

Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28 March 2019



Supporting Solutions Service

Report of Margaret Whellans, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

None.

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report outlines the activity and development of the Supporting Solutions Service (SSS) from April 2018 – December 2018.

Executive Summary

- 2 A new service was developed to provide crisis and intensive support to young people aged 11 to 17 years who were on the edge of care because of family breakdown.
- 3 A phased and layered model of interventions was agreed with partners and senior managers in the service following consultation. The service received an additional £250,000 to fund additional staff and the cost of an emergency bed.
- 4 The service has successfully engaged with 82 young people on the edge of care between April 2018 and September 2018.

Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5 Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to:
 - (a) note the contents of this report and acknowledge that the development of the service is on track.

Background

- 6 It was identified in 2017 that Children's Services were experiencing the following challenges:
 - (a) Increasing number of young people becoming looked after by the authority;

- (b) Lack of an emergency bed resulting in young people having to sleep in the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) office, preventing social workers responding to child/adult protection and crisis mental health incidents;
- (c) Young people sitting in service reception areas, whilst placement officers identify placements, this can sometimes take between 5-7 hours, whilst placements wait for a response from service providers.

Supporting Solutions Service - Model

- 7 In order to address the ongoing issues identified in the section above, a new service was developed to provide crisis and intensive support to young people aged 11 to 17 who were on the edge of care due to family breakdown.
- 8 Following consultation with partners and senior managers the following phased and layered model of interventions was agreed;
 - (a) **Crisis Response**
 - (b) An **overnight emergency response** for children and young people who need to be accommodated outside of the family home or current living arrangement,
 - (c) A **rapid response** following day including weekends to provide mediation and crisis intervention support package to help stabilise the situation.
 - (d) **Respite** care/activities to young people and their families
 - (e) A **12 weeks intervention and support package** offered to families, following a period of **engagement and motivation**
 - (f) Therapeutic support available to families where appropriate by a dedicated worker as part of a secondment into SSS from **Full Circle Therapeutic Social Work Team**
 - (g) **Family Group Conferencing** to all young people on the edge of care and to all families engaging in Families First Service
 - (h) **Children of Concern Meetings**
 - (i) Once the young person is discharged from the service, the service will provide regular **check-ins as part of an aftercare service**
- 9 The service received an additional £250K to fund additional staff and costs of an EDT emergency bed unit. Additional 5 x FTE staff were

recruited from April 2018 including a secondment of a FTE Therapeutic Social Worker via Full Circle.

Governance and multi-agency Involvement

- 10 A multi-agency steering group was gathered with representatives from across the partnership in Durham including Police, child health, Education and CAMHS to oversee the development of the model. To date the steering group has been well attended with the exception of CAMHS. A meeting has been arranged with senior managers from CAMHS to look at fostering a closer working relationship at an operational level.

Development Activity

- 11 **Young People's Steering Group** – It was agreed from the outset that the service would be developed in consultation with young people and families. A steering group was gathered from young people who had previously entered the service in crisis. Young people were asked about their experiences to help shape the model and to name the new building, which is now known as “The Nest”. Young people have helped decorate and furnish The Nest, and have produced induction packs available for young people who need to be accommodated overnight. The young people's steering group are now involved in the recruitment of all SSS staff.
- 12 **Nettlesworth “Nest”** - A property was identified in Nettlesworth to provide a dedicated office accommodation for EDT and SSS staff team and a separate emergency children's home within the same building. The team moved in on 1 October 2018. This has allowed EDT and SSS to work seamlessly together to support families on the edge of care, and the service now operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- 13 **Staff Foster Carers** - All staff across Children's Services were offered the opportunity to become edge of care foster carers in order to offer an emergency placement, or to provide planned respite as part of the SSS offer to families in crisis. This is a new way of working for Durham and has not been without its challenges. To date 5 staff members have undergone a Fostering assessment and have been approved at panel. Unfortunately 3 staff members have withdrawn their offer for the following reasons
- (a) Lack of support
 - (b) Delay in payments
 - (c) Didn't feel the role was fully explained
- 14 **Children of Concern Meetings** – A meeting is held every Friday afternoon to discuss any children and their families/carers who without

additional support over the weekend may present in crisis. Specific weekend support plans are agreed with families. A subsequent meeting is held every Monday, to review weekend activity and follow up any actions required. Feedback received from parents/carers has been incredibly positive and credited to improving relationships in the family or the need for EDT to become involved out of hours/weekends.

