

Extended Family Pathfinder Project

Project Content

The Extended Family Pathfinder Project offer early intervention with families with additional needs at a universal level, including parents with learning difficulties and their carers. It:

- Supports families where children are at risk of becoming looked after or where there are safeguarding concerns
- Supports families with mental health and substance misuse problems
- Offer early identification of young carers to prevent them undertaking inappropriate caring roles
- Offers intensive action with a cohort of families to lift children out of inappropriate caring
- Identifies of hidden young carers, enabling them to obtain the support they may need

Access Pathway

Families can self-refer or be referred to the project by contacting the Family and Parenting Team on (0191) 443 2908.

2009/10 Performance

- 149 young carers from priority families are receiving group support and of these 43 have one-to-one support
- 12 families are receiving intensive or innovative packages of care. This is below the target of 15 but indicates that the statutory services have been very flexible in what they provide therefore making the use of Pathfinder funding less essential and suggesting 'mainstreaming' the outcomes of the Pathfinder is already happening.
- The Young Carer School Card is in use in all secondary schools and some primary schools. Many schools have been very positive and have had or have booked awareness raising sessions for staff and students and the numbers wanting this is increasing
- The Sunwest Practice-based Commissioning Group has undertaken an audit of its members support for all carers, including young carers, and is now ready to develop protocols for identification
- A group of older young carers has set up a peer support help-line on one evening per week and an editorial group produces a Newsletter written by young carers for young carers. Informal peer mentoring takes place at all the groups and activities as informal support by their peers has been identified as one of the mechanisms particularly valued by young carers.