

**Preventative working and
Rapid Response to Parenting Concerns**

Universal Plus

SOUTHERN HEALTH FOUNDATION TRUST

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**Author: Marion Cribb
Health Visitor Southern Health Foundation Trust**

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

Building parental confidence by offering parenting programmes has the potential to improve the mental health and well-being of children along with improving family relationships (Audit commission, 2010 and Saunders, 2008) and ultimately this enables children to reach their full potential as defined by 'Every Child Matters' (DCSF, 2003).

It is well known (DCSF, 2009, Pugh et al, 1994 and NICE, 2006) that the quality of parenting received by children has a considerable effect on their emotional and social development and that it is, for the overwhelming majority, a complex and demanding task. Parents can experience varying levels of anxiety and apprehension about their role and greatly value the benefits of guidance and support from professionals (DCSF, 2009).

The provision of the 'Tiny Times' rolling programme care pathway aims to increase parental confidence by parents becoming better informed and being able to develop coping strategies for everyday parenting difficulties. Many GP visits are related to parental anxieties and evidence shows that psychological and emotional needs were identified more frequently with parents of children under five when calling out of hours GP services (Shipman & Dale, 1999).

These generalised parental anxieties and concerns are addressed through this care package, which increases parental confidence by improving knowledge and building coping mechanisms around key health issues related to their children. The programme includes three 'rolling' sessions each held once a month on the following:

- Weaning (to include nutrition and obesity)
- Sleep (including expectations)
- Behaviour and play (including attachment)

Within the 0-19 service the aim is to provide parents with the skills to encourage confidence and resilience in order to develop coping strategies and positive solutions to both current and future parenting issues.

Highlight Challenges

Southern Health Foundation Trust (SHFT) is geographically one of the largest trusts in the country. It includes most of the Hampshire County with diverse demographics including small cities, market towns and vast rural areas. The Trust serves a predominantly white population; other languages identified as being spoken include Nepalese, Mandarin, Polish, Turkish, Urdu, Arabic and Slovakian. Within SHFT there are two distinct areas with a high prevalence of military families.

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Specific challenges that this project addressed included

- Staff capacity to deliver care package
- Consultation with internal and external stakeholders

We met this challenge through open, productive and collaborative consultation with health visiting colleagues and managers, and in particular team members from the community nursery nurse forums across SHFT working with children centre and voluntary sector colleagues; local authority and commissioning bodies.

We learned that we need to consult from the earliest stage with a full range of clinical experts and internal and external stakeholders – to ensure we are offering evidenced based services and that they are what our service user want and will benefit from.

Summary of Achievements

A care package was developed utilising the service offers with safeguarding as a thread running through all service delivery

Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling programme to be run in community settings eg children centres in collaboration with children centre staff. • Information about rolling programme to be displayed in community settings and GP practices. • Children centres to identify and book appropriate families into rolling programme in collaboration with the health visiting team.
Universal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The health visiting team will have good communication and liaison pathways with the children’s centres and partner agencies in their locality. • The health visiting team will have information about all parents via their records system • All parents within the locality will have access to the rolling programme
Universal Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facilitators of the workshop from the health visiting team to identify individuals that may require further support • Liaison with GP services to identify vulnerable clients and support offered as appropriate. • Referral to local services if required and help with accessing and signposting to other services and sources of information and advice. • Skills to initiate or be part of a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as required or identified through the assessment process.
Universal Partnership Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to specialist services following assessment by 0-19 team; • Referral to children’s services for more intensive social support. • To be alert to risk factors and signs and symptoms of child abuse and follow local safeguarding procedures where there is

	cause for concern.
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Impact

The service provides access to a rolling programme for all parents of babies up to one year old aiming to increase confidence by learning more about key health issues related to their children. The programme supports best practice, and evidence shows that it helps to build up and improve parental confidence. The nature of a continuously running rolling programme enables parents to have flexible access to any of the sessions at any time relevant to their needs within the first year of their child's life. This encourages parental control and access at a time that is right for them and if necessary, they could repeat a session. The programme is made up of three individual 'rolling' sessions, each held once a month, on the following topics:

- Weaning (to include nutrition and obesity)
 - Sleep (including expectations)
 - Behaviour and play (including attachment)
 - Potential development for future session could include 'emotional well-being'
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Benefits

- Parents experience increased support related to routine parenting topics
 - Vulnerable families, in particular, receive more support enabling better outcomes for children
 - Improved long-term quality outcomes for children
 - Increased parental confidence and resilience in order to develop positive solutions to parenting dilemmas
 - Reduction in the need for the same messages to be delivered repeatedly in clinic situations reducing inefficiency and increasing effectiveness
 - Increased peer support-known to be an effective solution for parents in terms of developing strategies to cope with common parenting concerns
 - Increased understanding and knowledge of common parenting issues. Parents can not only ask questions of the Health Visiting team but they can also learn from each other whilst building those peer based support networks
 - Meets the requirements of part of the Healthy Child Programme.
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Innovation

- The sessions are held by community nursery nurses and staff nurses and, to ensure a consistent and evidence-based approach, each session has a 'toolkit' learning outcome and session plan attached to it. This ensures that the facilitator can tailor the presentation according to the needs of the individual group thus maintaining the integrity of the evidence-base and allowing for flexibility of delivery to varying demographic groups. The 'toolkits' are low cost and easily duplicated so may be used across the division ensuring consistency and the handouts and visual aids are also held electronically.
- A further recent practice development potential is the introduction of an 'emotional well-being' session co-facilitated with the team post natal depression champion where emotional wellbeing, key to parental confidence, can be discussed.

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Personal Narrative Story

- This Care Package has been led by health visitors within the Petersfield Team in collaboration with the community nursery nurses (CNN)
- It has been further developed within a Forum for CNN across SHFT and led by clinical managers
- The care package has been further reviewed at four professional mobilisation events consisting of health visitors and school nurses.