

## **Developing a Workforce Strategy for Family Support Services**

**September 2011**

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# Developing a Workforce Strategy for Family Support Services

## 2 Introduction

This review has been prepared by IPC to support the development and implementation of the Families First Pioneer programme within local authorities in Wales. A central objective for this programme is to improve the life chances of children and young people and particularly those in low-income families through earlier, more holistic and integrated interventions aimed at reducing the number of children developing more complex needs. National consultation and research has identified that preventative interventions focusing solely on the child aren't usually enough to ensure good child outcomes – the whole family requires support.

The Pioneer Programme has two distinct but inter-linked components:

- The further development of more integrated systems for identifying and supporting families of children with emerging additional needs.
- The development of integrated and 'family-centred' support services across all levels of needs.

### 2.1 Identifying vulnerable families

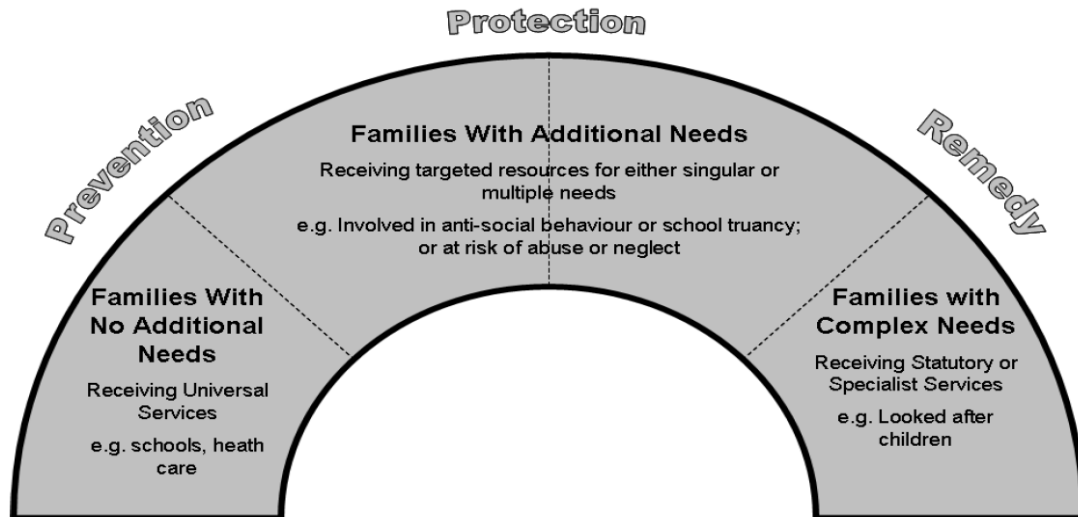
In every local authority there are areas of deprivation in which exist a relatively small number of families who experience severe and multiple problems, which impact on themselves, their children and the community around them. It is well documented that living in poverty where there is low income and a workless household are key factors associated with poor outcomes for children. The Welsh Assembly Government aspires to the eradication of child poverty by 2020, and is committed to the importance of supporting families in bringing up their children by creating 'stronger families' through a new approach to develop integrated family services.

In defining the vulnerability of children and families, a new approach has been developed drawn from work of the Efficiency and Innovation Board 'New Models of Service Delivery' group<sup>1</sup> that encompasses the need for prevention, protection and remediation.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://childpovertysolutions.org.uk/UserFiles/file/FamiliesFirstPhaseIIGuidance.pdf>. (accessed 16/3/2011).

**Figure 1**



The Efficiency and Innovation Board 'New Models of Service Delivery' Group

**2.2 The purpose and structure of this report**

The main purpose of this report is to inform the development of local strategy and related action planning.

It will start by looking at the relevant Welsh policy context; move on to describing the children and young people’s workforce work and review research and best practice around working with vulnerable families. It will conclude with a discussion about possible implications and next steps in developing the Family Support Workforce.

**2.3 Summary of recommendations**

Drawing together the analysis of policy drivers, evidence from best practice and the outcomes of a workforce conference held in Wales in July 2011, the following table summarises the recommendations of this report.

Aspect	Activity
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify mechanism(s) to embed integrated workforce development in the strategic leadership arrangements of the authority.</li> <li>■ Appoint a workforce development group from across partners. Agree remit, terms of reference and reporting lines.</li> <li>■ Identify an officer to facilitate the working group.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use the IPC Workforce Development Model (Figure 4) to confirm strategic priorities for the short and medium term.</li> <li>■ Develop a detailed action plan to help deliver these priorities.</li> </ul>

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>Identifying the Family Support Workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review existing mapping exercises against the model in Figure 3 to determine what is understood by the 'core' Families' Support Workforce.</li> </ul>
<b>Skills and Competencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use Welsh Common Core Skills to develop an initial joint training programme; for example a joint induction programme. Alternatively, in the first instance, such a programme might focus on equipping Family Support Services to deliver the 'Families First' agenda in the authority.</li> <li>■ The content for this initial programme might emphasise the Team Around the Child, Common Assessment and the Lead Professional. National training materials could be of use in delivering this programme.</li> <li>■ Review outcomes from this programme in order to develop more extensive integrated workforce development for the Family Support Sector.</li> </ul>
<b>Ways of working</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify joint ways of working which could be benefit from further development – the CWDC self-assessment toolkit might be helpful in doing this.</li> <li>■ Describe how you intend to develop these ways of working in the action plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ In the medium term identify map the extent and cost of development activity across the system, looking for opportunities to co-ordinate and reduce duplication.</li> </ul>
<b>The training needs of the workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Once the initial competency-based programme has been piloted, it might be useful to conduct a Training Needs Analysis of the 'core' members of the Family Support Sector to inform any role out of the programme.</li> </ul>

### 3 The policy context

#### 3.1 The Children and Families Measure (2010)

The Welsh Assembly Government has identified tackling child poverty as a top priority and recognises that better outcomes for children and tackling inequalities means supporting families<sup>2</sup>. The Children and Families Measure which became law in February 2010<sup>3</sup> demonstrates the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to providing support to those families and children in greatest need. It recognises the shared role across local authorities, Local Health Boards and a range of public bodies in Wales. There are 13 broad aims of the Children and Families measure:

- To work with the UK Government to increase the income of families with children.
- To ensure that, as far as possible, children living in low income families are not materially deprived.
- To promote and facilitate paid employment for parents/carers in low income families.
- To provide low income parents/carers with the skills needed to secure employment.
- To help young people take advantage of employment opportunities.
- To support the parenting of children.
- To reduce inequalities in educational attainment between children and young people.
- To help young people participate effectively in education and training.
- To reduce inequalities in health between children and between their parents/carers, so far as necessary, to ensure children's wellbeing.
- To reduce inequalities in participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities between children and between children's parents/carers, so far as necessary, to ensure children's wellbeing.
- To help young people participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their community.
- To ensure that all children grow up in decent housing.
- To ensure that all children grow up in safe and cohesive communities.

