

# Think Family and adults' services

**As part of the roll out of *Think Family*, government departments are working together to highlight links between adults' and children's services and how they can support families at risk. This note contains information about universal and specialist services which may be able to provide advice and support to practitioners, parents and other adult family members.**

## Why practitioners should make links

1. There are a range of services that can provide advice, support and services for families. Depending on the needs of individual family members or the family as a whole, help may be needed to overcome specific problems, work through difficult 'issues' or could just help life become more bearable by improving the family's social contacts or activities. Signposting or referring parents to services and building up contacts within the services you work with on a regular basis can help build trust with family members and give them confidence to take up support which is on offer.
2. This list is not exhaustive but provides links to useful sources of information. It will be added to as further guidance and service protocols and frameworks are developed.

## Signposting services

### *Local services: local authority Family Information Services*

3. Family Information Services are provided by every local authority (LA) and offer information, advice and assistance to parents, carers and professionals on children, family and young people's services available within their area. They are a good starting point for many family-related queries.
  - The National Association of Family Information Services provides a directory of local family information services on: [www.familyinformationservices.org.uk](http://www.familyinformationservices.org.uk)

### *National services: Parent Know How*

4. Parent Know How provides links to expert advice, provided through national telephone helplines, websites and via mobile phones designed to support everyone in a parenting role – mothers, fathers, carers, and other adults with parental responsibility.

- A directory of national helplines, websites and other services can be found on: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/parents/parentknowhow](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/parents/parentknowhow)

### *Lifestyle and leisure: Change4Life*

5. Keeping occupied and healthy are vital to good mental health and positive outlook. This website provides advice and ideas for practitioners and parents as well as a comprehensive directory of local sports and leisure activities, many of which are free or at reduced cost for children and those receiving benefits.
  - Home page: [www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/default.aspx)

## **Universal services**

### *Children's Centres and extended schools*

6. The services provided by Sure Start Children's Centres (and in some areas, extended schools) vary but they generally bring together a number of different agencies and offer a range of support to meet parents and their child's needs. Parents can get professional advice on health and family matters, for example, arrange for child care or learn about training and job opportunities, or simply just socialise with other parents.
  - To find your nearest Sure Start Children's Centre: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Preschooldevelopmentandlearning/NurseriesPlaygroupsReceptionClasses/DG\\_173054](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Preschooldevelopmentandlearning/NurseriesPlaygroupsReceptionClasses/DG_173054)

### *Further education colleges*

7. Further education colleges within the community are a valuable gateway to aid family members improve their skills and help with literacy and numeracy. They may also offer Apprenticeships.
  - The following link gives an overview of options for school leavers: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/14To19/OptionsAt16/DG\\_4016843](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/14To19/OptionsAt16/DG_4016843)
  - Information on adult learning and skills, student financial help, pre-school help and information about local schools can be found at: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/index.htm)
  - Local voluntary and Community Sector support for learning can be found at: [www.niace.org.uk/projects/vcslearninglinks/Directory.asp](http://www.niace.org.uk/projects/vcslearninglinks/Directory.asp)

### *Jobcentre Plus*

8. For many parents and families work provides a route out of the problems facing them. Jobcentre Plus can provide help and advice on jobs and training for anyone able to work and advice on benefits that are available for those who cannot work due to

disability, ill health or caring responsibilities, and financial help for those who are trying to get a job.

- Job search, benefit claim and general employment information: [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/index.html](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/index.html) and [www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/index.htm)

### *Libraries*

9. The libraries in the LA loan books, CDs, DVDs and training materials and may run support or learning groups or be able to signpost individuals to services and activities within the local community.
  - To find your nearest public library visit: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/YourlocalcouncilandCouncilTax/YourCommunity/DG\\_4018790](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/YourlocalcouncilandCouncilTax/YourCommunity/DG_4018790)

### *Police*

10. Safer Neighbourhood Teams are made up of police officers and community support officers, often working alongside special constables, LA staff and volunteers. They focus on making neighbourhoods safer and ensuring that local problems are dealt with quickly. They often meet with residents to hear their concerns and may become engaged when families are involved in complaints about anti-social behaviour or in helping arrange activities to keep young people busy and 'off the streets'. They do not deal with emergencies but are often able to provide advice, support or just keep an eye on families experiencing problems. In an emergency you should still dial 999.
  - This website provides details on how to contact your local Safer Neighbourhood Team: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/CrimeJusticeAndTheLaw/CrimePrevention/DG\\_072774](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/CrimeJusticeAndTheLaw/CrimePrevention/DG_072774)

### *Primary care*

11. Primary care is the term for the health services that provide most NHS care in the local community: GPs, pharmacists, dentists and midwives. Primary care providers are usually the first point of contact for a patient and refer patients to more specialist care such as when a patient may be experiencing mental or physical health problems.
  - The following link will enable you to find out about your local service and other related health information: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/HealthAndWellBeing/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HealthAndWellBeing/index.htm)

## **Specialist advice and support**

### *Alcohol treatment*

12. There are a range of organisations that offer advice and treatment to those experiencing problems with alcohol or alcohol dependence. The Alcohol Services

Directory provides a listing of alcohol services and types of treatment in England and an explanation of the range of treatment options available. The directory includes information on types of treatment including specialist listings on: residential services; young people's services; and women's services.

