

## WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2012

### Report to the Children's Trust Board on the Joint Development Day with the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board: 'Beyond Munro - Developing Early Help Services'

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#### 1.0 Background

The purpose of the day was to facilitate discussion and development on establishing a *shared vision and understanding on what an 'early help offer' would look like for Wirral children and their families.*

#### 2.0 Introduction

The day was planned to include a review of current service provision alongside recent challenges such as the Peer Challenge, conducted on early support and intervention services on Wirral, as well as emerging thinking nationally on what is known as the early help offer. It also considered what was meant by early help and early intervention given the inherent challenge in terminology used. The challenge to budgets over the next few years was acknowledged as a considerable factor in the shaping of services. The day was facilitated by Professor Jan Horwath, Professor in Child Welfare and Tracey Coffey, Strategic Service Manager, Children's Services.

#### 3.0 Attendance

The development day was attended by 36 colleagues from across the Children's Trust and WSCB including two Councillors and representatives from agencies from across the statutory and non-statutory sectors, including the NHS, Police, CAFCASS, Homestart, Probation Service and Connexions.

#### 4.0 Key Points from the presentations

- The Allen Report, (2011) stated 'Deficiencies in early years impact on development in later life'
- Increasing evidence of the negative impact of neglect on the developing brain
- Early intervention: critical to addressing vulnerability, builds resilience, breaks intergenerational cycle, economic benefit
- The Field report (2011) claimed fragmented services from health, early years and social care
- Early help/intervention not well understood by families and difficult to access
- Schools not addressing achievement gap
- Poor children get poor services e.g. child care
- Children's centres not sufficiently targeted at those most in need
- Peer Challenge tells us we are good at 'think child' but less good at 'think family'
- Early Help- is this chronologically early? Early in relation to development of problems or early in relation to likelihood that intervention might be successful?

#### 5.0 Early thoughts for re-designing services

- Using the FIP principles on intensive family support
- Deliver a true continuum across 0-19 years
- Service delivery based on intelligent needs analysis
- Early help provided by all agencies, early intervention on assessment of need
- A single gateway for level 3 - across four reconfigured and strengthened area teams
- Clearer differentiation on level 2 (early help) and level 3 (early intervention)
- Development of an integrated approach with health, police, children's centres, IYSS and ESW
- Use of Team around the Family assessment for level 3 co-ordinated through a gateway
- Area team undertakes family assessment and provides the appropriate lead professional
- Support for agencies to deliver a timely and appropriate 0-19 early help offer
- Implications for changes to the continuum of need and thresholds-these will need to be reset

## 6.0 Next steps

The outcomes from the development day are being used to inform the wider review of family support services which is currently underway. The key proposed next steps:

- The family support review group to finalise the service re-modelling and consult widely through the WSCB and Children's Trust partners including implications for partner agencies
- Developments underpinned by what works well in Wirral and informed by successful developments nationally
- Move towards a 'think family' Team around the Family approach and emphasis on building family resilience and achieving and measuring positive outcomes
- Commonality of definitions and terminology to be agreed – including what Wirral means by Early Help and Early Intervention
- WSCB is awaiting final guidance from DfE on Working Together to Safeguard Children which is expected to give guidance on what role the Board has in ensuring the development and effectiveness of early help across the partnership
- To complete the service re-modelling by April 2013

## 7.0 Recommendations:

7.1 That Wirral Children's Trust Board notes the report and approves the planned next steps.

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