

POST NATAL PARENTING SUPPORT/EDUCATION

Early Days workshops for Parents and Carers of Babies

February 2012

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Community Health [Health Visiting] / Sure Start Children Centre's Parenting

Purpose of Document

This case study focuses on an improvement in service quality, innovation or a new way of working, specifically along one or more of the strands of the health visiting service vision and family offer

**Community
Universal
Universal Plus and
Universal Partnership Plus**

Brief Description

The Early Days workshops leaders guide was designed in October 2010 by a multi-agency project group of health visitors and Sure Start Children Centres professionals.

Historically, delivery of postnatal support groups in Stockport varied between teams and there was little evidence base for the content of the sessions delivered or of the resulting outcomes.

Delivery of existing postnatal groups was reviewed, taking into account the views of staff and parents, and the new research and developing evidence base.

Parents workshops are delivered in a group setting and are designed to provide a link between the parent education sessions offered in the antenatal period and parenting programmes designed for parents with older children.

The leaders guide was developed along with resources including the DVD "The Wonder Years" and 'top tip' leaflets to give to parents at the end of each session.

The sessions are led by health visitors and delivered by the health visiting teams, children and family workers and children's centre development workers.

Staff attended training workshops on content and facilitation of workshops and were given the leaders guide and DVDs. Managers working in Community Health, Midwifery and Children's Centres were invited to awareness raising sessions about the parent workshops so that they were aware of the programme and could support the delivery.

The parent workshops were launched in each of the 19 children centre reach areas in Stockport in January 2010.

We have continued to have workshops for staff every six months to share good practice and problem-solve any challenges.

Vision

- Development of the new early days postnatal workshops has been an excellent example of effective integrated working between Community Health Stockport, Children's Centre's and the Parenting Service.
 - The Early Days Workshops meets the requirements of the **Healthy Child Programme 0-5 years** and **health visitor service specification** to promote sensitive parenting, address home safety issues and provide information and support to parents on feeding/weaning and other child health topics and has been developed using evidence base and new research about early child development and attachment.
 - Training workshops for staff have increased knowledge and skills of the work force and enabled consistent and up to date evidenced-based information for parents.
 - Outcomes of the workshops have been captured using the Impact evaluation model.
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Challenges and how we addressed them

Challenges

- There were challenges in working and delivering this project with children centre colleagues because of differences in skills and knowledge and other competing priorities in teams
- Lack of resources and funding to deliver the project
- Attendance of parents in some children centre reach areas was poor.

Ways of addressing challenges

- Workshops supporting staff every six months to share good practice, resolve challenges and build professional relationships
- Managers attended awareness raising workshops about the project which has helped to secure funding for resources eg DVD players, photocopiers and Infant massage training.

Lessons Learnt

- The need for continued support for staff delivering early days workshops and the opportunity to share good practice and problem solve
 - Early days workshops in children's centre reach areas and parenting workshops have been limited by staffing capacity. We expect that the Health Visitor implementation Plan and increase in the number of health visitors should help to achieve a universal offer.
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Achievements

- Improved integrated working and increased knowledge and skills of all staff working in children's centre's teams
- Consistent evidence-based postnatal parent education/support.

Impact

Between April 2011 and September 2011 a total of 49 early days workshops were delivered throughout the town with a total of 463 parents attending, as indicated by figures from a six month snap shot sample. Some teams were unable to offer the workshops due to staff shortages and other priorities.

We have used the Impact evaluation model [TDA 2009] the weekly and course evaluations to gather feedback from parents.

Service offer

We offer a universal programme for parents with babies 0-6 months, providing an evidence-based programme led by health visitors and delivered by the children's centre team. A rolling programme will be delivered in every children's centre reach area. Each early days group runs over eight weeks, includes topics on soothing and sleep, early communication, play and learning, home safety, feeding, adapting to being a parent and family wellbeing.

Aims

Our aims were to:

- achieve a consistent programme of delivery across Children's Centres
- deliver a training programme for staff to improve integrated working and give staff the opportunity to train and plan within their locality teams
- develop a training programme that provided clear consistent messages on child development, weaning, home safety, parenting and family wellbeing, which are based on up to date guidance and evidence including the Solihull Approach, Incredible Years principles, EYFS, HCP and UNICEF guidance.

Benefits for Parents

Intermediate outcomes

- Greater understanding of baby development, home safety, weaning, play and family wellbeing
- Increased positive outlook, less anxiety about differences between babies, positive view of accessing support and Children's Centre services.

Final outcomes

- Reduced social isolation
- Increased parent confidence
- Increased understanding of baby development and promotion of sensitive attuned parenting
- Promotion of parent-child attachment and positive relationships
- Improved home learning environment.

Innovation

Evidence of innovation includes:

- Development of a consistent evidence based programme for universal postnatal support has improved the quality of the service delivered and enabled outcomes to be monitored
 - Six monthly meetings for all teams to share good practice and problem solve challenges ensures that the early days workshops remain embedded in practice and maintains quality.
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Personal Narrative Story

Below are a sample of comments and feedback from parents about the service, gathered from our regular monitoring of feedback:

What have you learnt about baby Development?

“What to look out for, tips, take it slowly every step is important”

“All babies develop differently”

“Play is very important”

“How my baby communicates”

“Learnt how to help my baby settle himself”

“Let your baby lead”

“Make mealtimes fun and relaxed”

“Learnt about different stages of development”

“How to understand my baby”

What changes have you made in the way you look after your baby?

“Be patient and give praise”

“More confident as a parent”

“Baby massage for relaxation and for colic”

“Using turn taking more”

“Making time to play”

“Get my partner involved”

“How to interpret different cries and moods”

“Taught to self settle”

“I take time out for myself”

“Improved bedtime routine”

“Reading stories even though five months old”

Additional Information

The aim to deliver a universal rolling programme in every children centre reach will be made possible by the Health Visitor Implementation Plan.

The leaders guide is a high quality resource which has the potential to be marketed and shared with other PCTs.