- The NHS website has a 'services near you' section:  
[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholhome.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholhome.aspx)
- A more general alcohol concern help and advice website:  
[www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/servlets/helpandinfo/directory.jsp](http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/servlets/helpandinfo/directory.jsp)
- Online resources and learning for commissioners, planners and practitioners working to reduce alcohol-related harm can be found on:  
[www.alcohollearningcentre.org.uk/](http://www.alcohollearningcentre.org.uk/)

#### *Debt and legal advice*

13. Citizen's Advice centres, legal aid centres and solicitors providing legal aid funded services can provide impartial and confidential advice to families experiencing financial or legal problems.

- Free and confidential legal advice and details of how to get legal aid is available on:  
[www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk/](http://www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk/)
- Advice on debt is available on:  
[www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/ManagingDebt/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/ManagingDebt/index.htm)
- Citizen's Advice including local service details are available on:  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/)
- Resources from the Financial Services Authority on how to manage money are available on: [www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk/](http://www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk/)

#### *Drug treatment*

14. There are a variety of organisations set up to help people with drug dependence. Details of local services are available from the FRANK helpline or website. Every area has a Drug Action Team which plans and commissions local services and is involved in delivering the Drug Interventions Programme which aims to get adult drug-misusing offenders out of crime and into treatment and other support.

- FRANK website for young people, parents and carers:  
[www.talktofrank.com/home\\_html.aspx](http://www.talktofrank.com/home_html.aspx)
- Regional contact details for Drug Action Teams:  
[www.nta.nhs.uk/areas/regions/default.aspx](http://www.nta.nhs.uk/areas/regions/default.aspx)

- Information about drug treatment and advice on service development provided by the National Treatment Agency can be found on: [www.nta.nhs.uk/](http://www.nta.nhs.uk/)

### *Housing Advice Centres*

15. Usually based in an LA – Housing Advice Centres are able to help families with advice on housing problems whether those affected are living with friends or family, or are lodgers, tenants, landlords or owners. They can also help if families are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Third sector organisations, such as Shelter (the housing and homeless charity), also provide telephone and web support and a drop-in service in some areas.

- Details of housing services provided by your LA: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/index.htm)
- Shelter is at: <http://england.shelter.org.uk/>

### *Mental health*

16. General Practitioners (GPs) can provide advice and treatment for people with mental health problems including depression, anxiety states, eating disorders, psychosis schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder/manic-depressive illness, and dementia. They can also provide information on seeking help and treatments or refer patients to more specialist care provided by NHS mental health trusts. A range of third sector services are also available as well as telephone helplines and websites.

- A list of local organisations specialising in mental health can be found on: [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_4007780](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4007780)
- MIND is the leading mental health charity providing a network of local services and other advice and information on: [www.mind.org.uk/](http://www.mind.org.uk/)
- Web-based support on best practice from the National Mental Health Development Unit can be found at on: [www.nmhdu.org.uk/](http://www.nmhdu.org.uk/)

### *One-stop-shop services and women's centres*

17. Many voluntary organisations operate centres for women experiencing problems. The Ministry of Justice also funds one-stop-shop services which aim to help divert women with very complex needs away from the criminal justice system and to help address social exclusion. To find out where these projects are in your local area, practitioners should contact their Regional Directors of Offenders Management Office in the first instance (see Bibliography for contact details).

- Further details on all these services can be found on the Griffins Society Women's Information Network (WIN) Database: [www.thegriffinsociety.org/](http://www.thegriffinsociety.org/)

### *Probation services*

18. The National Probation Service rehabilitates offenders given community sentences and those released from prison; enforces the conditions of their court orders and release licences; and takes steps to protect the public. The Priority Prolific Offender programme (PPO) tackles those offenders who have been identified as committing the most crime and causing the most harm to their communities. PPO schemes are now established in every Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership area. They provide a joined up, multi-agency offender management model involving representatives from the local police and probation services, LAs and youth offending teams.

- Contact details of local Probation areas:  
[www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/page21.asp](http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/page21.asp)

### *Social services*

19. There are many different social services available from LAs. These include services provided to adults suffering from physical or mental disabilities.

- Information on the types of service available and a local directory can be found on:  
[www.direct.gov.uk/en/H11/Help/Socialservices/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/H11/Help/Socialservices/index.htm)

### *Violence against women services*

20. There are a range of organisations that offer advice and support for women who are victims of violence. The 'UK Gold Book' is a directory for refuge and domestic abuse services and provides comprehensive information about the type of services provided and referral procedures. The National Domestic Violence Helpline is a free helpline that women experiencing domestic violence can call 24 hours a day. They can help abused women and their children access places of safety in the network of refuges across the UK.

- Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline (run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge) 0808 2000 247. Website: [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)
- The DABS Directory is a useful resource for information about sexual violence services: [www.dabsbooks.co.uk/](http://www.dabsbooks.co.uk/)
- The Women's Aid website contains information on the Gold book and local domestic violence services: [www.womensaid.org.uk/](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/)