#### 3.2 The Child Poverty Strategy for Wales (2011)

The Children and Families Measure placed a duty on the Welsh Assembly Government to publish a Child Poverty Strategy for Wales, which was published in February 2011<sup>4</sup>. This strategy places a duty on specific Welsh public bodies to identify and take action to assist in the goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020. There are three key strategic objectives:

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<sup>2</sup> WAG (2011). Child Poverty Strategy for Wales. Information Document 095/2011.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2010/1/contents> (accessed 2/3/11).

<sup>4</sup> WAG (2011). Child Poverty Strategy for Wales. Information Document 095/2011.

- To reduce the number of families living in workless households.
- To improve the skills of parents/carers and young people living in low-income households so they can secure well-paid employment.
- To reduce inequalities in health, education and economic outcomes of children and families by improving the outcomes of the poorest.

The Child Poverty Strategy for Wales argues that income compounds other factors that affect child development such as parental education and the home learning environment, and therefore low-income children experience poorer environments in terms of factors that would otherwise promote their cognitive, social and health development. They are more likely, therefore, to begin school with deficits in their learning ability and social behaviour. As a result, they progress more slowly than their more affluent peers and achieve fewer educational qualifications, even in circumstances in which schools serve all learners equally.

The strategy prioritises:

- Child development in the Early Years
- Addressing the needs of the child within the family context
- Prevention through building resilience
- A focus on literacy and numeracy in schools
- Raising aspiration and opportunity for young people
- Working together in local partnerships.

The Strategy is clear about the need to re-design systems and interventions to meet the needs of families in an holistic, integrated manner:

*‘Children grow up in families. Better outcomes for children and tackling inequalities means supporting families. Families do not come in neat packages, and they do not have identical needs.....There is emerging consensus, and evidence from Flying Start, that the best way of supporting families, particularly those families in poverty, is through an integrated, whole-family approach. This means that we must find better ways of designing support systems and interventions, at both the national policy and local levels, and ensure their effective and efficient delivery. A clear message of merging policies and programme is that a whole family approach built around integrated service to provide holistic support to children and families....’<sup>5</sup>*

It is similarly specific about the importance of prevention, early intervention and integrated family support at the point of crisis:

*‘A report by the Efficiency and Innovation Board’s New Models of Service Delivery group set out the diverse approaches developed across Wales and identified the need for a systemic approach to supporting families that encompassed prevention, protection and remediation. • **Prevention:** interventions aimed at building resilience and supporting families to develop the skills and attributes associated with more positive child outcomes – for example, promoting positive parenting or supporting family learning. • **Protection:** approaches aimed at early identification and action to*

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<sup>5</sup> Child Poverty Strategy for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, Information Document 095/2011



support families well before they reach crisis point. These typically involve looser, multi-agency approaches towards meeting identified needs (e.g. team around the child approaches). • **Remedial:** approaches aimed at supporting families that are at or near crisis point, involving a fully integrated approach to service delivery (e.g. Integrated Family Support Services)<sup>6</sup>.

### 3.3 Setting the Direction: Primary and Community Services Strategic Delivery Programme (2010)

In addition to government policy described above, the Welsh Assembly Government has set out a framework to assist Local Health Boards (LHBs) in the development and delivery of improved primary care and community based services for their local populations; particularly for those individuals who are frail, vulnerable and who have complex care needs. There are a number of key issues that need to be considered by LHBs and their partners in the redesign and realignment of services within communities<sup>7</sup>:

- Information framework – aims to identify how existing systems can be used more effectively to enable information to be shared where it will benefit the individual and at the same time preserving the underpinning information governance requirements.
- Communications – designed to provide a single point of access for the co-ordination, scheduling and tracking of individualised care across the interface between the hospital and community setting: described as the Communications Hub.
- Locality working arrangements – describes a system of empowered localities in the form of Locality Networks which will be developed around natural communities as a key platform for local service planning and delivery. They will be built around primary care, community and social care teams, working together across agreed populations to plan and deliver integrated care out of hospital services.
- Enhancing skills in the community – establishment of a Community Resource Team which is intended to support Primary Care and Hospital Clinicians to maintain individuals at home and in the community. “Specialist generalist skills” will be highly developed within these teams to complement existing expertise in the enhancement of outcomes for patients with complex needs.

### 3.4 Sustainable Social Services for Wales<sup>8</sup>

This paper puts in place a framework for meeting the challenges facing social services in the next decade and beyond, and sets out priorities for action. It aims to reshape and refocus social services in order to ensure that they remain strong, and can continue to meet citizens’ needs and aspirations.

In terms of the workforce, the paper describes “a confident and competent workforce” where the professional contribution of social workers and social care workers are placed even more at the heart of services. This recognises the need to:

<sup>6</sup> *Child Poverty Strategy for Wales*, Welsh Assembly Government, Information Document 095/2011

<sup>7</sup> WAG (2010). *Setting the Direction: Primary and Community Services Strategic Delivery Programme*.

<sup>8</sup> WAG (2011). *Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A framework for action*.



- Prioritise integrated services, in particular for families with complex needs.
- Reconsider the approach to assessment and care management (to be less bureaucratic).
- Consider ICT systems that can interface with each other.
- Have a greater focus on evidence-based practice.
- Do more work to ensure quality leadership.
- Professionalise the workforce further.
- Strengthen practice governance.
- Continue to support the workforce through training and development opportunities.
- Strengthen information held about the workforce and ensure comprehensive and robust information for workforce planning and development.

