

**Directory of Early
Intervention Practiced Within the
Western Trust Area**



Introduction

This practice directory was compiled by the Western Locality Planning Groups and the Western Trust to provide information and inspiration for any practitioner engaging with families. We have been encouraged to discover the range of early intervention that is in use in the West to address the needs and challenges that families present. This directory is by no way complete and only highlights a sample of what is in use, this directory it is hoped, will be regularly reviewed & expanded.

Early intervention has become the hot topic, attracting wide spread international, national & regional interest. Research both at home & from abroad has shown that models of early intervention are effective when they are appropriate, applied well and following timely identification of the difficulty. The earlier in the life of the difficulty that intervention takes place, the better to secure maximum impact and greatest long term sustainability.

This publication demonstrates what can be done by describing what is already happening in particular areas of the West. The challenge now is to draw all the elements together into a strategic approach that will extend the outcomes of families. To assist with this, the models illustrated have been placed under the relevant high level outcome from the Strategy for Children & Young People: Our Children & Young People Our Pledge (2006) which underpin all our work and is our common purpose.

We all recognise there are no quick fixes for the work that needs to be undertaken, just long term programmes of hard work which eventually will lead to a new and better level of health & well being for children, young people & families.

We would like to take this opportunity and thank all the organisations that contributed to this directory and stress that this is only a sample that put together creates optimism for the future of families.

For further information about the organisations or agencies offering these models please go to www.familysupportni.gov.uk

Summer 2012

High Level Outcome: Being Healthy

Family Nurse Partnership Programme

Solihull Approach

Infant Massage

3 2 1 Programme

Class Smiles Programme

Health Promoting Homes

The Toy Box Travellers Project

Sure Start

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

Hanen Programme

Roots of Empathy

Incredible Years Programme

Families and Schools Together (F.A.S.T)

Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP)

The Nurturing Programme

The Elklan Programme

Early Intervention Family Support Service

The Sure Start Development Programme for 2-3 Year Olds

HighScopeProgramme

Spirals

Home Start Model of Early Intervention

Early Intervention Family Support Hub

Parents Plus Programmes

High Level Outcome: Living In Safety & Stability

P.A.I.N.T Project (Parents and Infants Nurturing Together)

Family Group Conferencing

Helping Hands Programme

Strengthening Families Programme

High Level Outcome: Experiencing Economic & Environmental Wellbeing

Barclays / Action for Children Money Skills

High Level Outcome: Living In a Society Which Respects Their Rights

Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme

High Level Outcome: Being Healthy

Accredited Programme

Family Nurse Partnership Programme

The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is a voluntary programme developed over 30 years in the United States. FNP is being tested across the UK and now on one test site in Northern Ireland (The Western Trust has been chosen as the test site for the Programme.) This programme is supported by the Department of Health & Social Services and Public Safety and the Public Health Agency.

The Aim of the Family Nurse Partnership Programme

The aim is to improve the health and well-being of our most disadvantaged families & children & prevent social exclusion. The FNP is a licensed programme with structured inputs and well tested theories and methodologies. FNP is a nurse-led intensive home visiting preventative programme offered to young mothers having their first baby, beginning in early pregnancy through to the baby's second birthday.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

The programme has six domains:

- Personal Health
- Environmental Health
- Life Course Development
- Maternal Role
- Family and Friends
- Health and Human Services

The Family Nurse Partnership Team

The FNP team is made up of staff appointed by the Western Trust and PHA:

FNP Supervisor (1 wte)

FNP Team Member (4wte)

FNP Administrator (1wte)

Posts will be offered as secondment opportunities to March 2013.

Family Nurse Partnership Learning Programme

FNP is a new way of working for all members of the team. A comprehensive learning programme will be provided for all team members. Much of the training is residential and provided in England including for example a 5-day residential training course which introduces the team to FNP methods and materials, a second 5-day residential training course including learning about parenting module that is embedded within FNP, (Parents in Parenting Education) and a range of other workshops and master classes.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

100 teenage mothers in the North/ West are benefitting from FNP in 2011/2012.

Further Details From: [**www.publichealth.hscni.net**](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net)

Solihull Approach

The Solihull Approach was developed in primary care settings through multi professional collaboration and has arisen from professional's experience of working with children and their families. The Solihull Approach is a highly practical way of working with families within a robust theoretical structure. None of the content is new or revolutionary. What is new are the range of content that has been assembled and the synthesis of a thoughtful psychodynamic approach with practical child development and behavioural approaches.

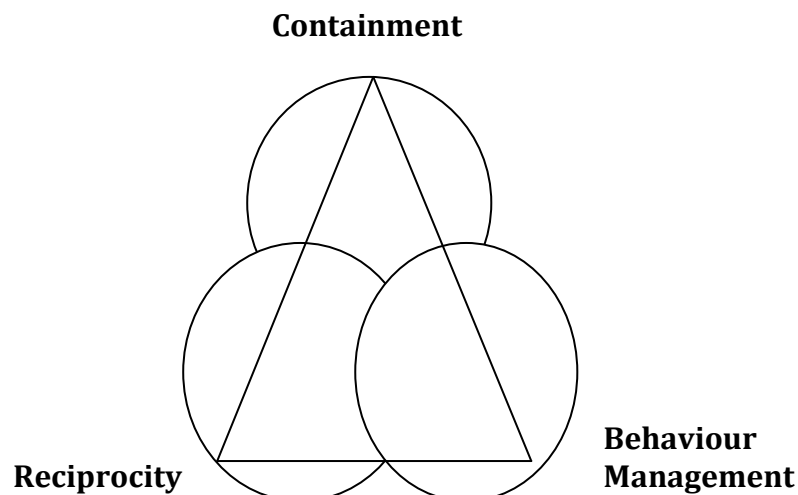
The Aim of the Solihull Approach

The Solihull Approach aims to help practitioner's address emotional problems in a different way, giving them greater confidence in their own skills and practice. The Solihull Approach has a major contribution to make to the ways in which practitioners in health, education, voluntary and social care can work with families to ensure that children have a good emotional start in life. Teamwork and collaborative working between different professionals using the principles of the Solihull Approach can help support parents in a consistent and creative way.

This is an integrated psychodynamic and behavioural approach for professionals working with children and families who are affected by behavioural and emotional difficulties.

The theoretical model has been developed from three concepts (see Figure 1.1). These form the cornerstones of the Solihull Approach:

- Containment.
- Reciprocity.
- Behaviour Management.



These concepts can be useful to practitioners in three ways:

- To help parents process any emotions and anxieties that are overwhelming, which in turn both restores the parents' ability to think and enables them to help the baby or child cope with his emotions and anxieties.
- To help practitioners and parents see how the parents and child interact – this can then provide the basis for feedback in order to facilitate the relationship.
- To help parents work with their child's behaviour.

What Does The Intervention Offer?

The Solihull Approach may lead to a different emphasis in the way practitioners work, especially if they have been trained as a nurse or other professional where you are expected to know the answers and give advice. Practitioners using the Solihull Approach learn to listen attentively and in doing so help the family to build up their own 'story'. Usually practitioners find they do not make any suggestions for a while and sometimes not at all, because by understanding the 'story' into which the current problem fits, the parent is often enabled to find their own solution. The Solihull Approach has a number of specific resource packs that support the delivery of the programme:

- Solihull Resource Pack: The First Five Years.
- Solihull Resource Pack: The School Years.
- Solihull Resource Pack: For Workers Involved With Fostering and Adoption.
- Early Years Foundation Stage: Solihull Approach Trainers Pack.

Who Is Benefitting from This Intervention?

This Approach uses behavioural techniques customised by the parent, which are usually decided upon at the end of a process of listening. Many practitioners feel under pressure to come up with an 'answer' or a technique very early on in their meeting with a parent. The Solihull Approach explains the theory behind the approach so that you can change the emphasis of your work.

