

Family Safeguarding Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire County Council has secured a £4.15million investment from the Department for Education (DfE) for the implementation of Family Safeguarding which will be introduced in February 2020.

The Strengthening Families, Protecting Children - Family Safeguarding approach improves outcomes for vulnerable children and young people by involving multi-disciplinary teams in children's social care, and builds on work which has been underway in Peterborough for the last two years. Initially developed in Hertfordshire, the model has resulted in significantly better outcomes for some of the most vulnerable and at risk children.

Most children who are facing the greatest risks to their wellbeing are those who live in families where at least one of the adults is struggling with mental or emotional health issues, substance or alcohol difficulties, or where there is domestic abuse. Under the Family Safeguarding approach, children's social work teams are expanded to include adult practitioners who are experts at supporting parents to address these challenges.

Family Safeguarding has three core elements:

- 1. Multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs):** specialist adult workers with domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health expertise working within social work teams. Group case supervisions are also held with all workers allocated to a case.
- 2. Motivational Interviewing (MI):** MI supports families in dealing with a variety of mental health, substance misuse and domestic violence issues planning and connecting them with the resources they need to achieve such change and helping them to find their own personal motivation for positive change.
- 3. Structured Workbook:** a new method of recording case notes with the aim of improving information sharing, streamlining processes and reducing the amount of time spent reporting.

We will soon be starting to recruitment Adult Practitioners and Motivational Interviewing training for our social care teams will start in November. One of the main interdependences is the introduction of the new case management system Liquid Logic in Cambridgeshire which will be used from late January 2020. This will bring Cambridgeshire onto the same system as Peterborough so data can be collated and reported on in the same way and aid a consistent approach to the delivery of the Family Safeguarding model.

In Hertfordshire it has been reported, that Family Safeguarding saved an estimated £2.6m for Children's Services in the first year. With additional estimated savings of £107,000 to the police, due primarily to a reduction in incidents of domestic abuse and £200,000 to the NHS due to a 53% reduction in emergency admissions.

As well as Hertfordshire and Peterborough other authorities practising, or set to introduce Family Safeguarding include West Berkshire, Bracknell Forest, Luton, Darlington and Middlesbrough. In October it was announced that five more local authorities would be supported to introduce Family Safeguarding - Lancashire, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall, Swindon and Wandsworth. Family Safeguarding is one of three projects that make up the DfE's national Strengthening Families and Protecting Children Programme designed to support families to stay together wherever appropriate and reduce the numbers of children in or at risk of care.

If you have any questions or queries please contact family.safeguarding@cambridgeshire.gov.uk