### **3.5 School Effectiveness Framework: Building Effective Learning Communities Together (2008)**

This Strategy<sup>9</sup> describes the Welsh Assembly Government's vision and approach to promoting a collaborative approach to improving the learning and well-being of children and young people. For example, it says:

*'Schools also need to work with other agencies to address the wellbeing and citizen aspirations of individual learners. When schools work with other agencies to deliver joined-up programmes, the full range of resources and expertise can be harnessed to deliver improved learner outcomes and wellbeing'.*

The Framework describes the responsibility for working in partnership at the classroom, school and local authority level. The Strategy comments on the responsibilities of the local authority:

*'Through their leadership of Children and Young People's Partnerships, local authorities have a central role to play in developing shared priorities and programmes for education services, social services, health services and voluntary sector providers which are aligned with improved learning and wellbeing. By co-ordinating a multi-agency approach based on the needs of the local learning community or family of schools, local authorities can ensure that the response to the needs of individual children and young people at school level is more effective. Partnership working should be the stimulus for tackling difficult issues and securing improved outcomes'.*

### **3.6 Investors in Families**

Investors in Families has been established to recognise and promote the importance of family-friendly approaches, which many schools have already developed. Schools that receive the Investors in Families award will have demonstrated their commitment to working with families to achieve each of the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda and to have evidence that they are working with families to deliver the five outcomes.

Investors in Families aims to:

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<sup>9</sup> WAG (2008). 'School Effectiveness Framework: Building Effective Learning Communities Together'.

- Value and support the role that families' play in the life of a child.
- Support families in developing their children's healthy behaviour.
- Help families participate in raising their children's achievement and self-esteem.
- Promote social inclusion and a sense of well-being through positive participation in family life.

An evaluation pilot report<sup>10</sup> describes the aim of Investors in Families to help schools become family friendly in the context of:

- All schools becoming extended schools by 2010 and as part of the core offer, making parental support available.
- The evidence that children's attainment will rise more dramatically when their learning at school is reinforced at home in the family context through informal activities.
- The desire for parents to become partners, with schools, in their children's learning.
- Home-school agreements.
- The healthy schools programme.

The evaluation found some good examples of initiatives reflecting:

- Impact on underachieving pupils.
- Increase in confidence and self esteem.
- Outcomes of specific interventions (eg getting to school on time).
- Impact beyond school age.
- Impact on 'whole child' issues.
- Rise in aspirations of families.
- Change in attitude of parents.
- Attendance.
- Behaviour.

### **3.7 Integrated Family Support Services**

The notion of 'Integrated Family Support Services' (IFSS) is central to the Welsh Assembly Government's approach to supporting vulnerable families with complex needs including substance misuse, domestic violence, mental health and learning disabilities through better integrated services.

Initially concentrating on families where parental substance misuse coexists with concerns about the welfare of the child, the multiagency Integrated Family Support Teams will work to provide targeted support and better connect children and adult service with a focus on the family as a unit.

Over time the service will be extended to families within which there are:

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<sup>10</sup> Grainger J (2007). Investors in Families Evaluation Report.

- mental health problems or mental illness
- learning disabilities and/or
- domestic violence.

### 3.8 Families First Pioneers

The local authority for whom this review has been prepared is in one of the pilot consortia tasked with improving service delivery to vulnerable families through the 'Families First' initiative. In re-designing services the consortia plans to:

- Focus efforts on **early identification** and **prevention** to prevent problems from escalating for children, young people and families, reducing the need for intensive, higher cost interventions later on
- Provide **locality** based **integrated services** that are accessible, equitable and effective
- Ensure the most efficient use of limited resources and maximise opportunities for integrated working and joint commissioning
- Ensure the **workforce** is appropriately **skilled** to work together across institutional and professional boundaries, focused on the needs of children, young people and families.

### 3.9 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy for Wales<sup>11</sup>

This is a strategic framework for cross sector development of the children, young people and families' workforce. The priorities of the Strategy are to:

- Strengthen the children and young people's workforce
- Ensure that all workers have appropriate skills and qualifications
- Increase the recruitment into the children and young people's workforce and improves the retention of high quality employees.
- Ensure that the unique qualities and contributions of individual professions are recognised and planned for.
- Ensure that workers have a common core of skills and knowledge relevant to working with children and young people.
- Ensure that the workforce delivers joined up services and improves communication across sectors.

### 3.10 Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding for the Children and Young People's Workforce in Wales<sup>12</sup>

The purpose of this document is to *'reflect a common set of values rooted in commitment to realisation of children's rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and to achieve more integrated service delivery' (introduction).*

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<sup>11</sup> 'Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy for Wales', Children and Young People's Workforce Development Network, April 2011

<sup>12</sup> 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding for the Children and Young People's Workforce in Wales'. Children and Young People's Workforce Development Network, April 2011

It is intended that all those working with children, young people and their families should have a common set of skills, knowledge and understanding. These are listed under six key areas:

- Effective Communication and Engagement
- Child and Young Person Development
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child
- Supporting transitions
- Multi-agency and partnership working
- Sharing information.

An implementation plan addressing the Common Core will be developed in due course.

## 4 Developing a whole workforce approach

### 4.1 Defining the children, young people and families' workforce

There is no single definition of the Children, Young People and Families' Workforce. At the simplest level it has been defined as 'everyone who works with children and young people and their families, or who is responsible for improving their outcomes'<sup>13</sup>. The Children, Young People and Families' Workforce, therefore, encompasses people from a range of sectors with a variety of roles. Some of these roles bring workers into direct contact with children, young people and their families; others are more removed. As *Building Brighter Futures: Next Steps for the Workforce*<sup>13</sup> put it:

*"The workforce crosses the full range of sectors of employment and includes both the 'core' of people whose primary purpose is to work with children and young people and their families, or be responsible for their outcomes, and the wider workforce which includes people who work only partly with children, young people or their families or who have some responsibility for their outcomes as a part of a wider primary role. In addition, many people who work primarily with adults – for example in health, social care or justice – can have a significant influence on outcomes for children and need to consider their clients in their role as a parent and as a member of a family".*