'I used to look at the interaction between mothers and babies and wonder what was going on. Then I learned about containment and reciprocity and it changed the way I look at things'

Health Visitor

Many professionals who have already used the Approach feel that their work is more effective because they are making more-in-depth, holistic assessments and this in itself becomes part of the intervention. The research on the Solihull Approach shows that this can be a very effective way of working and can increase the job satisfaction and confidence of the practitioner.

Who Is Delivering The Solihull Approach?

A number of staff have commenced training in the Solihull Approach; they are from a range of disciplines including the Social Services Training Team, Family Centres, Health Visitors, Family Intervention Services and CAMHS. The staff will undertake further training (May 2012) & in the future they will facilitate the delivery of this programme to other Trust Teams and potentially services closely connected to the Trust who provide services to families.

All Health Visitors will be trained in the Solihull Approach starting with a cohort of twenty four.

Further Details From: www.westernhealth.hscni.net

www.childcare-west.org

Infant Massage

Health Visitors and Sure Start practitioners in the West have been trained in infant massage, a very powerful and research based bonding and attachment tool. Bonding has been defined as a "unique relationship between two people that is specific and endures through time".

The Aim of Infant Massage

Touch is a very powerful element in human bonding, as are communication, both verbal and non-verbal, and prolonged eye contact. Infant massage encompasses and supports all these vital aspects of bonding. Delayed bonding may occur due to situations such as premature birth, recovery from caesarean, medical complications, adoption, lack of physical and emotional support and post natal depression. In these cases Infant Massage can begin to recreate the elements of bonding.

Fathers can especially benefit from infant massage. It gives them time to connect and interact with their child on a deeper level than day to day contact provides.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

Infant Massage is beneficial to children with special needs and older children and facilitates deeper understanding, integration and connection with their parents and caregivers

Benefits to the Baby

- * Helping your baby to feel more loved, valued and respected
- * Helping your baby to feel securely attached - important for their long term emotional health
- * Increased levels of relaxation and longer sleep
- * Reduced crying and emotional distress
- * Stimulation of baby's circulation, digestion, nervous and lymphatic systems
- * Development of body awareness and coordination
- * Helping with language development, memory and concentration
- * Increased recognition of facial & emotional expressions which supports development of social skills
- * Relief from wind, colic, constipation and teething discomfort

Benefits to the Parent/Carer

- * Feeling closer to your baby
- * Gaining a deeper understanding of your baby's behaviour, crying and body language
- * Feeling the relaxing effects of giving your baby a massage

- * Providing an enjoyable opportunity for you to spend one-to-one time with your baby
- * Reducing post-natal depression
- * Increased confidence in your ability to care for and nurture your baby
- * Learning a life-long parenting skill

What Does Research Say?

Studies from around the world have shown that massage can assist in reducing abuse, aggression and violence. It has also shown that infant massage reduces post-natal depression and can improve mother/baby relationships.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

Infant massage is particularly important during times of stress. Health Visitors around the West work with their clients on an individual basis and also in groups in order to meet the needs of their clients. Often this intervention is offered within one of the nine Sure Starts.

Fathers are always welcome in infant massage classes and some instructors even hold a special Father's class during their course.

Further Details From: www.westernhealth.hscni.net
www.childcare-west.org

3 2 1 Programme

This is a Dental Health Programme run in pre-school settings to improve the oral health of children within the Western Trust.

The Aim of the 3 2 1 Programme

The programme aims to support childcare providers to promote good dental health practices in the childcare setting. This includes daily tooth brushing within the facility, the promotion of healthy eating, especially health snacks and encouraging children to get registered with a dentist.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

An Oral Health Educator visits the facility and provides tooth brushes and tooth paste for all the children three times per year. Advice is given to the childcare providers on healthy eating and where possible a visit to a dental surgery is offered to the children.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

This programme benefits all children within pre-school facilities within the Western Trust.

Further Details From: www.westerntrust.hscni.net

High Level Outcome: Being Healthy

Class Smiles Programme

This is a Dental Health Programme run in Primary 1 and Primary 2 classes in the 20% most deprived Primary Schools in the Western Trust in an effort to improve the oral health of children within these areas.

The Aim of the Class Smiles Programme

The programme aims to support children, teachers and class room assistants to promote good dental healthcare for children through day to day practice in the school setting. This programme centres on twice daily tooth brushing with a fluoride tooth paste. Teachers are encouraged to promote brushing within the school setting along with healthy snacks/lunches

What Does the Intervention Offer?

An Oral Health Educator visits the facility and provides tooth brushes and tooth paste for all the children three times per year. Advice is given to the children on how to brush properly, healthy eating is reinforced and the need for regular visits to the dentist.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

This programme benefits Primary One/Two children within the 20% most deprived areas in the Western Trust.

Further Details From: www.westerntrust.hscni.net

High Level Outcome: Being Healthy

The Health Promoting Homes Programme

The Health Promoting Homes Programme is a partnership between a number of local agencies which aims to take a preventative and awareness raising approach to tackling obesity in some of the most disadvantaged homes in communities in the Western Board area.

Partners in the Health Promoting Homes Programme include:

- Western Investing for Health Partnership
- The Public Health Agency
- Strabane/ Barnardos Sure Start
- LAST Surestart Omagh
- Oak Healthy Living Centre
- Bogside Brandywell Health Forum
- Dry Arch Centre

Five partners are responsible for the delivery of this Health Promoting Homes Pilot Project under the guidance and direction of the Health Promoting Homes Steering Group.

The Aim of the Health Promoting Homes Programme

The Programme focuses on delivering informal and participative learning techniques within local communities. This is essentially a free 18 week programme for local women which takes a preventative approach to tackling weight gain and obesity in the home setting.

The programme is designed to target the most disadvantaged sections of the community and to utilise a community development approach that creates access to those sections of communities that are hard to reach but potentially most at risk and least equipped to do anything without external support and assistance.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

The course typically consists of three modules, each lasting 6 weeks:

1. Personal development, self-esteem and assertiveness building
 2. Diet and nutrition including 'Cook It', a practical cookery course
 3. Physical fitness - typically involves various exercise classes / activities
- In addition to the above, programmes typically incorporate sessions in First Aid / Accident Prevention, Dental Hygiene/ Oral Health and Breastfeeding awareness as well as health checks by relevant practitioners, at the beginning and at the end of the process.

Health Promoting Homes Objectives

- »To develop integrated and co-ordinated programmes targeting risk factors for obesity
- »To equip participants to identify contributory risk factors to obesity
- »To provide practical implementations of good practice across a range of different lifestyle practices
- »To offer incentives to maintain involvement to the end of each module.

Anticipated Long Term Outcomes

- »Decrease in dental caries
- »Decrease in obesity rates
- »Increase in breastfeeding maintenance rates.
- »Increase in physical activity levels
- »Improvement in awareness of healthy eating habits
- »Enhance lifestyle skills
- »Encourage a more positive attitude to breastfeeding
- »Increase in dental registrations
- »Decrease in home accidents.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

125 people will participate in the 'Health Promoting Homes' Initiatives each year within the areas that the partners provide services.

Further Details From: www.publichealth.hscni.net

High Level Outcome: Being Healthy



The Toybox Traveller Project

In partnership with children and parents, The Toybox Project provides a rights-based outreach service for Traveller children aged 0-4 aimed at tackling inequalities in Traveller education.

