

**ADDITIONAL SUPPORT ADDRESSING PARENTING ISSUES
AFFECTING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF THE FAMILY UNIT**

Health Visitor Parenting Support Surgery

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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 of Case study

The purpose of the Health Visitor Parenting Support Surgery is to offer parents an individual detailed session that address the presenting issues currently affecting the health and wellbeing of the family as a unit. The surgery is facilitated, co-ordinated and evaluated by a health visitor. Resources and advertising is supported by Slough Surestart.

Common parenting issues and concerns are addressed as an enhanced service to the existing health visiting core programme. The health visitor surgery supports parents with particular difficulties requiring more support than available at the health visiting drop In clinics. Issues surrounding sleep, feeding and behaviour are the areas in which parents face the most difficulties and the surgery offers a one to one tailor made solution and action plan to the issues raised. A further review and or telephone follow up is offered for all parents.

The surgery operates twice a week at different children centres across Slough, through self-referral; other professionals can refer parents.

Challenges

The parenting support surgery replaced the previously offered 'health visiting parenting workshops' held at various children's centres across Slough.

There are no childcare costs or considerations which could affect uptake. This was a major consideration in previous workshops and ultimately parents were unable to attend as a result. Equally as the surgeries are run weekly parents do not need to wait for a place to attend, addressing the issue/s when parents are eager to seek solutions.

Summary of Achievements

The following are issues which have been effectively and expertly addressed during the surgery sessions helped by methods such as maintenance of a sleep/food diary.

- Feeding - meal time issues, appropriate portion sizes, how much milk? When?

- Sleep difficulties – night time feeding? night time waking? nightmares?
 - Developing routine
 - Play
 - Sibling rivalry? New baby
 - Behaviour – dealing with challenging behaviour
 - Potty training
 - What is normal behaviour?
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Impact

The surgeries offer a quality personalised service at a time when perceived children's behaviour is affecting the health and wellbeing of the family unit. Individually tailored action plans made in conjunction with the parent/s has ensured greater success relieving frequent visits to the health visitor drop in, GP appointments, A&E and Walk In Centre.

The health visitors expertise has enabled quick comprehensive assessment of need and referral and/or sign posting to other services or agencies when indicated, providing an early intervention approach.

Benefits

Parents seek expert advice about presenting parenting problems and some appreciate and prefer an individualised approach local to where they live rather than a preventative group parenting programme.

Providing a health visitor led session has ensured a fuller assessment of the family situation and immediate plans put in place. This has led to improved outcomes for the individual family that can be measured rather than the broader group education approach that has proved harder to sustain and evaluate.

Innovation

The health visitor parenting support surgery within the children centre provides a protective environment where parents feel safe and expertly guided through their own parenting and perceived child behaviour problems. Though the presenting problems are generalist in nature some parents prefer not to share personal information in amongst a group environment. The self-referral to the surgery ensures greater commitment by the parent/s and is away from their home environment where often the presenting problem feels over whelming.

Personal Narrative Story

Bob 18 months old

Bob's mother was referred to the health visitor surgery from the toddler group at the children's centre. His mother and father presented with the following issues and concerns

1. Fussy eating – Bob was having a total of five or more bottles of milk daily plus one during the night.
2. Sleep issues – wakeful at night and would not settle without a bottle of milk.
3. Behaviour – mum described Bob's behaviour as 'spiteful' and he was hitting, biting other children.

Eating:

Following a detailed consultation a plan was devised with Bob's mum and dad. This included reducing milk intake to twice daily.

Literature and advice was given on realistic portion sizes for Bob's age group.

Advice given on appropriate snacks and drinks between meals.

Referred to Surestart cookery course to improve family meal times.

Sleep:

Strategies, leaflet and advice given to implement the 'checking method' for night time waking.

Sleep cycle/ sleep associations explained and advised on how to stop night time feeds.

Encouraged to maintain a sleep diary.

Behaviour:

Discussed appropriate age expectations.

Strategies given for dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

Encouraged to attend groups to encourage socialising with other toddlers.

Referred to the family links parenting programme.

