

Effective family and parenting support

Helen Dent CBE

Family Action

About Family Action



- Mental health services
- Grant maker for individuals
- Family Support services
 - Children's centres
 - Home based family support
 - Families with multiple needs

The new Government



- Let's face it, we are scared.
- What do the promised cuts in public expenditure mean for us?
- What does decentralising budgets mean for us?

Time to be positive



- Sure Start is a national treasure
- It reaches parts no other services been before
- Might have been labour idea but long overdue investment in early years and families
- AND it works

Coalition: pledged support for:



- Sure Start
- Health visitors
- Ending child poverty
- Cash to schools for poor children
- Families with multiple problems
- Action on safeguarding
- Big Society

So it is good time to:



- Seek control over our destiny
- Opportunity for creative thinking
- Promote success of Sure Start
- Evidence of what works
- Govt will shape Sure Start
- Better value for money
- Big society

My focus



- What works
- Reaching families with multiple problems
- Children's centres
- Big Society

What works

- Universal services
- Easy access to local centres
- Quality -> improved outcomes
- Quality = staff and creativity

So....salami slicing cuts not good idea,
nor is targeting

Family with Multiple Needs



- Centres not reaching this small group
- Different needs, different services
- Parents enduring mental health problems, learning difficulties, substance misuse
- Children at risk – developmentally, educationally, socially, cognitively

Family Action's Home based family support



- Works with families in their own homes
- Focus on children's safety and wellbeing
- Works with family members individually and together
- Work linked to other agencies

Work with families includes:



- Assess parents' difficulties and impact on children
- Focus on parenting – home, food, school attendance
- Reduce children's caring responsibilities
- Help children understand problems

It works



www.family-action.org.uk

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“What I think is best for me is that since we’ve been seeing Maggie, my mum doesn’t shout at me when she sees me coming out of school. Maggie explained it embarrassed me and big boys bullied me about my mum” – *Shane aged 9*

Home based support



- Service needed in own home
- Lasts 6 months to 1 year
- Expensive @ £4,000 per family
- High risk of family breakdown
 - Neglect
 - Parental hospitalisation
- Ready to attend centres at end of programme

Creative Childrens Centres



- Avoid arguing about lead agency
- Danger education or health leading
 - Focus on health and learning
- Bring more agencies within remit of centres – better value for money and better outcomes for children
- Voluntary organisations key role

Children's Centres



Family Action Centres: in addition to core services

- Family support, parental outreach
- Job centres and work skills
- Work with Young Families
- Work with fathers
- Partnerships with health visitors/midwives
- Parenting support
- Credit Unions
- Financial advice
- Relationship support, summer schemes

Big Society: let's grab this agenda



- Political Parties – 500,000 members
- Church of England – 1.4m on pews every week
- **3,500** Children's Centres
- **2.7m** families attending weekly.
- Best centres engage parents, build confidence, participate in events, empower parents to work in community volunteering and peer support.

Conclusion



- Stick to vision and promote what works
- Quality services, easy access
- Universal services
- Better value for money from centres
- Sure Start is the Big Society
- Our Children's Centres are a national treasure

Thank you



Helen Dent CBE
Chief Executive

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