The project is core funded by the Department of Education and is delivered by ten staff to nine areas across Northern Ireland. This includes our peer support worker who brings great insight of the Travelling Community to the team. During 2011-12 the team engaged with 193 families and 266 children, and delivered 4600 play sessions

The Aim of the Toybox Traveller Project

Toybox uses a rights-based service development model to significantly reduce the social and education inequalities experienced by young Traveller children through an outreach play-based early intervention service provided in partnership with children and parents. Its aims are to:

- Enhance the social, emotional, physical, language and cognitive development of Traveller children from birth – 4 years.
- Maximize the participation of Traveller children in “The Programme for Two Year Olds” and in at least one year’s pre-school/nursery provision, and to close the gap in enrolment levels between Traveller and settled children.
- Encourage Traveller families to engage in local community groups including “Parent and Toddler” Groups and “Sure Start Programmes”.
- Strengthen the capacity of Traveller parents to support their children’s well-being and eagerness to learn.

- Empower Traveller parents to become involved in the education process for their children and themselves.
- Support communities in developing inclusive environments.
- Strengthen effective partnerships working between parents, Traveller support groups, NGOs and the health education professionals with the aim of supporting the social and educational development of young Traveller children, at home and in school.
- Work progressively to ensure that Traveller culture, values and perspectives are reflected in the development and practice of the project.
- Contribute effectively to the development of the wider policy and practice which challenges discrimination and inequalities experienced by young Traveller children.

What Does The Intervention Offer?

Toybox offers a broad range of HighScope initiated play activities. Through HighScope approach children gain an understanding of the world through interaction with people, materials and ideas. Learning is measured through children's actions and behaviours rather than their age. From birth children are supported to be active learners through weekly home visits by a project worker trained in the HighScope approach.

What Does Research Say?

HighScope is an evidence based intervention where children develop abilities to problem solve, initiate their own tasks, and demonstrate self-confidence and a positive self-image. The children also develop good attitudes and relationships with others. The HighScope Perry Pre-School Study of Children Aged Four (2005) examined the lives of 123 African-Americans who were born into poverty and were deemed at high risk of failing within education and found that the HighScope approach had reduced inequalities. Those individuals who received the HighScope learning approach at age 3-4 years had achieved higher earnings, better education and committed less crime than those individuals who did not.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

The Toybox Traveller Project recognises HighScope as a quality learning program for young children, as it delivers positive outcomes to all children.

This intervention can be transferred into the home of Traveller families by project workers who are able to create a rich learning environment which the family can build upon.

Further Details From: www.early-years.org

SureStart

Sure Start has been one early intervention model which the Government has introduced to support parents in making confident, well-informed choices for their families.

The Sure Start programme was rolled out in Northern Ireland in 1999/2000 and there are currently 34 Sure Start projects across the region providing a variety of child health, early learning and family support services and programmes.

The Aim of the Sure Start Programme

The programme aims to work for and with parents and their children aged 0-4 years old to: -

- Improve social and emotional development
- Improve health and well being
- Improve the ability to learn
- Strengthen families and communities

What Does The Intervention Offer?

It is widely recognised that working in isolation with children, while beneficial for the child and family, may have no long-term benefits. Holistic care and education means working with the family, parents and children to give a better start in life. Holistic care means all services working together to provide a seamless approach where parents and their children can easily access services that are offered locally and are signposted onto more specialist services as needed.

Each of the Sure Start projects involve a multi-agency partnership of health, social services, education, voluntary and community groups working closely together in the development of services for families with young children. Each Sure Start provides:

- Outreach and home visiting services
- Support to families including befriending, social support and parenting information
- Services to support and promote good quality play, learning and childcare experiences for children
- Health care and advice about child health and development and parental health.

While each project has the same aims and provides similar services each has to respond to the needs of their own locality. Therefore, there may be some

differences in the services offered by each Sure Start as these are needs-led within each area.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

- Parents are empowered to meet their own needs and the needs of their family
- That the provision and quality of play opportunities are promoted
- Better effective communication between all services and providers that impact on families with which and for which Sure Start works
- Early identification and intervention for parents and children who may be having difficulties
- Reduce isolation
- Children ready to learn in schools.

Universal Service

Sure Start services are universal and therefore, parents can self-refer or, as also happens, a local Health Professional such as a Midwife or Health Visitor may be the first point of contact for some families. Most Sure Start projects offer similar family support programmes, which can be categorised as:

- Support for Expecting Parents
- Early Learning and Development Programmes
- Parental Support – Making the transition to Pre-School & Nursery

The flow chart which follows gives an indication of how Sure Start operates a multi-agency approach towards supporting parents in meeting their child's needs during the very early stages of their lives.

New Initiatives

Only in the last two years, the Sure Start Projects have undertaken to implement a bespoke programme for supporting the Early Learning and Development of Pre-Pre-School Children (i.e. the Sure Start Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds).

Additionally, the Sure Start Projects look at how they can best support parents interested in returning to Training and / or Employment. Further developments in this area will be influenced by the new Northern Ireland Childcare Strategy currently under development.

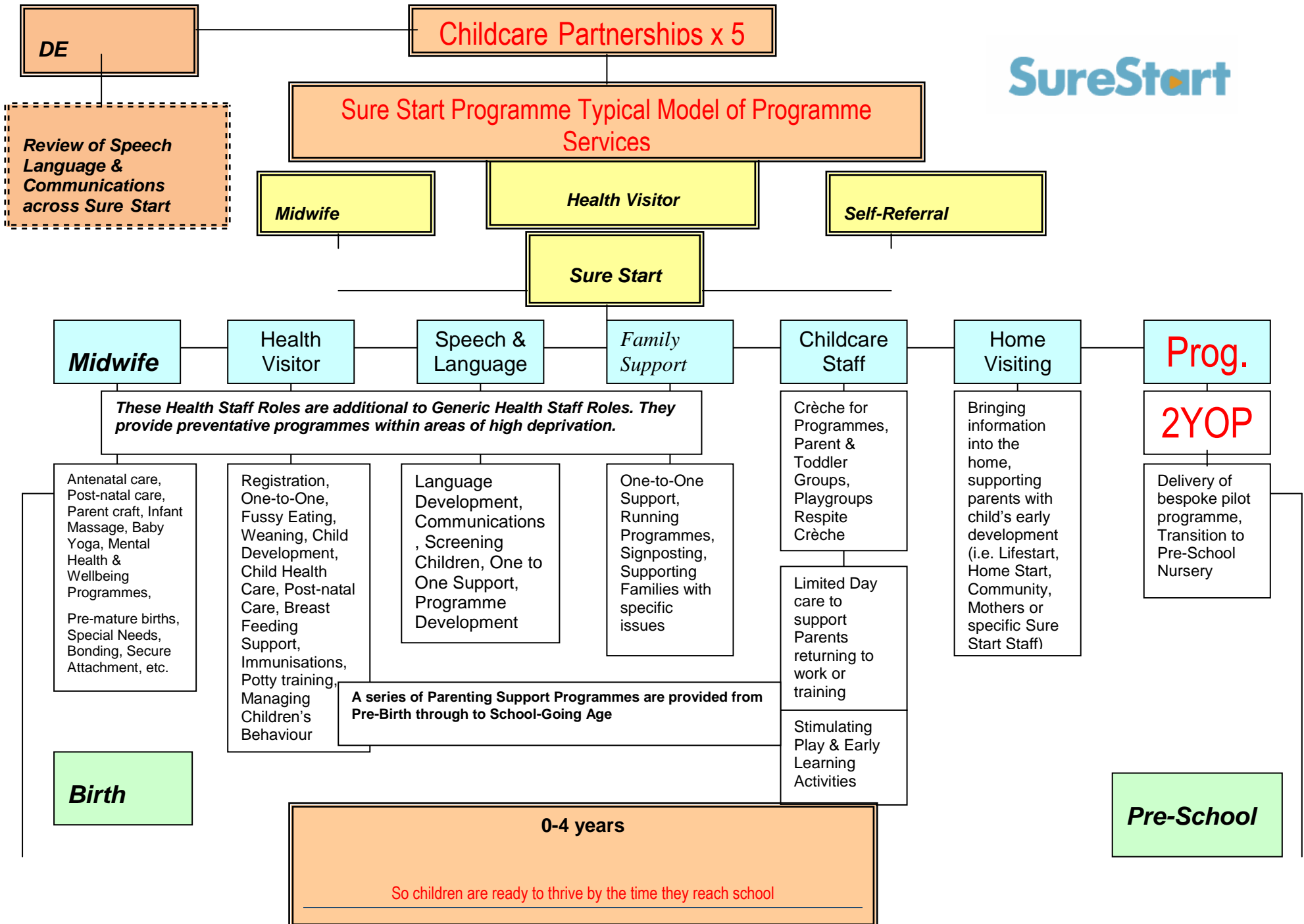
Breast feeding Support

The Sure Start programme supports the Regional Breastfeeding Strategy and will signpost mums to Breastfeeding Peer Support Workers and Breastfeeding Groups within their areas.