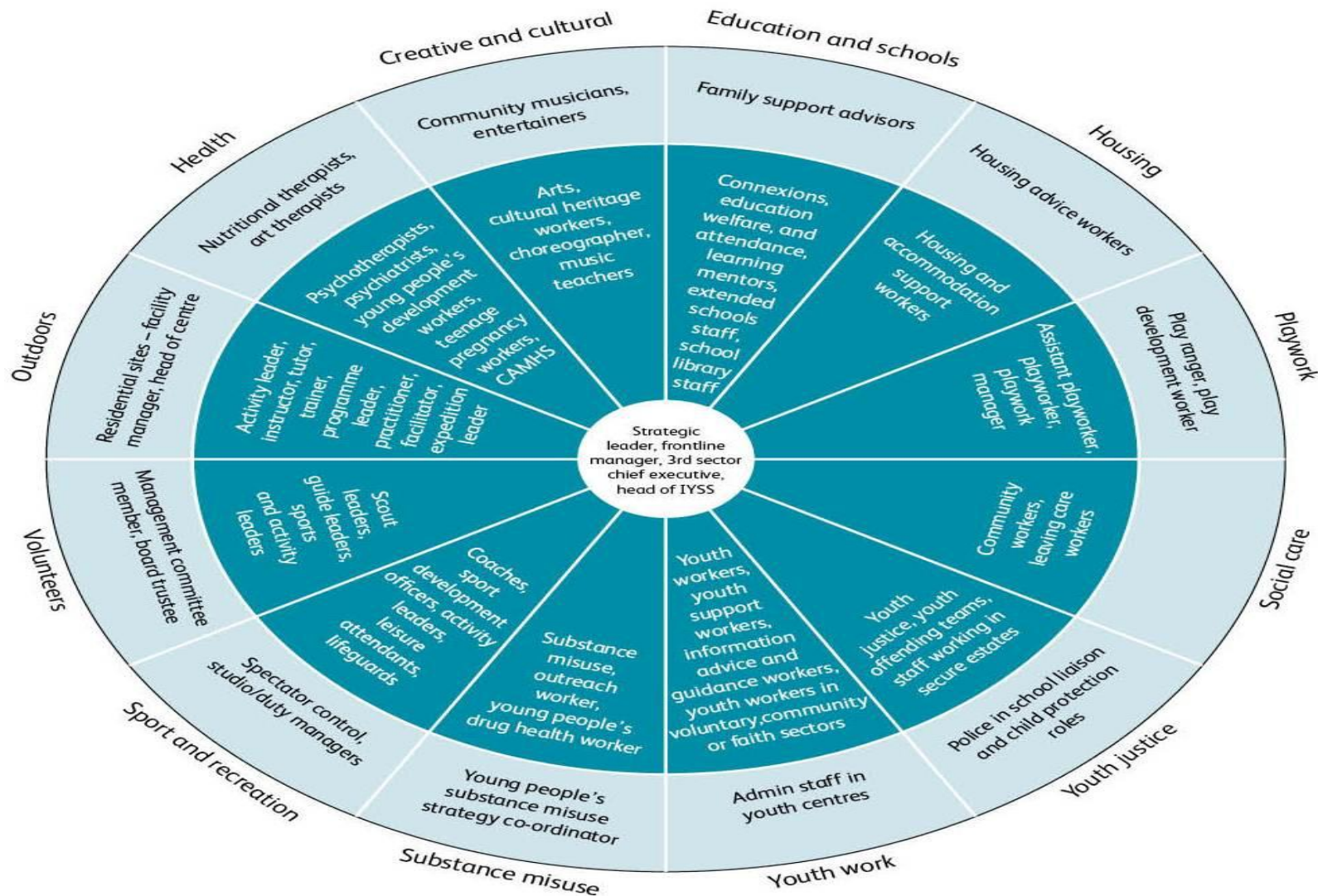
This idea that the workforce is drawn from a number of sectors, operating more or less directly with children, young people and their families, has also been described diagrammatically<sup>14</sup>:

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<sup>13</sup> HMSO (2007). *Building Brighter Futures: Next Steps for the Children's Workforce*.

<sup>14</sup> CWDC (2010). *Skills Development Framework*.