- 15 **Clinical supervision** – A group supervision model has been developed. The group supervision is facilitated by the Therapeutic Social Worker from Full Circle and is separate from line management supervision.
- 16 **Consultation Clinics** – The Therapeutic Social Worker provides a number of sessions per week for staff to discuss individual young people and their families/carers who require a service from full circle. This also included fast track referrals into CAMHS. The Full circle Social Worker also carries a small case load of young persons on the edge of care, delivering therapeutic interventions where appropriate.
- 17 **Staff Training** – A training matrix was developed to ensure all staff members across SSS & EDT are fully trained in a range of interventions and also training compliance for looking after young people when required in The Nest.
- 18 **Summer Program** – A program of activities was organised and included as part of identified respite for families and carers.

Outcomes – Supporting Solutions

- 19 Supporting solutions have successfully engaged with **82 young people** on the edge of care between April 2018 and September 2018.

Outcome	Number of young people
Young people received support	Target 75 Achieved 107
Young People accessing emergency bed due to family breakdown or Police restrictions on bail	8
Number of young people who remained in the care of their parents/carers	100
Number of young people who have become looked after children	7

Individual Young People Journey Mapping (soft outcomes)

- 20 All young people as part of their engagement phase within Supporting Solutions are asked about their life and issues that have led to them becoming at risk of becoming looked after. The figures below show any self-reported improvements in aspects of their lives following a period of 4 weeks engagement phase. Outcome of this 4 week review helps young persons to reflect on the first phase of their journey and to inform what areas of their lives still require support. This is then translated into an interventions work plan.
- 21 The service has committed to develop this approach further, and as a result have commissioned the use of the Outcome star, which is an evidenced soft measurement/child's journey tool. All team members are currently undergoing training and the tool will be launched and implemented from the 1st April 2019. The tool will be used at each monthly review and also used as part of the post-discharge check in service offer at 4 weeks, 3 months and 6 months.

Issues impacting on the YP and their family/carer situation	improved	Stayed the same	worsened
Relations with family/carers			
Risk of CSE	67%	22%	11%
Regularly reported as missing from home	83%	17%	0%
Impact on YP's of parents misusing substances	40%	60%	0%
Impact on YP's of parents misusing alcohol	16%	67%	17%
YP's substance misuse	57%	43%	0%
YP's alcohol misuse	29%	71%	0%
Impact of Parental Mental Health	53%	33%	14%
YP's mental/Emotional health	50%	50%	0%
Impact of Domestic Abuse	40%	40%	20%
Anti-social Behaviour	60%	40%	0%
Offending Behaviour	50%	50%	0%
SEND/NEET/excluded from education	60%	40%	0%

Please note not all young persons experienced all issues. The table above shows a percentage of the cohort e.g. who were at risk of CSE, not all young people accessing the service.

Performance – Family Group Conferencing

FGC - Performance Activity	Target Q1 – Q3	Achieved
Referrals received	120	208
FGC's completed	90	115

- 22 The table above shows a significant difference in the number of referrals received and FGC's completed. This is due to the number of families who withdraw consent.
- 23 The table below shows the outcomes following a family group conference, where families come up with a plan which is then agreed by the social worker at the time of the conference.