Geographical Locations

Sure Start programmes have geographical boundaries which they must observe as they attempt to impact positively on areas of high deprivation.

Further Details From: www.childcare-west.org



High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

Accredited Programme

Hanen Programme

The Hanen Centre's family-focused programs for parents are led by Hanen Certified speech-language pathologists (SLPs) who have received special training at a Hanen Workshop. The model was developed in Canada and is widely used there.

The Aim of the Hanen Programme

Through the use of activities and group discussions, small groups of parents learn to create and take advantage of everyday opportunities to improve their child's communication skills. All Hanen Programmes use a combination of group training sessions (where only parents and the SLP are present) and individual consultations with the SLP (in which the child is present). This provides a comprehensive and personalized learning experience for each family participating in the programme.

What Does The Intervention Offer?

For parents whose child is experiencing a communication difficulty, Hanen's specialized programmes can provide them with the tools they need for helping their child reach his or her fullest communication potential. Hanen has developed programmes for parents in three areas: Language Delays, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Asperger Syndrome.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

The HANEN Programme is provided within all 9 Sure Starts within the Western Trust, also it is offered to families who are engaging with the Speech Therapy Teams & can be offered alongside the Elkin Programme.

Further Details From:

dorothy.mccaffrey@westerntrust.hscni.net (Southern Sector)

joanne.feeney@westerntrust.hscni.net (Northern Sector)

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

Currently Being Evaluated in NI



The programme was founded in Canada in 1996 by Educator Mary Gordon. Roots of Empathy is an evidence based, classroom programme that has shown significant effect in reducing levels of aggression among school children while raising social / emotional competence and increasing empathy.

The Aim of Roots of Empathy

- To foster the development of empathy
- To develop emotional literacy
- To reduce levels of bullying aggression and violence & promote children's pro-social behaviours
- To increase knowledge of human development, learning & infant safety
- To prepare students for responsible citizenship & responsive parenting

What Does the Intervention Offer?

At the heart of the programme are a neighbourhood infant and parent who visit the classroom nine times during the school year. A certified Roots of Empathy Instructor guides the students in observing the relationship between baby & parent, following the baby's development and celebrating milestones. This experiential learning is reinforced through Instructor Visits the week before and the week after each Family Visit, with 27 class visits allowing for both preparation and prediction, as well as critical thinking, problem solving and discussion. The specialised curriculum covers nine themes and supports children as they learn to understand the baby's perspective, label the babies feelings & extend that learning to reflect on their own feelings & others.

Research Findings from the Roots of Empathy

Children in the Roots of Empathy programme exhibit:

- A decrease in aggression
- An increase in pro-social behaviour
- An increase in social & emotional understanding
- An increase in knowledge of parenting
- The perception of a caring classroom environment

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

Thirty Five schools across Northern Ireland will benefit from this programme in 2011/2012 with six schools benefited in Omagh & Fermanagh.



Pictured at the launch of the Roots of Empathy programme are Anne Donaghey, Business Manager – Women & Children’s Directorate; Kieran Downey – Assistant Director for Children’s Mental Health & Disability; Sonia Montgomery – Health Promotion Department and Deborah Hunter, Project Lead for the Roots of Empathy Programme within the Western Trust

Further Details From: www.westernhealth.hscni.net

Incredible Years Programme

The Incredible Years Programme was developed by Carolyn Webster – Stratton & is aimed at children three to twelve years and is founded on social learning theory. It consists of at least twelve weekly two hour group sessions delivered by skilled practitioners.

The Aim of Incredible Years Programme

- Promote positive parents
- Improve parent – child relationships
- Reduce critical & physical discipline & increase use of positive strategies
- Help parents identify social learning theory principles for managing behaviour
- Improve home / school relationships



What Does this Intervention Offer?

The Programme uses a collaborative approach encouraging parents to learn from each other. Methods used include role playing, modelling, group discussion, homework & reviewing DVD's of family behaviour. Practical support is an

important element of each group to promote attendance parents are offered transport, snacks & crèche places.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

While the Incredible Years Programme has primarily been used with parents of children who display varying degrees of social, emotional & behaviour problems increasingly it is being applied for families with ADHD, reading difficulties, language delay & divorcing parents.

The Incredible Years Programme (Basic Parent Programme & Baby Programme) is being delivered by all nine Sure Starts in the West.

Further Details From: www.childcare-west.org

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

Families and Schools Together (F.A.S.T)

F.A.S.T. stands for Families and Schools Together. It is an internationally celebrated programme that prides itself in building relationships within families and between families and their local school and community. It is an exemplary evidence-based programme and has built a robust evidence base of over 20 years of practical experience. Based on the socio-ecological theory of child development, FAST uses a participatory and experiential curriculum to build relationships. The programme incorporates 8 weekly facilitated multi-family sessions of coaching and hands-on learning for parents in a school or community setting.

Save the Children has received funding from Lloyds Banking Group to deliver this programme across Northern Ireland.

The Aim of the FAST Programme?

1. **Improved outcomes** for children, including increased attainment at school and strengthens child development.
2. **Enhanced parental skills** through building confidence, communicating effectively with your child and making links with other parents.
3. **Stronger home-school relationships** through increased interaction with school staff on a more informal level.
4. **Community Participation** through working with existing community partners, letting you know what services, courses and resources are available in your area.
5. **Enhanced social capital** through building links with other parents and local community partners
6. **Sustainability and local skills growth** via training of local parents to deliver outreach and to facilitate FAST's methodology of multi-family sessions and increased community voice, knowledge, collaboration and leadership
7. **Quality evidenced based parental engagement** that is respectful and aims to make positive changes for families

What Does This Intervention Offer?

FAST programmes work because they add value to schools. Enriched Curriculum, PDMU, Extended Schools and improvements in attendance and attainment levels are mutually beneficial for both families and schools and FAST can help to deliver on some of these at no financial cost to the school or family.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

FAST is run in a primary school or community setting and is aimed at families with a child aged 3-5 (may be increased to 8 depending on school population). The whole family are invited to attend one afternoon a week for 8 weeks and there are lots of activities and games for the whole family. Some of the activities include:

- Arts and crafts
- Families will sit down each week to share a meal
- Every week, at least one family will win a hamper of prizes
- 1-1 time with your children
- Parent's Time—a chance for a quiet cuppa and a chat

Joint partnerships have been developed across the West to deliver this programme including St Mary's Primary School, Newtownbutler, County Fermanagh and Cherish Sure Start.

Some comments from previous F.A.S.T participants:

"I've noticed a big difference in her. I could hardly get her to sit still half the time. Now, she listens more when I talk and I listen more to her too."

"I knew parents in my neighbourhood but because of FAST we are talking more and having conversations not just a quick hello in passing."



(Image from St Bernadette's Primary School FAST Graduation, June 2010)

Further Details From: Annette McCann 0792 0296688

Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP)

Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP) support parents and carers as their children's first and most important educators.