Figure 2

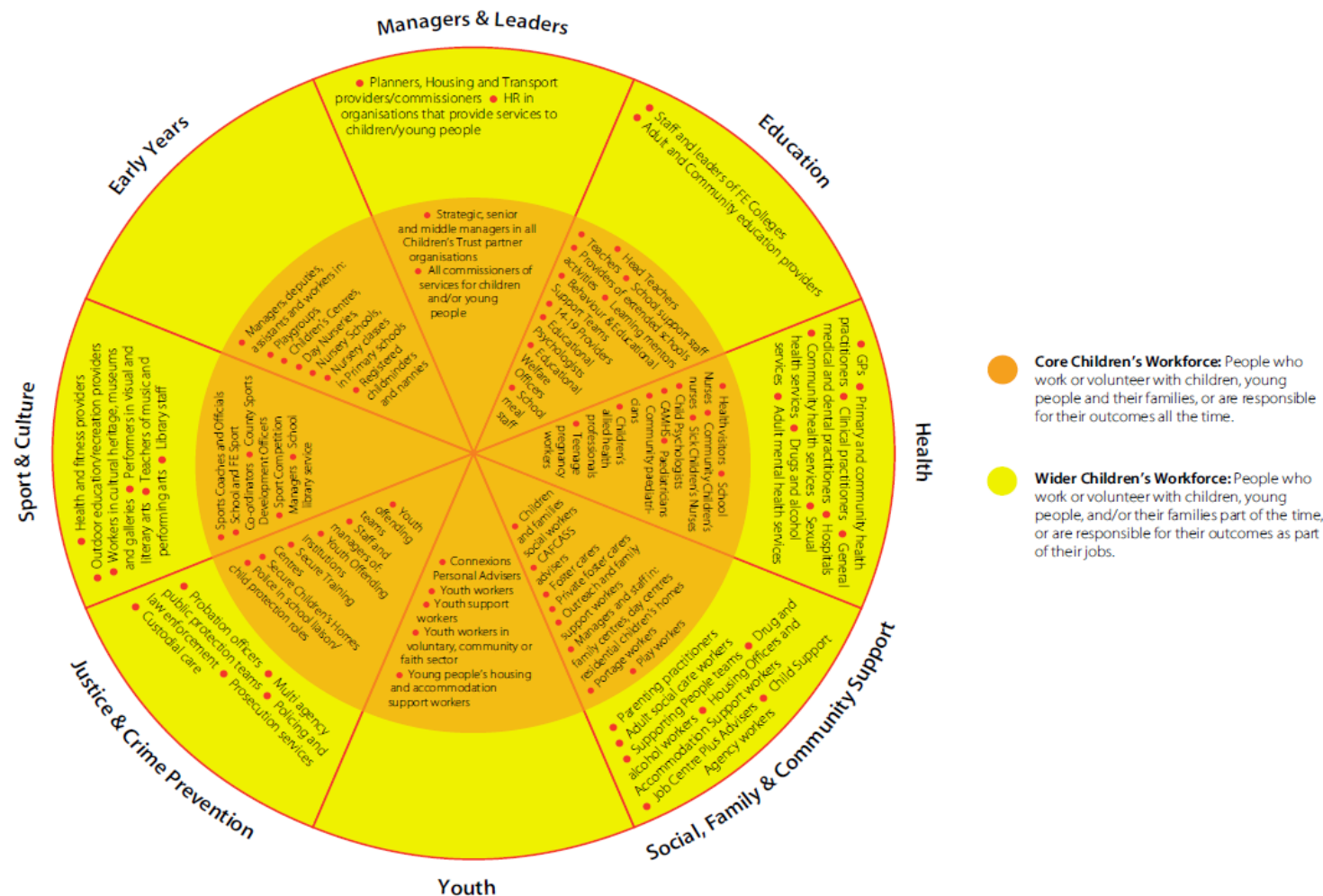




This particular model puts leadership as the pivotal factor in the workforce. It was developed from an earlier model - as well as locating leaders and managers differently this model lists specific roles in more detail.

Figure 3

The Children's Workforce





## 4.2 An Integrated Workforce

There is considerable reference in the policy described in the previous section to 'integrated working'. The Children's Workforce Development Council describes integrated working in this way: 'when everyone supporting children and young people works together effectively to put the child at the centre, meet their needs and improve their lives'<sup>15</sup>.

It is argued that integrated working is needed to<sup>16</sup>:

- Provide more comprehensive approaches to prevention and early intervention in universal settings;
- Provide services that are personalised around the needs of individual children and their parents;
- Make sure that everyone supporting individual children, together with their parents, shares high expectations of them to succeed;
- Provide better co-ordination and a single point of contact for families;
- Reduce the likelihood that children or young people who are at risk of harm, or are putting others at risk, go unnoticed by the system.

There is a growing evidence-base for the positive outcomes generated by integrated working. For example, Atkinson et al (2002) identified the following<sup>17</sup>:

- Access to services not previously available, and a wider range of services
- Easier or quicker access to services or expertise
- Improved educational attainment and better engagement in education
- Early identification and intervention
- Better support for parents
- Children's needs addressed more appropriately
- Better quality services
- Reduced need for more specialist services.

Developing a children and young people's workforce drawn from a range of sectors, with the capacity to work in an integrated fashion, does not imply that specialist roles will be weakened<sup>18</sup>:

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<sup>15</sup> CWDC (2008). Integrated Working Explained.

<sup>16</sup> HMSO (2007). Building Brighter Futures: Next Steps for the Children's Workforce.

<sup>17</sup> Atkinson et al (2002). Multi-agency Working: A Detailed Study.

<sup>18</sup> HMSO (2007). Building Brighter Futures: Next Steps for the Children's Workforce.

*“We are not seeking to develop a homogenous workforce – either in terms of skills and knowledge or in terms of employment arrangements or terms and conditions. Rather, we are seeking to build capacity in each distinct group within the workforce and to ensure people from different specialisms can work better together to address all the needs and well-being of children and their families”.*

The system will be re-modelled so that its processes promote better integrated working. The workforce will be developed so that each sector has the skills to deliver its specialism in an integrated context<sup>19</sup>:

*“This means practitioners working together in an integrated way, characterised by professional respect and mutual trust, cutting across institutional boundaries to fit services around the needs of children. It involves working in teams made up of people from a range of professional backgrounds”.*

### **4.3 Developing an integrated workforce**

A number of tools are available to support the development of a workforce for supporting vulnerable children and families:

#### **A model for strategic development of the workforce**

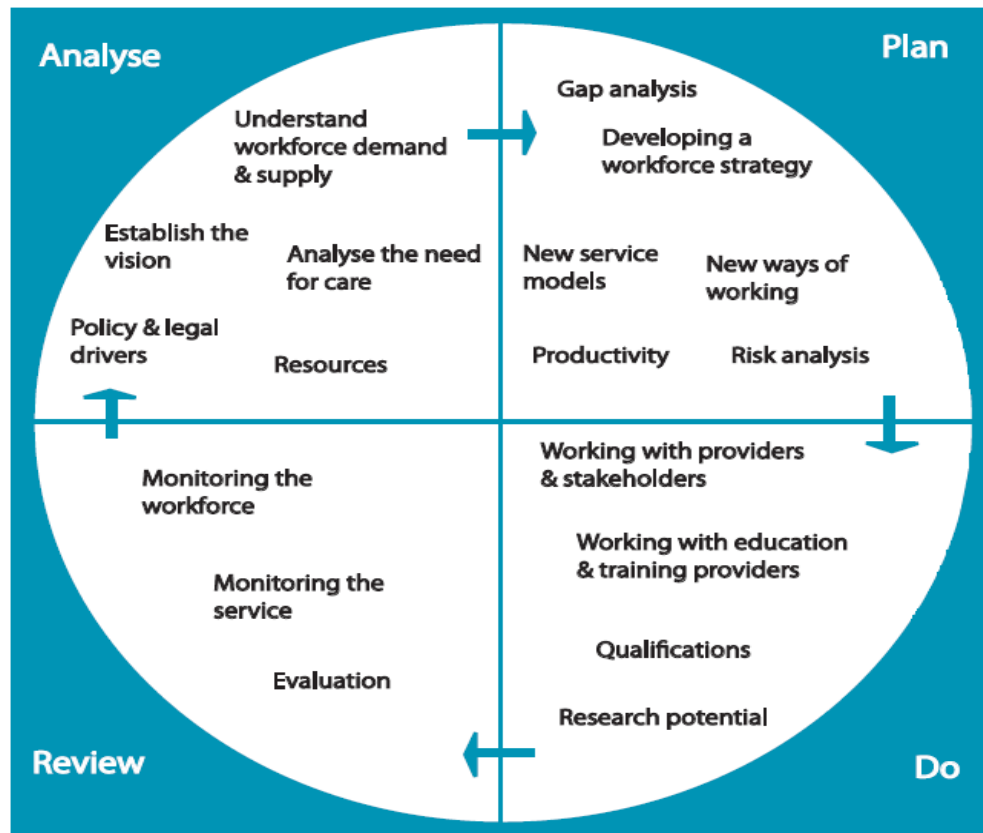
A model developed by IPC offers a clear, cyclical approach to the strategic development of the workforce<sup>20</sup>:

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<sup>19</sup> HMSO (2008). Children’s Trust: Statutory guidance on inter-agency cooperation to improve well-being of children, young people and their families.

