

Family Focus Team

What We Believe

The Family Focus Team believe that families are experts in their own lives and can identify their own issues and difficulties and draw on their own unique strengths to address their problems. Our team members work with families to help them make self identified changes which will enable them to stay together in a safe way.

The Team

Team members have many years experience working with children and families. The team consists of a Team Manager, Senior Social Workers, Social Workers and a Community Support Worker.

What Families does the Team work with?

Any families with children under 16 who have become involved with Social Services, have difficulties which need support and are willing to engage in intensive work due to recognising the need to make changes.

Social Workers can ring the team to discuss cases that they feel would benefit from the service. All cases referred by social workers must be taken to Vulnerable Children's Panel for agreement for them to be allocated to the service. In situations of crisis a case may be allocated to the team by agreement from a Group Manager, this decision will then need to be ratified in retrospect through Vulnerable Children's Panel.

The family have to be consulted about the referral and given information about the team (including this fact sheet).

The family needs to agree to working with the Family Focus Team and demonstrate their motivation to change, to enable the Family Focus Team to provide input. The

referring worker will also need to be clear about the outcomes they want for the family and the timescale they want changes to be made in. The family need to be clear about the concerns and want to work on them.

The Process

The Social Worker visits the family to explain about the team. If the family agree to the referral the Social Worker will visit the family again with the Family Focus Practitioner. Introductions are made and concerns discussed from the Social Worker's and Families perspective. The case will then be opened to Family Focus. All cases will remain open to the Child Care Team and the referring Social Worker will be involved at the points of review and be kept informed throughout. In Child Protection cases the Child Care Social Worker will continue to be involved under these duties.

The Family Focus Practitioner will visit the family intensively over a period of 4 to 12 weeks to explore the families concerns, values and strengths. A safety plan may need to be put in place by the family. The Family Focus Practitioner will help and support families with any immediate practical needs they have. Through identifying their concerns, values and strengths families are then able to set some self defined goals for their future. At the end of the 4 to 12 week intervention a Maintenance meeting will be held. This meeting will involve all those professionals who are involved with the family and any other people from whom the family receive support. The family's goals will be shared and a Family Plan compiled looking at what further or on-going support the family need to achieve their goals. In keeping with the Care and Support Plan.

Reviews of the Family Plan will then be held

at regular intervals in line with the care and support plan meetings. The meetings will look at the goals set and progress made.

At each Review case closure will be considered if no further support from the team is needed. Most cases would close by the 12 month interval.

The Team are available out of hours should the support needed be out of office hours, but this support will need to be pre-arranged.

In addition

Booster sessions can be carried out with families over the period of work; as lapses are a natural part of change and provide a good opportunity to look at what things are working and what strengths, strategies can be used to overcome the difficulties that arose.

The Family Focus team aims to help families make change and maintain these changes to remain together. It is hoped and has been evidenced that the team can be successful for most families.

Only if safety cannot be maintained will the team have to refer back to the Child Care Management team. If this has to happen the family will be aware and involved in this.

Family Focus Team
Fairfield House
Pontypool, Torfaen
NP4 6JT
Telephone: 01495 742282

“We aim to help families make and maintain changes to remain together”

Torfaen County Borough Council
Civic Centre
Pontypool, Torfaen
NP4 6YB
Telephone: 01495 762200

This factsheet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request. Please contact us in order to arrange this