The Aim of the PEEP Project

The PEEP Project aims to develop and support both universal and targeted services to parents/carers and their children aged from pre- birth to five years. It aims to increase the educational achievements (particularly literacy skills) of disadvantaged children.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

The trained PEEP practitioner's role is to provide ideas and activities which support children's learning in everyday situations. These include:

- songs and rhymes
- stories
- adult talk time
- play/craft activities and;
- opportunities to borrow books and play packs

PEEP strives to form partnerships with parents & carers by recognising and supporting their contribution to their children's learning. Individual programmes can be offered to families who are unable to access groups. Short term focused group work can also be offered to support those with an identified need e.g. low mood.



Babies Having Fun!

Sure Start Babies & Mums Enjoying a PEEP Play Session

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

All nine Sure Start Projects in the West offer PEEP.

Further Details From: www.childcare-west.org

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

The Nurturing Programme

The Nurturing Programme is a universal programme that:

- increases the well-being of all families
- is an effective vehicle for change in vulnerable ones

Specially trained staff work with families to provide the building blocks for positive, constructive relationships to promote quality parenting.

The Aim of the Programme

The Nurturing Programme provides simple, effective tools to help adults and children:

- understand and manage feelings and behaviour
- improve relationships at home and in school
- improve emotional health and wellbeing
- develop self-confidence and self-esteem; crucial ingredients for effective parenting and learning

Adults are given tips on how to:

- build on pre-existing parenting skills
- use positive behaviour management, communication and relationship strategies
- look after their own emotional needs, so they can parent more effectively



Model of Emotional Health Components

What Does the Intervention Offer?

The Nurturing Programme runs for two hours per week over a period of ten weeks. Groups of between eight and ten parents / carers are led by two trained facilitators. Different topics and approaches to discipline are explored, so compiling a toolkit of strategies. The topics covered include:

- Positive discipline
- Rules, rewards and penalties
- Personal power, self-esteem and choices & consequences
- Coping with feelings
- Nurturing ourselves
- Ages and stages of child development
- Helping children stay safe
- Behaviours to ignore, problem solving and negotiating

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

All nine Sure Starts are offering this programme

Further Details From: www.childcare-west.org

The Elklan Programme

The Elklan Programme will improve the interaction and communication skills of children and young people by training those who live and work with them. Elklan is the leading externally accredited training organisation offering programmes taught through local Speech & Language Therapists working collaboratively with specialist education staff. The courses equip staff and parents to be more effective in supporting children with speech, language and communication need. It was established in 1999 by two experienced, practising speech and language therapists, Liz Elks and Henrietta McLachlan. Over the past 10 years Elklan has trained in excess of 500 SLT's and specialist teachers who work collaboratively to deliver the Elklan training programmes in their locality.

The Aim of the Programme

Elklan works by training Speech and Language Therapists and Specialist Teachers in the local area to deliver any one of the range of courses they have written. Elklan offers accredited courses for those working throughout pre-school, primary and secondary education in mainstream and specialist settings as well as parents and carers.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

Elklan has devised and delivered training packages to help others to promote and support the communication skills of all children especially those with speech, language and communication needs. Elklan courses aim to support early year's practitioners, teachers, teaching assistants, parents and others who work and live with children. The books which accompany each of the courses offer information, advice and activities; this ensures that after the training is completed the participant has a resource to use in their setting which can be shared with others.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

Elklan is provided within all nine Sure Starts within the Western Trust, also it is offered to families who are engaging with the Speech Therapy Teams & can be offered alongside the HANEN Programme.

Further Details From:

dorothy.mccaffrey@westerntrust.hscni.net (Southern Sector)

joanne.feeney@westerntrust.hscni.net (Northern Sector)

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

Early Intervention Family Support Service (Southern Sector – Western Trust)

An early intervention (Hardiker Level 2) support to children & their families through a range of individual & group interventions, based on individually assessed need. The service provides individual work with children, group work, parenting programmes, family support & family work.

The Aim of the Intervention

To reduce childhood vulnerability & build on the strengths of the family through a range of early interventions based on assessed need.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

- Individual work with children
- Esteem building programmes
- Handling Children's Behaviour
- Support to school age young mothers
- Nurturing Programmes
- Group work
- Support to young care leavers in conjunction with the Floating Support Project
- Support for children & young people with disabilities

Every child has an agreed assessment, service plan & set of outcomes agreed following initial referral which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that support remains purposeful & outcome focused. Action for Children's outcomes framework reflects the six high level outcomes set out in "Our Children & Young People – Our Pledge (2006 – 2016).

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

Children, young people & families can access this service either by referral from a social worker, health visitor, education professional or via self referral.

Action for Children runs this intervention in the Southern Sector of the West for families who do not have long term contact with Social Services.

Further Details From: melissa.mclaughlin@actionforchildren.org.uk

The Sure Start Development Programme for 2-3 Year Olds

The Sure Start Development Programme for 2-3 Year Olds is a new programme designed by Early Years and targeted at 2-year old children. It aims to improve young children's eagerness and ability to learn through improving the learning environment in the early years setting, and enhancing the children's physical, social, emotional, linguistic and cognitive development.

The programme has a centre-based element which involves a series of developmental movement and play activities, and a home-based element, which encourages parents to explore play activities with their children. The home-based element requires practitioners to make a series of supplementary visits to the child's home.

An Early Years Specialist is assigned to each setting to provide:

- Initial training in programme implementation for practitioners
- A series of support visits and cluster sessions for practitioners throughout the year
- A series of workshops for parents of children receiving the service.

In addition, practitioners are given a service design manual to guide them through delivery of all aspects of the programme.

The Aim of the Intervention

The Sure Start Development Programme aims to impact on two year old children's eagerness and ability to learn by supporting their physical, social, emotional, language and cognitive development in group settings and in partnership with parents at home.

A particular emphasis is placed on physical movement focusing on what we know about two year old children as "whole bodied learners" and that physical activity provides a more natural context for children of this age to develop their social, cognitive and language skills.

Research Findings

Prior to the implementation of the Programme a base line study was carried out on the characteristics and experiences of two year olds in Northern Ireland. The Programme has been subject to a randomised controlled trial and a qualitative evaluation in 54 settings including Sure Start and full Day Care settings. Results from this study will be available in early 2012

Who Is Benefitting From This Programme?

Day care settings, Sure Starts and parents in the home environment.

Further Details From: www.early-years.org or www.childcare-west.org

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

High Scope Ireland Accreditation Award

High Scope Programme

High Scope is a quality approach to early childhood care and education which has been shaped and developed by research and practice over a 40 year period. It identifies and builds on children's strengths interests and abilities. The High Scope curriculum is used internationally in a variety of settings including day care, crèches, Sure Starts, playgroups, nursery and primary schools.

The Aim of the High Scope Programme

The central belief of the High Scope approach is that children construct their own learning by doing and being actively involved in working with materials, people and ideas.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

High Scope provides practitioners and managers with:

- A recognised and well researched curriculum
- Validated observation tools – Child Observation Record (COR) and Programme Quality Assessment (PQA)
- A flexible open framework for learning which can meet the needs of individual children
- Opportunities for initial and ongoing training and development
- Opportunities to achieve High Scope Ireland Accreditation award
- A comprehensive range of publications, DVDs and resource materials
- A consistent and flexible daily routine which provides for child and adult initiated activities
- Opportunities to choose, plan, carry out and reflect on their activities
- Opportunities for children to engage in the active participatory learning process
- Adults who value and appreciate children and provide a creative and supportive learning climate

What does the Research Say?