<sup>20</sup> IPC (2010). How to commission the adult social care workforce. North West Joint Improvement Partnership.

Figure 4



### A framework for workforce reform

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) have developed a framework for workforce reform with an accompanying self assessment tool which looks at 8 strands of strategic workforce reform or development:

- Capacity to deliver and keep children safe.
- Complementary roles focused around children and young people.
- High quality, appropriately trained workforce.
- Integrated working practices.
- Behaviours focused on positive outcomes for children and young people.
- Common values and language.
- Shared identity, purpose and vision.
- Outcomes focused.

### The Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce

The Common Core is also being used in the development of workforce strategies. The Common Core sets out skills and knowledge that everyone who works with children and young people is expected to have under six

main headings, which offers a single framework to underpin multi-agency and integrated working, professional standards, training and qualifications across the children and young people's workforce.

- Effective communication and engagement with children, young people and families. Good communication is central to working with children, young people, families and carers. It helps to build trust, and encourages them to seek advice and use services. Skills which include: listening and building empathy; and summarising and explaining. Knowledge which includes: how communication works; sources of support; and importance of respect.
- Child and young person development. This core area covers the physical, intellectual, linguistic, social and emotional growth and development of babies, children and young people. Skills include: observation and judgement; and empathy and understanding. Knowledge which includes: understanding the context; understanding how babies, children and young people develop; and being clear about own job role.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child or young person. People who work with children and young people have responsibilities to safeguard and promote their welfare. Skills which include: being able to relate, recognise and take considered action; communication, recording and reporting; and personal skills. Knowledge which includes: legal and procedural frameworks; wider context of services; and self understanding.
- Supporting transitions. The term 'transitions' is used to refer to changes between services, or to common life changes. Skills include: identify transitions; and provide support. Knowledge which include: how children and young people respond to change; and when and how to intervene.
- Multi-agency and integrated working. Different services, agencies, teams of professionals and other staff working together to provide services that meet the needs of children, young people and their parents or carers. Skills which include: communication and teamwork; and assertiveness. Knowledge which includes: role and remit; how to make queries; and procedures and working methods.
- Information sharing. Sharing information in a timely and accurate way is an essential part of delivering better services. It is important to understand and respect the legislation and ethics surrounding confidentiality and security of information. Skills which include: information handling; and engagement. Knowledge which includes: importance of information sharing; and roles and responsibilities.

### **Skills Development Framework**

CWDC has developed a Skills Development Framework mapped against the Common Core. CWDC has developed a Skills Development

Framework<sup>21</sup> mapped against the Common Core. The SDF is a model to aid the development of integrated working skills. Skills are defined progressively from level three through to expert practitioner. The skills defined at each level are relevant to integrated working, regardless of the precise role or profession of an individual.

The Skills Development Framework can be used in a number of ways:

- By employees and employers who wish to use a national model of the skills needed for effective integrated working across the young people's workforce.
- By employees and employers who wish to meet continuing professional development (CPD) needs concerning integrated working for specialists within the young people's workforce.
- By employers and workforce development managers involved in commissioning provision and describing local job roles.
- By employers and stakeholders planning sustainable workforce development, including apprenticeships and other qualifications.
- By young people and volunteers who plan to enter the workforce; so they can understand, identify and develop the skills needed for integrated working and plan their careers.

Fundamentally, the SDF is a model against which individuals and employers can benchmark. It groups skills against level descriptors so employees and employers can identify what they need to be able to do in terms of integrated working in order to progress within the young people's workforce. The SDF can therefore be embedded in training and professional development.

The SDF also supports supervision in an integrated workforce. Line managers can use it to ensure the four management functions have the hallmarks of integrated supervision. The SDF can therefore be embedded in induction and supervision activities.

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<sup>21</sup> CWDC (2010). Skills Development Framework.

## Appendix 1

### 1 Working with vulnerable families

The clear messages from policies and research is that a whole family approach built around integrated service to provide holistic support to children and families at the level of need is important<sup>22</sup>. Traditional children and family services have been organised around four tiers of need from universal to specialist services. Increasingly research emphasises the importance of a range of services along the continuum of prevention, protection and remedial. At any one time families may need to access any number of services or interventions. A report by the Efficiency and Innovation Boards New Models of Service Delivery set out the diverse approaches developed across Wales and identified the need for a systematic approach to supporting families that encompassed prevention, protection and remediation:

- Prevention – interventions aimed at building resilience and supporting families to develop the skills and attributes associated with more positive child outcomes, for example, promoting positive parenting and supporting family learning.
- Protection – approaches aimed at early identification and action to support families well before they reach crisis point. These typically involve looser, multi-agency approaches towards meeting identified needs (eg team around the child approaches).
- Remedial – approaches aimed at supporting families that are at or near crisis point, involving a fully integrated approach to service delivery (eg integrated family support services).

In working with children and vulnerable families research suggests that<sup>23</sup>:

- Effective early intervention can prevent huge costs to society later on.
- Locally led programmes help to engage those families who might not otherwise seek help.
- Integrated early years settings beneficial to children’s development. Disadvantaged children who attend child care settings with children from mixed backgrounds make more progress than in settings serving mainly disadvantaged children.

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<sup>22</sup> WAG (2011). Child Poverty Strategy for Wales. Information Document 095/2011.

<sup>23</sup> Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances (2010). Paper 5: Evidence on Interventions to Improve Parenting, the Home Learning Environment and Early Years Attainment. Cabinet Office.

- Voluntary approaches, engagement with parents and support across transitions (for example the transition between primary and secondary school) are important to consider when working with young children.

