bringing information from across the partnership together gets us to understand the context of families better, enables us to inform an effective route of engagement and understand the issues that may need to be tackled.

How can we use our joint knowledge of demand to be more proactive and together in tackling areas of need?

E.g.

- Information on communities with high referrals for DA – could we do a community partnership approach to responding to the issues rather than an individual approach?
- CSE – could we provide a more preventative approach to schools where there are pupils of high risk identified?

Considering a large proportion of children in this review had been impacted by the Toxic Trio factors and therefore increasing the Adverse Childhood Experiences, it may be worth considering undertaking further work to map the information held by Adult Social Care and Adult Mental Health for the families included in the redesign.

### **2. Treating symptoms versus ‘root cause’**

The case reflection highlighted a reactive response to a presenting need/issue at a moment in time. The reactive response doesn't allow us to see the entire picture. We miss important details and information about the children, young people and family which we need to inform effective decisions. The case reflection identified that at times we jump to conclusions, misread the situation and take action to simply stop the 'presenting need' and not securing change as we have not addressed the 'root cause'. The case reflection also identified that, at times, we are not focussed enough, do not jointly understand the impact we want to achieve for the children and do not have a focussed approach on how to achieve this.

In a number of the case reflection workshops professionals identified that this had been the first time they had an opportunity to reflect in detail on a family they were working with. All involved saw it as a positive experience and gained valuable learning directly related to the case and for their practice in general.

The partnership needs to consider how we can move to a more responsive approach (in line with restorative practice), meaning practitioners take time to thoughtfully evaluate the situation, are encouraged to have conversation, or challenge and determine how best to respond. It allows us to build with what we've got.

Moving to a responsive approach as a partnership may help us to deliver adaptive/flexible services, rather than offering a 'standard menu of service', increasing the chances that we find the right solution first time around.

### 3. Knowledge is power

The review demonstrated that there are lots of effective and quality services and interventions available to support children, young people and families. However, practitioners were not always aware of the services or how to access them for families and therefore did not pull them in to support.

We also need to acknowledge that the current economic climate means that services and/or their remits are changing on an ongoing basis. As a partnership, we have a challenge to consider how we can keep a joint knowledge hub of what valuable services we have and promote how they can be accessed to practitioners and families on.

The case reflection also identified the underdeveloped partnership with the community and faith sectors in securing change and providing ongoing sustainable support for families.

### 4. Lots of pathways...more developing

We seem to have lots of referral pathways for different services, and therefore it becomes hard to navigate and secure access to services. The different pathways and their related criteria can provide a barrier to enable practitioners to secure and synchronise the right interventions.

As a result practitioners sometime fall back to offering a less effective service as it is perceived as 'better than offering nothing'. However again, as a partnership, we need to consider if this is a waste of valuable capacity as it may not address 'root cause'.

Practitioners raised particular issues in understanding pathways and securing the right support to children with disability, including transition support, Children Mental Health and services around Adult Mental Health. It was identified that adult focussed services like probation, Adult Mental Health and the Police were not always sufficiently sighted on the children, the impact of the adult issue or behaviour on the children within the family. or how the parental role can be used to secure positive change for the Child.

We seem to have reducing services but be continually creating more pathways for different issues/problems which are often developed from a professional perspective rather than a service user perspective.

As a partnership we need to consider following:

- Understand what pathways we do have, do we need then all (are they effective in making a difference), can we integrate them or link them better together?
- Do we understand enough about what the experience of the current pathways are for children, young people and their families and when developing new pathways whether this will improve this experience?

## 5. Relationships are key in doing the right thing

Taking time to build relationships with children, young people and families is really important in ensuring we are working **with** them. The case reflections highlighted the need for practitioners to have 'curious' approach to families to enable us to gather valuable information on family context and root cause.

Practitioners don't always feel confident to ask challenging questions or feel they have the time to build an effective relationship that allows for asking the right questions and challenge.

In addition, it was identified that some families' negative experience of services when they were children results in not wanting services involved and practitioners end interventions too soon due to non-engagement. Practitioners identified lack of capacity and the pressure to get onto the next family as barriers to provide the 'persistence assistance' approach to engaging 'hard to reach' families

As well as building relationship with families we need to have time to build relationships with colleagues, including the third sector providers. We need to have a network of support services and practitioners that feel they work together in a high support, high challenge and reflective environment to secure sustainable change with families.

Effective communication was also identified as a key enabler for delivering the right interventions – some pathways and processes prevent practitioners from communicating effectively.

Examples in the case reflection showed that change in staffing and organisation at times can lead to vital knowledge on a child and family and the impact (or lack of impact) of interventions being lost, leading to duplication of non effective interventions. Again we don't always reflect enough on how families experience this and what this may mean to their future attitudes to service engagement.

## Recommendations

### Recommendations for the Partnership Leadership Group

1. Partners to use the demand analysis to respond to the actions identified in the Accenture Report including:
  - (1i) Create a common Purpose informed by the common drivers of demand
  - (2ii) Mapping of strategic priorities informed by shared, intelligence-led understanding of need
  - (11Xi) Customers to be sufficiently represented in performance data – ‘1000-case review’.
2. Partners to consider future integration of health, social care, police and housing to develop multi disciplinary locality teams to enable more effective information sharing and a more responsive response to needs of children, young people and families with a view to reduce duplication and costly long term interventions.
3. For the partnership to map and review our range of pathways and consider opportunities to streamlining these. Consider how we can keep a flexible approach to pathways for those families and circumstances that don’t fit a standard approach.
4. Develop a structure that provides us to coordinate and effectively communicate the range of services, interventions available across Walsall to ensure practitioners and families have easy access to information on pulling in the right support.
5. Develop a partnership protocol or standard that sets out expectations/accountability on how we work together and communicate between professionals when supporting families
6. To consider further mapping of information held by Adult Social Care and Adult Mental health for the families included in this review to enhance our understanding of need and possible future opportunities for joint working.

### Recommendations for Walsall Safeguarding Board

1. Consider opportunities to disseminate learning of this review to Strategic partners and practitioners including an event on 17 November 2016.
2. Consider further development of the Children Walsall Safeguarding Board training plan to include training that responds to the findings including:
  - Restorative training to develop a culture of high support high challenge between professionals and develop a response approach to need.
  - ‘Persistence Assistance’ training
3. Safeguarding Board to consider regular multi agency reflection workshops (using methodology used in this case review) in addition to desk top audits. This would provide an enhanced opportunity to identify good practice and areas for further development as well as give a range of practitioners a key learning opportunity.

### Appendix 3