Findings from the High Scope Perry Preschool Study found that using the High Scope curriculum had positive effects from the time the child attended the High Scope setting up until they were 40, including better school achievement and literacy, more likely to graduate from High School, better adult earnings, home ownership, lifetime arrest rates, less teenage pregnancy.

- Children develop self confidence, initiative, creativity and problem solving skills
- Children learn about social relationships, the world around them, maths, science and technology, reasoning and language
- Children develop positive attitudes to self, others and to future learning

Who Benefits From This Intervention?

Playgroups, Day Care Settings, Sure Starts, Primary Schools and Parents.

Further Details From: www.early-years.org or www.childcare-west.org

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

Evaluated Programme



Lifestart Spirals Programme for Young Parents

The Lifestart Spirals Programme is an innovative, strengths-based, group parenting programme designed around the specific needs and lifestyle context of young parents. Spirals sessions are delivered by Lifestart personnel and/or family support workers who have been trained by Lifestart. This enables partnerships with other relevant organisations, for example, the Teen Parent Support Programme (TPSP), Family Resource Centres and HSE Health Promotion, and facilitates a collaborative approach to supporting young parents within a community

The Aim of the Intervention

The aim of the programme is to empower and support younger parents by providing them with key information, skills and confidence that will help them to nurture their children as they grow and learn.

The delivery methodology consists of group sessions incorporating quizzes, circle time, music and You Tube clips. Practical demonstrations and interactive, 'hands-on' play sessions are used to reinforce learning in relation to key developmental concepts.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

Participation in the Lifestart Spirals Programme helps to raise awareness about a number of key parenting and child developmental issues including:

- Bonding & Attachment
- Feeding & Nutrition
- Parenting styles & managing behaviour
- Children's holistic development
- Keeping children safe from harm
- Importance of play & children's well being

The measurable outcomes from the Spirals Programme include confident and informed young parents who can positively engage with their existing informal networks and be active participants within their communities. There are also improvement in the young parent's self-efficacy measured in a number of domains including relationships, enjoyment, setting boundaries, self-acceptance

and learning. Outcomes also include children who are healthy both physically and mentally and are being supported in active learning by their young parents. It can be delivered in partnership with personnel from a TPSP or other agencies engaging with young parents and encourages the participation of partners. It is designed as a 'strengths based' programme, with an emphasis on empowerment and is non-judgemental. One of the guiding principles for professionals working with teenage parents is to "empower and support parents in their role as educators".

What Does The Research Say?

These impacts are measured using a pre and post programme evaluation tool which has been designed in conjunction with the Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway and University of Hertfordshire.

Many young people are successful in adapting to the role of parenthood and have happy, healthy children. Research has indicated that young parents are aware of negative attitudes and prejudices towards them. This may result in them being less likely to avail of existing services.

Who Benefits From This Intervention?

Spirals is a group parenting programme for parents of children aged from birth to three years of age. The programme provides an introduction to a range of relevant topics, and child development issues for parents and caregivers. Play is a central theme of the programme with interactive sessions on play each week. The delivery method is fun and varied with lots of discussion and practical tips on how to support babies and toddlers as they grow and learn. This programme is ideal for younger parents.

The methodology of delivery is innovative with use of 'YouTube' clips to illustrate key developmental concepts sourced from the *Growing Child*. Group quizzes, group discussions and 'hands on' demonstrations are used throughout the programme. 'power-point style' presentations are avoided. Delivery of the programme can be flexible and designed to meet specific needs. Carrying out a needs assessment with the participants prior to commencement of the programme can identify areas for adjustment, for example, if there are some pregnant participants, group work can be carried out around a table and some of the sessions can be shortened.

Spirals training can be rolled out anywhere in the West.

Further Details From: michelle@lifestartfoundation.org

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

Currently Being Evaluated

Home-Start Model of Early Intervention

The Home Start Model of Early Intervention offers one to one, personalised support for parents with children under five; reaching families at risk of social exclusion, including those who sometimes do not engage with other services.

Home-Start places trained volunteers alongside parents with support tailored to the individual needs of each family and is provided for as long as the family needs it. Volunteers are managed and supervised by their local Home-Start Scheme which is in turn supported by Home-Start UK.

The Aim of the Home-Start Model of Early Intervention

The aim of the model is to reach families in their own home, through partnership working alongside other family support services, with the benefit of local expertise to enhance support for families. The Trustees of Home Start are local people who are selected, trained and guided to support the volunteers who are local parents, selected trained and supervised to provide one to one support to other local parents. The added value of this model is that local and other funding and resources are brought into the community.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

The intervention provides tailored, personalised support to families, in their own home and in groups. It encourages wider social and support networks and opportunities for increased engagement in community life.

The model offers choices for parents and their children and opportunities for their voices to be heard. The volunteers offer consistent adult role models for parents and their children and show the family that other adults do care. The intervention promotes active citizenship, by involving local people in planning and provision. It also ensures consistent, high quality service through monitoring and quality assurance.

Who Is Benefitting From This Programme?

Findings from this intervention have shown that parents develop improved coping strategies and parents become more confident in their role. Parents report that they feel less marginalised and better equipped to make better use of local services, they are less isolated and have wider horizons. Children have fun and opportunities to enjoy new experiences with stronger parent/child relationships in happier safer homes.

Volunteers are encouraged and supported into training and employment, with increased community capacity and positive outcomes achieved by local people for local people.

Further Details From: www.home-start.org.uk

Early Intervention Family Support Hub

What is the Early Intervention Family Support Hubs?

An Early Intervention Family Support Hub is a single point of contact for children families & professionals which coordinates a range of family support services & activities to enhance the quality of life & wellbeing of vulnerable children & families. There are now seven Early Intervention Family Support Hubs established in the West:

- Fermanagh
- Omagh
- Strabane
- Limavady
- Waterside
- Shantallow
- Creggan

The term “*early intervention*” refers to intervention “*early in the life of a child*” in recognition of the critical importance of the early months and years of life, and/ or “*early in the life of a problem*” as certain issues may only become apparent over time, for example, when a child transfers to secondary school. The Family Support Hub recognizes that no single agency, no matter how good, can meet the needs of families with complex needs and that families need agencies to work together with them.

The Family Support Hubs invite a range of providers and agencies which include local community, voluntary and statutory support services, including education, paediatrics, nursing, education, youth justice, early years, council and police youth diversion to agree how best to work together to support families.

The intervention upholds the rights of children and their parents to achieve the outcomes set out by the **OFMDFM** paper, ***Our Children, Our Pledge: A 10 Year Strategy for Children & Young People in NI 2006-2016.***

Many families are unaware of what help is available to them especially in more rural communities. Families often speak of having to tell their stories repeatedly when their needs require the help of more than one agency. Moreover, agencies have been concerned that gaps or duplications could arise if their respective inputs were not effectively coordinated.

In summary, the Family Support Hub is a locally agreed way of effectively accessing and efficiently coordinating local family support services to achieve better outcomes for local families.

The Aim of the Intervention

The Early Intervention Family Support Hubs aim is to ensure that families in need of support can choose the right help from the right services at the right time.

The Hubs aim to achieve positive change in three key outcome areas:

- 1. *The extent to which outcomes for children; young people and families have been improved.***
- 2. *Whether or not partner agencies and disciplines consider that the Hub has improved their ability to work more effectively and efficiently with children and their families.***
- 3. *The added value of the Hub, for example, improving families' access to existing services.***

What Does the Intervention Offer?

The Hub Coordinator offers to meet the family and provides a brief outline of what the Hub can do. The Coordinator completes an initial assessment of what the family wants help with. Whilst the Coordinator might suggest that certain issues might usefully be addressed, the Hub offers families choice in relation to the identification and prioritisation of their needs. The issue of choice is pivotal as parents and young people need to consent to the Hub's involvement, including how information about them is to be used. The only exception to this is where child safety concerns exist.