Forehand and Kotchick cited in Moran et al<sup>24</sup> identified 4 groups of factors that can influence effective implementation of services aimed at working with children and their parents:

- Practical factors - There are a range of practical factors that can contribute to the ease with which services can both get and keep parents, such as: child care facilities; provision of paid transport to and from the service; convenient time and location; non-stigmatising; service is properly advertised and marketed.
- Relational factors - The relationship between parents and those delivering the service can affect both 'getting' and 'keeping' parents as well as issues of 'engagement'. The quality of staff and programme deliver style and content affect implementation and delivery of parenting services.
- Cultural, contextual and situational factors - There are a number of ecological factors which influence services ability to get, keep and engage parents. These include: life circumstances and stresses; gender of parents; cultural sensitivity.
- Strategic factors - Strategic aspects of service delivery that can incentivise attendance and discourage drop out include: persistence in the recruitment of families; addressing parents concerns and anxieties about services; rewarding regular attendance.

Research literature and national guidance has identified some of the key messages for policy about good practice and what works in supporting families and which suggest key characteristics of effectively configured services to vulnerable children, young people and families<sup>25</sup>:

- Services are **accessible** to children, young people and families in their localities, and within a range of settings.
- Services are **acceptable**, for example, parenting advice linked with other advisory services (such as employment and child care); one stop shops that are both welcoming and helpful for older children and young people.
- Services are as **non-stigmatising** as they can be. Generally, targeted services should be embedded in more open-access services, so that a more graduated response can be provided.

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<sup>24</sup> Moran, P; Ghate, D and Wan Der Merwe A (2004) What works in parenting support? A review of the international evidence. Research report no.574. DfES Publications.

<sup>25</sup> Every Child Matters: Next Steps (2004), Department for Education and Skills. Youth Justice: The Next Steps (2003), Home Office.



- Services **focus on key transition points** in a child's life, such as the change from primary to secondary education, transition from child to adult services for young people with disabilities.
- There is a whole-child/young person and whole-family approach that is **enabling and empowering**.
- There are **good links with relevant adult's services** (in particular mental health or drug and alcohol services) so that these services take account of the developmental needs of the child or young person.
- Services are **evidence-based**, grounded in robust evaluation of what works.
- Where possible, **new services are built on existing local networks** and services that are already working well.
- Services are **sustainable**, with support continuing for as long as is needed.

## Appendix 2

### 2 Integrated Family Support Service

The introduction of the Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) model in September 2010<sup>26</sup> is the Welsh Assembly Governments response to concerns that existing services were not sufficiently meeting the needs of some children and families with complex problems. The IFSS model focuses on reconfiguring services towards more effective support and earlier intervention. The IFSS will be a new multi-disciplinary team of professionals with specialist skills in working together to improve outcomes for children and families.

Initially concentrating on families where parental substance misuse coexists with concerns about the welfare of the child, the multiagency teams will work to provide targeted support and better connect children and adult service with a focus on the family as a unit. Over time the service will be extended to families within which there are:

- Mental health problems or mental illness.
- Learning disabilities.
- Domestic violence.

The primary focus for changes to this provision of services for vulnerable families is to “increase the skills of the work force by providing them with training, supervision and support in order to deliver high quality services to some of the most vulnerable families in Wales”<sup>27</sup>. Options for a new career structure including the establishment of a new professional title Consultant Social Worker has been explored within the pioneer ISF teams in Wales, to encourage and reward those who wish to remain working directly with clients. Furthermore, a key principle of the IFSS model is for the teams to help build capacity within the wider workforce by disseminating good practice and building confidence. Training modules will be delivered to partners and other agencies across health and social care looking at:

- Enhancing motivation.
- Lowering resistance.
- Goal centred interventions.

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<sup>26</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/parenting/help/ifst/?lang=en> (accessed 2/3/2011).

<sup>27</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/parenting/help/ifst/catalystforchange/;jsessionid=fKVLNJ3d1pl3RvdydpSmcyQ51TKm3KQNX1nT64SGynqyD2kLjYxT!1531853584?lang=en> (accessed 23/3/11).

- Promoting family change.
- Care pathways – maximising multi-agency planning.
- Substance misuse.

Research suggests that interventions best suited to informing the work of IFSTs are<sup>28</sup>:

- Intensive Family Interventions.
- Motivational Interviewing (for longer term work).
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.
- Social and Behavioural Network Therapy.
- Task-Centred Casework or variations.

Recommendations for the intensive family support team includes<sup>28</sup>:

- The intervention to be delivered by the IFST should be based on motivational interviewing communication skills.
- It should also involve intensive family work and the possibility of other provision as appropriate.
- The quality of the service is likely to be more important than the duration of contact. However, it would seem appropriate for provision to involve a comparatively short period of intensive intervention and a longer period of follow up.
- The IFST needs to consider robust child protection assessment processes which are intrinsically part of (not separate from) the intervention.
- The assessment should be as clear and concrete as possible about the nature of the concerns within the family. As well as considering current needs it should consider possible future outcomes.
- Successful evidence based interventions require: skills training for staff; extensive ongoing supervision; sufficient time for individual and collective reflection on work undertaken; supportive cultures; and strong and committed leadership.

## 2.1 Team around the child

Team around the child (TAC) is a multi-agency service delivery model which coordinates services at the level of each individual child/young person and family. The TAC service model usually includes: some form of joined-up assessment; a lead professional to coordinate work; a virtual or flexible multi-agency team; the development of a TAC support plan; and regular meetings to which the child/young person and family are invited to attend. Evaluations of TAC models suggest that the multi-agency

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<sup>28</sup> Forrester D (2010). Evidence Based Interventions and “Stronger Families”: Recommendations and lessons from a review of evidence. University of Bedfordshire.

approaches are successfully delivering service delivery improvements<sup>29</sup>. A limited core of characteristics that are widely believed to have the potential to increase the effectiveness of team around the family approaches include<sup>30</sup>:

- Think whole system – important to position team around the family initiatives within broader programmes of family support including those aimed at early intervention and prevention.
- Focused services – important to have a clear focus on one or a limited number of issues for the service, for example, child protection/at risk children; domestic violence; substance misuse; or antisocial behaviour. The team skill mix and experience will need to reflect the focus and specific needs of the local area and families in need.
- Learn from others – important to base service models on research and best practice, learning from the experience and evaluation of others.
- Develop a good funding model – important to ensure long term funding viability. In order to do this it will be necessary to evidence the benefits and cost effectiveness of the service. A robust evaluation approach with the collected of appropriate measures must be in place from the outset.