Telephone call to review one week later:

Spoke with mum who was very pleased with the improvements in Bob's behaviour – Bob's dietary intake was much improved and milk intake reduced to twice daily. Sleep diary maintained and daytime naps changed accordingly. Bob had slept through the night for the past two nights. Contact details given for further advice and support.

Zoe 15 months old

Zoe's mum was signposted to the health visitor surgery by the health visitors at the drop in clinic. She also attended her GP with the following issues:

1. Zoe was fussy with eating and had a poor appetite. She refused a lot of foods and mealtimes had become a battle. It was established that Zoe was also having three 200ml bottles of formula feeds during the day.
2. Zoe was wakeful at night and having bottles of milk to settle back to sleep during the night. Both parents attended the surgery and described the situation at home

as very tense and stressful as they are co habiting with the paternal grandparents. As dad does shift work the disrupted nights were affecting the quality of his family and working life.

Fussy eating:

A lengthy discussion on appropriate expectations and nutritional requirements of a toddler was followed by devising a plan together.

Strategies given and discussed for dealing with challenging behaviour.

Reduce milk intake and discontinue night feeds.

Parents were not going to offer food alternatives.

Encourage family meal times together and promote the social aspect of meal times.

Sleep:

Advised on strategies for dealing with night time waking and discontinuing the night time milk feeds. These strategies considered the extended family needs and sleeping arrangements.

Advised to maintain a sleep diary.

Review planned for one week later

Review

Parents attended a second appointment at the children's centre. At that appointment both parents reported an improvement in Zoe's food intake and reducing her milk intake.

Further strategies advised on establishing a bedtime and daytime routine. Parents were upset and disclosed a number of other factors affecting their relationship including financial stress. Referred to social care drop in at the local children's centre and contact details of local benefits office in Slough given.

Referred to family links nurturing programme.

Telephone review planned for one week later.

Telephone review

Review by telephone. Spoke with mum who reported that Zoe's dietary intake was very good. Now eating three meals daily and sleeping through the night. Details given for further advice/support as necessary.

Additional Information

Below is information provided to parents regarding the health visitor surgery sessions provided at the children's centres.

Health Visitor Surgery at your local Children's Centre



A Health Visitor parent support surgery is available at your local children's centre.

Do you need further help/advice on...?

- Sleep – can't sleep / won't sleep!**
- Fussy eating – eating too much / too little??**
- Dealing with tempers / tantrums and tears**
- Potty training – how to start/ what's normal?**
- Getting rid of the 'bottle' / 'dummy'**

Your consultation will last approximately 30 mins – please bring your child's **RED BOOK**.

For more information contact
01753 635544

CHILDREN'S CENTRE'S

Chalvey Grove, SL1 2TE . 09:30 – 12:30
1st Wednesday of every month (except Aug & Jan)
 01/06/11 06/07/11 07/09/11
 05/10/11 02/11/11 07/12/11
 01/02/12 01/03/12

Monksfield Way, SL2 1QX . 09:30 – 12:30
2nd Tuesday of every month (except Aug)
 14/06/11 12/07/11 13/09/11
 11/10/11 08/11/11 13/12/11
 10/01/12 14/02/12 14/03/12

Penn Road, SL2 1PG . 09:30 – 12:30
4th Tuesday of every month (except Aug & Dec)
 28/06/11 26/07/11 27/09/11
 25/10/11 22/11/11 24/01/12
 28/02/12 28/03/12

Romsey Close, SL3 8PE . 09:30 – 12:30
3rd Wednesday of every month (except Aug)
 15/06/11 20/07/11 21/09/11
 19/10/11 16/11/11 21/12/11
 18/01/12 15/02/12 15/03/12

Wexham Road, SL2 5JW . 09:30 – 12:30
3rd Tuesday of every month (except Aug)
 21/06/11 19/07/11 20/09/11
 18/10/11 15/11/11 20/12/11
 17/01/12 21/02/12 21/03/12

You may be asked to wait if the 'drop in' surgery is busy. In the unlikely event that we will not be able to see you, we will ensure you will be seen at an alternative venue where possible.