The Hub Coordinator then agrees to find out what help is available and offers this choice of services to the family. The term "*Team around the Child*" is used to describe the various individuals from selected support services who agree a "*Family Support Plan*" with the family. This may involve support workers meeting the family together; perhaps in the family home, if the family feels this is helpful. The "*Family Support Plan*" is reviewed as required.

Who is Benefitting from This Intervention?

The Family Support Hub Model reflects a whole child perspective that is aware of the inter relationship between child, family and community, it is available to all families, but primarily targeting families whose needs are below the threshold for HSC Trust Gateway/ Family Intervention Team involvement.

For Further Details of the Seven Western Family Support Hubs:

www.familysupportni.gov.uk

High Level Outcome: Enjoying, Learning & Achieving

Parents Plus Programmes

Parents Plus was founded by Dr John Sharry (Social worker/psychotherapist) and Prof Carol Fitzpatrick (Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist) in 1998, with the specific aims of developing educational and therapeutic materials for families and children and providing support and training to professionals working with children and families in the community.

The Parents Plus Programmes have been developed in partnership with parents and children who attended the courses and in consultation with the wider multi-disciplinary professional team at the Mater Child and Adolescent Mental Health service.

The programmes are ideal to use by professionals who are looking for collaborative and cost-effective ways of working with parents either in groups or individually, in clinic or community settings.

What Does This Intervention Offer?

The Parents Plus Programmes are practical and positive evidence-based parenting courses designed to support and empower parents to manage and solve discipline problems, create satisfying and enjoyable family relationships and to help young people grow up and reach their full potential.

Aims of Parents Plus Programmes

Parents Plus has developed into three separate programmes covering the different age ranges:

The Early Years Programme – for parents of children aged one to six years

Main aims:

- Promote children's language and development
- Help children concentrate and learn
- Build co-operation in young children
- Encourage and support children
- Reduce behaviour problems and manage tantrums and misbehaviour
- Help children to grow up to be happy and emotionally secure
- Maximise children's social development

The Children's Programme – for parents of children aged six to eleven years

Main aims:

- Show parents how to communicate positively with children
- Encourage good social behaviour and skills
- Manage difficult behaviours in a positive way
- Solve discipline problems
- Develop close parent/child relationships
- Encourage children's learning
- Help children to be emotionally secure and happy

The Adolescent's Programme – for parents of children aged eleven to sixteen years.

Main aims:

- Help to connect and build good relationships with teenage children
- Teaching teenagers responsibility
- Help manage conflict
- Solving problems together with teenagers
- Be able to negotiate rules and boundaries
- Promoting positive influences in teenage years

Who is Benefitting From This Intervention?

Parents with children from one - sixteen years benefit from Parents Plus Programmes.

The programmes use carefully selected video scenes of parent-child interactions to illustrate well-researched ideas about positive communication and behaviour management (backed up by professional comments and input from parents and children who have successfully applied the ideas at home). Together with group discussion, practice exercises, handouts and home tasks, the video input forms the basis of small group interventions and courses with parents in clinical and community settings.

Who is Delivering This Intervention?

Parents Plus has been delivered in some Action for Children Family Support projects in the Western Area for seven years and evaluations from parents and professionals have been extremely positive.

Parents Plus is currently facilitated within Waterside Family Support Hub and Clooney Family Centre.

The Waterside Family Support Hub has facilitated all three age range programmes over the last year in order to meet the demand from parents to run the programme.

For Further Information:

Rhonda.murphy@actionforchildren.org.uk

High Level Outcome: Living In Safety & Stability

Accredited Programme

P.A.I.N.T Project (Parents and Infants Nurturing Together)

The PAINT Project was developed as a pilot programme with the Divert Project and Sure Start Edenballymore. Paint is a child centred project that will engage parents of children living in a Hidden Harm situation in two accredited Child & Parenting Support Programmes.

The Aim of PAINT

The programme aims to improve the health and well - being outcomes for children 0-4 years living in a Hidden Harm situation. Trained facilitators from Sure Start Edenballmyore & Divert facilitate the training which comprises of two specific programmes which are the Nurturing Programme and the PEEP programme.

The Nurturing Programme fosters good relationships within families, it aims to break unhelpful patterns of intergenerational parenting behaviour by inviting parents and carers to think about how they were parented, the way it affected them and the way it might affect their children. Participants will also be given a toolkit of positive parenting strategies to build on their own parenting skills.

The PEEP Programme aims to:

- Promote parents' and carers' awareness of children's very early learning and development through making the most of everyday activities and interactions.
- To support parents/carers' in their relationships with their children, so that the children's self-esteem will be enhanced.
- To affirm the crucial role of parents/carers as children's first educators.
- To support parents/carers in the development of their children's literacy and numeracy.
- To support parents/carers so that they can encourage the development of positive learning dispositions.
- To promote and support parents' and carers' lifelong learning.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

The Nurturing Programme will run over a period of ten weeks. Parents of children living in a Hidden Harm situation will be invited to participate in the group consisting of no more than 8 parents/carers. The groups will be led by two trained facilitators. Over the 10-week programme, participants will look at lots of different topics and approaches. The topics covered include:

- Positive discipline
- Rules, rewards and penalties

- Personal power, self-esteem and choices & consequences
- Coping with feelings
- Nurturing ourselves
- Ages and stages of child development
- Helping children stay safe
- Behaviours to ignore, problem solving and negotiating

Who Is Benefitting?

This programme is to benefit parents:

- Parents/carers to learn together with their children
- High expectations of what children and adults can achieve together.
- Better understanding that children are rewarding, stimulating and fun, but looking after them can be stressful and challenging.
- Practical advice to help deal with those challenges so you have a calmer, happier family life.
- Help to build understanding why children behave as they do and recognise the feelings behind behaviour (ours and theirs).
- It offers ways of encouraging co-operative behaviour and empowering both parents and children.
- It highlights the importance of looking after ourselves.

Further Details From: divert@dove-house.com

High Level Outcome: Living In Safety & Stability

Family Group Conferencing

A Family Group Conference is a meeting where family members, relatives & friends get together to discuss problems & make a plan to help & support one another in the future. It is a different way of dealing with family difficulties – as families know one another best, it is a way for them to take responsibility for planning for their children.

The Aim of Family Group Conferencing

This intervention can be used at any age but, is encouraged in the early years or the early stage of the difficulty.

A Family Group Conference is a chance for families to meet together to ask questions and be given information and support from professionals. It allows families to take responsibility for making good, safe decisions about their children.



What Does the Intervention Offer?

A Family Group Conference Co-ordinator will meet & talk to members of family, including the children. They will help the family prepare for the meeting & listen to any concerns they have and ensure that the family understands the professionals' concerns. Together they will decide where and when the family meeting will happen and who will be invited. It is hoped that this will include as many people as possible from the family and any close friends that the family see as helpful. The professionals explain their concerns in a straightforward way and what help they can offer. The family have the chance to ask questions and put forward their point of view. Together a plan is designed which everyone must agree to and this plan can be reviewed and changed at a later date. Family members and professionals work together to carry out the plan.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention?

Action for Children's Family Group Conferencing Project runs this intervention throughout the West for families who do not have long term contact with Social Services. Families who are being supported by Social Services can be offered this service by the Trust's Family Group Conference Team.

Further Details From: melissa.mclaughlin@actionforchildren.org.uk

Helping Hands Programme

The Helping Hands Programme is an activity based preventative education programme which overall aim is “to increase children’s understanding of feeling safe and to explore and promote behaviours which will contribute to a safe environment”.

This programme has been designed primarily for use with Key Stage 2 children, although it can also be used and adapted with older Key Stage 1 children.








The Aim of the Helping Hands Programme

The programme is based upon three main core themes:

- *We all have the right to feel safe all the time*
- *There is nothing so awful or so small that we cannot talk about it with someone*
- *Others have the right to feel safe with us*

What Does The Intervention Offer?