## 2.2 Targeted family and parenting interventions

There is an emerging body of evidence based practice about working effectively with families to improve parenting skills and strengthen the ability of family members to provide care and support to each other. Based on this evidence, from April 2009 all local authorities received extra funding to provide three types of targeted service<sup>31</sup>:

- Youth crime family intervention projects to provide intensive support to families in the greatest difficulty.
- Parenting early intervention programmes to help improve parenting skills of mothers and fathers of children (aged 8-13) who are at risk of poor outcomes.
- Parenting experts and parenting practitioners to provide and advise on the provision of parenting programmes and one-to-one support to parents.

Effective ways of working with the most challenging families are a characteristic of Family Intervention Programmes but can be applied more widely when working with families with complex problems, including<sup>31</sup>:

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<sup>29</sup> WAG (2010). Efficiency and Innovation Board: New Models of Service Delivery. A Qualitative Study of Team around the Family Approaches.

<sup>30</sup> WAG (2010). New Models of Service Delivery: Team around the Family Approaches, Key findings and high potential characteristics.

<sup>31</sup> DCSF (2009). Think Family Toolkit: Improving support for families at risk. Guidance Note 02 – Think family services.

- Multi-agency teams organised around the full range of family needs and drawn from across adults and children's services.
- A co-ordinated support plan for the whole family which pulls agencies together and meets all needs.
- Key workers who case manage families, oversee delivery of multi-agency whole family support plans and co-ordinate the input of other services, who have small caseloads.
- Open access and targeted parenting programmes and one-to-one support to help parents develop their skills and confidence in managing children's behaviour.
- Follow on support to ensure improvements are sustained.

Parenting style has been shown to have a pervasive influence on health and well-being in childhood and adult life, and adequate or good parenting has been shown to have a protective influence against some of the negative outcomes linked to deprivation. There is growing research knowledge about the impact that different styles of parenting have on outcomes for children, including what constitutes 'positive' and negative' qualities of parenting.

It can be helpful to think of parenting support in terms of a series of three dimensions<sup>32</sup>:

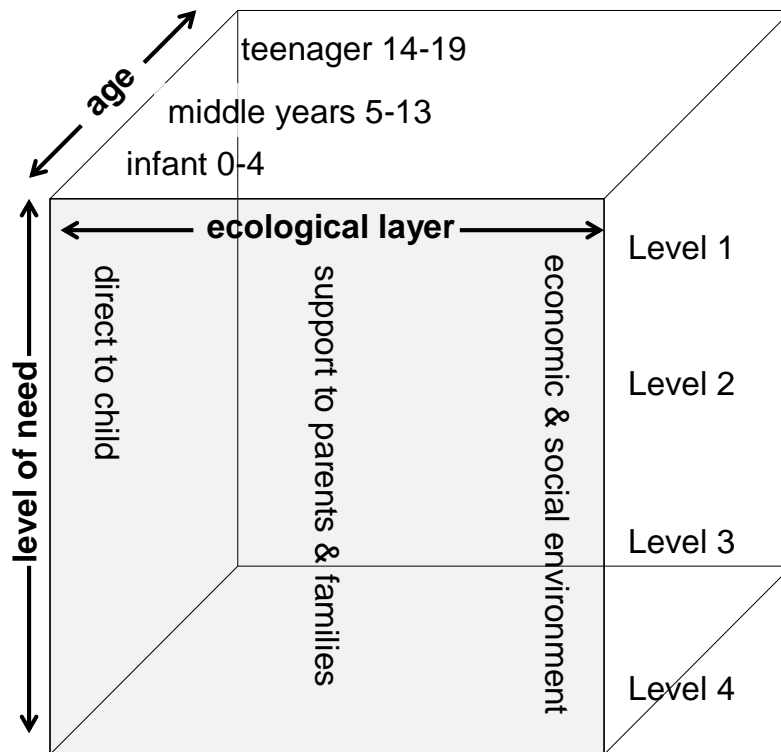
- Child age
- Level of need
- Focus of Intervention: or 'ecological layer'

These are described pictorially in the model below.

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<sup>32</sup> Wiltshire Children and Young People's Services Partnership (2006). Developing a commissioning strategy for family and parenting support – briefing paper.

Figure 1



### Dimension One: Age of Child

Parenting support, including services and programmes aimed at enhancing parenting skills, should be focused on parents of children or young people of a particular age (infant, middle years, and teenager tend to be the ages described in the best practice literature) rather than provided in a uniform way for parents of all age groups together.

### Dimension Two: Level of Need

The second dimension considers differing levels of need. There are different models used to describe levels or tiers of need in the field of family or parenting support, including The Hardiker model<sup>33</sup>. The aim of these models is to differentiate between the needs of most parents (who are likely to require more universal, less specialist services) and the needs of parents who are struggling to provide good enough parenting, or whose children are at risk of significant harm.

### Dimension Three: Focus of Intervention

The third dimension considers the focus of intervention, often considered in terms of different ecological “layers”. In the model above, these are

<sup>33</sup> Hardiker P, Exton K and Barker M (1996). The prevention of child abuse: a framework for analysing services. National commission of Inquiry into the prevention of child abuse: HMSO.

described as: direct work with the child or young person; support to parents and families; and changes to the economic and social environment within which parenting is taking place. All elements may be instrumental in improving outcomes for the child or young person, and as such need to be considered in the context of developing a parenting strategy.

Parenting programmes include:

- The Incredible Years parenting programmes have been developed for parents of children aged 3-8 years who are already exhibiting behavioural and related problems. Incredible Years parent, teacher and child training programs are guided by developmental theory concerning the role of multiple interacting risk and protective factors (child, family, and school) in the development of conduct problems. A comprehensive set of curricula are designed to promote social competence and prevent, reduce, and treat aggression and related conduct problems in young children. They are delivered in small groups or to entire classrooms.
- The Triple P Programme focuses on improving parenting skills for parents of 'middle age' children and teenagers who are experiencing behaviour problems. The aim of the programme is to induce changes in children's problem behaviour by modifying family environments that maintain and reinforce the behaviour.