FGC - Outcomes for children	Number of Children
Ceased to be Looked After – returned to extended families care	3
Ceased to be Looked After – returned to parent's care	2
Contact Plan devised	32
No agreement could be reached between family members – no plan created	12
Remain with extended family with support from family members	23
Remained in independent living with support from family	1
Remained Looked After in Local Authority Care	8
Remained with parents with support from extended family	102
Unborn baby - assessments ongoing	1
To remain with extended family	4
Grand Total	188

Feedback and learning through case studies

- 24 Staff members have embraced an approach of feedback not criticism to develop a culture of learning, to inform future developments and improve practice. Feedback received from young people and families is included in the quarterly operational reports presented the Steering group;

“I feel like (SSS worker) is the only person that has listened and helped me through bad times. I wanted to stay with my Granny (SSS worker helped me do this”

Feedback from Grandmother:

“I am pleased that support is just a phone call away”

“We would just like to say a huge thank you to all the support we have received, more specifically the support regarding your service and more specifically your staff member XXXX We would like to convey our extreme gratitude for all the help and support that XXXX has provided over the last couple of months. Without her help and support myself and my husband would not have been able to cope. She is a lovely woman who has tried her hardest to help us to overcome everything we have faced since taking in A (young person)”

“From years of services the only two ladies that have supported us is xxxx, in my darkest of hours, I was at the worst place cracking up’, they have been there for us, very supportive understanding, if it was not for xxxx Josh would not be living with us as a family”

Cost Avoidance

- 25 The average cost of a foster placement is £399.42 per week (excluding overheads e.g. a share of fostering and management costs. As an example of cost avoidance, the minimum cost to Durham Children’s services for a 12 week period for **1 x YP would be £4,793.04.**

Future Development

- 26 **Early Help FGC Pilot** – 2 x One Point Practitioners have been trained in facilitating FGC with a view to offering a conference at an earlier point in a child’s journey (pre escalation meeting with Families First).
- 27 **Pre-Birth FGC Pilot** – As part of the development of the new Pre-birth pilot, every family involved with the service will be offered a FGC. The pilot will run for a 6 month period and evaluated by the Steering group.

- 28 **Police enabled Network** – DCC IT and Police IT and Security departments have been working together to allow Police IT equipment to be installed in the Nest. This will allow our ERASE colleagues/Missing Children Co-ordinators to be able to work alongside SSS staff members and have access to live information, making the Children of concern meetings more dynamic.
- 29 **Staff Foster Carers** – learning gained over the last 6 months has taught us that Foster Carers need to feel more part of the SSS service. Therefore the carer’s activity and support will now be managed by the SSS Team Manager, however Fostering supervision and training will remain the responsibility of the Fostering Service.
- 30 **Young People's Profiling** – work has begun to analyse the data and experiences of our young people to help understand what we need to do differently or earlier to support young people and their parent and carers to reduce the number of children on the edge of care or becoming looked after. A summary profile is attached to this report - Appendix 2 - which shows emerging themes of young people on the edge of care e.g. high number of young people were placed with family members at an earlier age, number of young people with substance misuse issues, additional needs which will be impacting on their behaviour resulting in conflict within their home.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not Applicable

Finance

Not Applicable

Consultation

Not Applicable

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not Applicable

Human Rights

Not Applicable

Crime and Disorder

Not Applicable

Staffing

Not Applicable

Accommodation

Not Applicable

Risk

Not Applicable

Procurement

Not Applicable

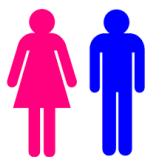
Appendix 2: Young People's Profiling

Supporting Solutions Young People Profile

The Supporting Solutions Team was launched in February 2018 and have worked with **107 young people** on the edge of care (Apr-Dec)

100 young people have been supported to remain in their current family/carer home

56%



Aged between 15 - 16

26% - Female 74% - Male

31%



Placed with family or carers by Children's Services at an earlier age.

38%



Not attending Education Or training

41%



Problematic substance Misuse issues

35%



Missing From Home Episodes training

21%



Med or High risk of Sexual Exploitation training

35%



Have a diagnosed additional need

15%



Parents have mental health issues

100% of young people have lived experience of
TRAUMA, ATTACHMENT ISSUES, PARENTAL REJECTION