The programme explores each theme in detail through various mediums including games, stories and role play, which have been developed to facilitate enjoyment as well as learning. The objectives of the programme are to:

-  Develop children’s levels of self-esteem and confidence
-  Enable children to explore and express different feelings
-  Inform children of their right to feel safe at all times
-  Increases children’s abilities in safety planning
-  Encourage children to seek support when needed
-  Empower children to identify their own personal safety network
-  Identify healthy ways to manage conflict/ anger

Who Benefits From This Intervention?

This programme has been designed primarily for use with Key Stage 2 children, although it can also be used and adapted with older Key Stage 1 children.

Women’s Aid has been successfully running the Helping Hands Programme in schools across Northern Ireland for a number of years. The Department of Education recognises the positive impact and outcomes that result from the

programme delivery. They are supporting the training of thirty teachers in each District Council area to deliver the Helping Hand Programme in schools as part of teacher's becoming Social Guardians. Helping Hands is also delivered on a one-one basis with the children that are availing of support through Women's Aid.

Heading for Healthy Relationships can be used as a preventative education intervention that addresses the context and impact of domestic violence on young people. Young people are able to identify early warning signs of a potentially abusive relationship and the programme delivers a core message that behaviour is a choice.

Further Details From: admin@belfastwomensaid.org.uk

High Level Outcome: Living In Safety & Stability

Evidence Based Intervention

The Strengthening Families Programme

The Strengthening Families Programme is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program for families at risk. Strengthening Families Programme is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly reduce challenging behaviours, delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse in children and young people. It strives to improve social competencies and increase school performance where there are challenges. Child maltreatment also decreases as parents strengthen bonds with their children and learn more effective parenting skills.

The Aim of the Strengthening Families Programme

The Programme offers the family who may have concerns that their child or young person could become involved, or has become involved in risk taking behaviour, the opportunity to meet other families who may be experiencing the same challenges. The parent is offered new skills & ideas on how to talk to their child or young person and how to actively listen, leading to a better relationship being forged with the child or young person. Through discussions and fun and games families solve problems together, learn about rules & consequences and explore ways to show love and support.

What Does The Intervention Offer?

The Strengthening Families Program is a science-based parenting skill, children's life skills, and family life skills training programme specifically designed for families at risk. Parents and children participate in the Strengthening Families Programme, both separately and together for ten – fourteen weeks. The Group Leader Manuals contain a complete lesson for every weekly session. Parents' and children's Handbooks/ Hand outs are also provided for every session they also use DVDs which portray different family situations. Planned activities each week help the parent understand the child or young person better.

Who Benefits From This Intervention?

The Programme welcomes any family that wishes to make a difference in their family life & protect their family from drug & alcohol misuse. The Programme assists the parents or carers to set boundaries and be assertive in their parenting role. The child or young person benefits from learning how not to give in to peer pressure the importance of following rules and to appreciate their family.

Derry Health Cities / CAWT are delivering this programme in the Northern Sector, with Action for Children's Early Intervention Family Support Project starting to deliver the programme soon.

Further Details From: www.cawt.com/alcohol

melissa.mclaughlin@actionforchildren.org.uk

Barclays / Action for Children Money Skills Toolkit

The Barclays/ Action for Children Money Skills Toolkit provides a financial early intervention for young people in the West. The Barclays Money Skills is a free training toolkit developed by Barclays' and Action for Children to be used in one to one sessions or in groups. It is currently being delivered to young people in the south west. The toolkit has been evaluated and positive outcomes have been identified.

The Aim of the Intervention

Personal finance has become increasingly complex in recent years, and vulnerable young people are the ones who can least afford to get it wrong. The aim is to get to young people early, before they have an opportunity to get into difficulty, and show young people they can take control of their bank accounts, manage a household budget and avoid the pitfalls of credit and debt.

The Toolkit aims to improve financial capability; providing basic money management guidance about budgeting, banking and debt for young people and families, helping those on the lowest incomes to make the most of their money.

Barclays Money Skills training toolkit was developed for young people aged sixteen – twenty five to help them learn to manage their money. The programme was created through a six year partnership between Action for Children and Barclays, drawing on Action for Children's experience of delivering services to vulnerable children, young people and families and funded through Barclays Community Investment Programme.

What the Programme Offers

Barclays Money Skills can make a real difference to people's lives, changing behaviour and attitudes and increasing confidence in dealing with money. The toolkit provides hints and tips on how to deliver the training. Regular formal training is offered to participating staff, but staff already confident in facilitation work are able to deliver directly from the toolkit resources.

Who Is Benefitting From This Intervention

The programme is flexible to suit the different needs of the young people and can be delivered within a group or tailored to the young person's learning needs & delivered as 1 to 1 sessions.

Further Details From: mandy.chambers@actionforchildren.org.uk

Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme

The Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) was developed by Early Years – The Organisation for Young Children (formerly NIPPA) and the Peace Initiatives (Pii, USA). It combines a series of cartoon media messages with the Pre-school and Foundation Stage curricula. Together they aim to build a better understanding among children of physical, racial and cultural differences. Bullying behaviours and the inclusion of Traveller children are also addressed with the training.

The Aim of the Intervention

The cartoons are shown on television three times a year (once each school term). The aim of this is to raise awareness across several generations; the cartoons are set in a play park and feature characters young children can easily identify with. The messages in the cartoons are reinforced in the early years settings through the use of resources and interactive activities that prompt children to talk about their feelings and attitudes to the issues explored in the cartoons. Also, they help children to receive information in appropriate ways and within a context where they can ask questions. They encourage the strong, robust, competent child and help children feel valued as people given the lack of control they have over their lives until they are older.

What Does the Intervention Offer?

The training prepares practitioners to deliver the MIFC in their setting which includes informing and involving parents and the wider family circle. During the four days training, participants have the opportunity to explore their own attitudes and experiences to difference. Practitioners examine the curriculum and the resources which accompany the programme. Most importantly practitioners are given follow up training at a later date and that gives them the opportunity to review how the programme is going in their setting.

Research Findings

The development of the initiative was influenced by research “Too Young to Notice?” carried out by Professor Paul Connolly from Queen's University Belfast, which showed that by the age of six a significant proportion of children (1 in 6) in Northern Ireland are making sectarian and racial remarks. A large randomised controlled trial was carried out in 2008 in 74 early years’ settings across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Clear evidence showed that the MIFC achieved positive effects regarding children’s attitudes and awareness in relation to their socio-emotional development; cultural awareness and inclusive

behavior. Such effects were consistent across the whole sample of children and no differences were found between boys and girls; Catholic and Protestant children; children from differing socio-economic backgrounds and children in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The programme was also found to achieve similar effects regardless of the rated quality of the setting and, on the whole, the settings that took part in the intervention were found to have delivered the programme with relatively high degrees of fidelity.



Who Is Benefitting From This Programme?

Early Year's staff from more than 1000 settings, (voluntary, statutory and private), in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have now completed the Introductory Training.

Engaging meaningfully with parents/carers and the development of a community outreach approach is another crucial component of the programme. Home-links exercises have been incorporated into the programme as well as parents/carers workshops.

Further Details From: www.early-years.org

The Western Locality Groups, Western Outcomes Group and Western Trust would like to point out that this directory only provides a basic description of a small range of early intervention models & programmes being rolled out across the West. Information about any of these and other models or programmes can be found at www.familysupportni.gov.uk

We would like to stress that there are also many other effective models & programmes currently making a difference for children, young people & families and over time we hope to capture them in future editions of this directory.

If you would like to appear in future directories please contact:
priscilla.magee@actionforchildren.org.uk or
bronagh.donnely@actionforchildren.org.uk

