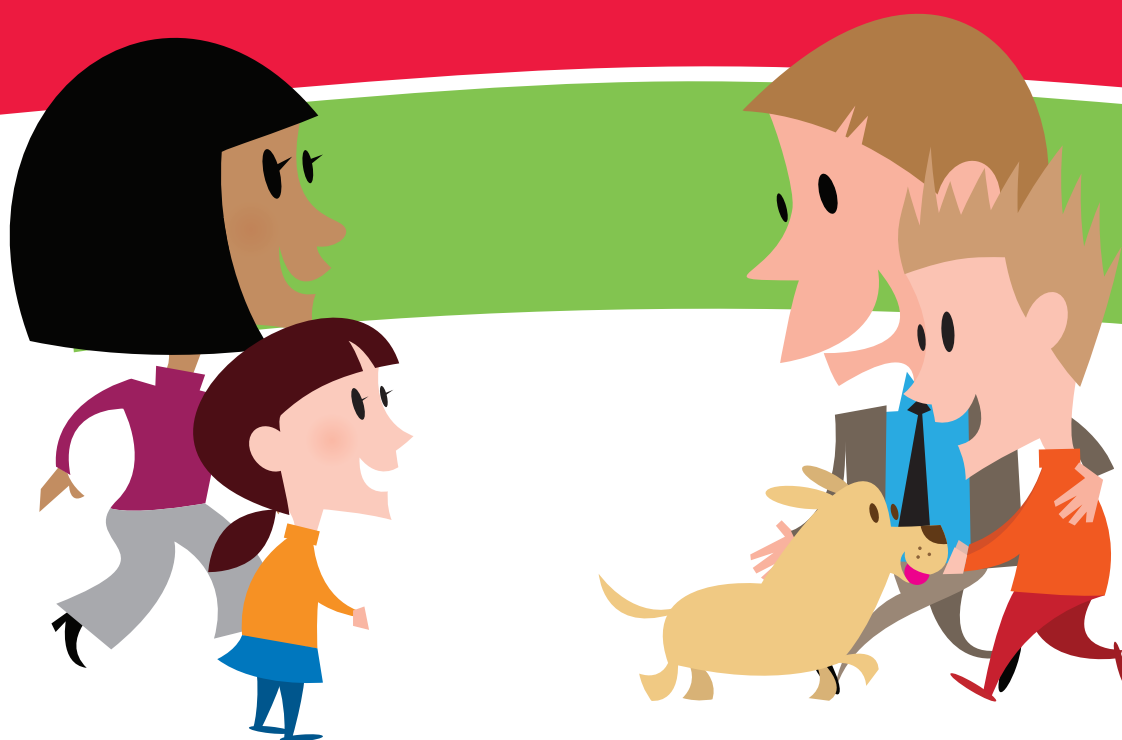


# Think Family Toolkit

Improving support  
for families at risk

Strategic overview





# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>What is <i>Think Family</i> practice?</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Services which <i>Think Family</i></b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Children’s Trusts which <i>Think Family</i></b>	<b>9</b>
<b><i>Think Family</i> is more effective and cost-effective</b>	<b>11</b>
<b><i>Think Family</i>, prevention and early intervention</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Supporting the families with the greatest needs</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Estimating the number of families needing intensive support</b>	<b>16</b>
<b><i>Think Family</i> and safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Target setting and commissioning for <i>Think Family</i></b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Resources, grant requirements and monitoring</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Measurement of success</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Support</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Annex – Relevant Government Plans and Strategies</b>	<b>23</b>

## Foreword

Families, in whatever form they take, are the bedrock of our society. Mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, grandparents, step family and extended family members provide the support, safety and encouragement in which children grow up and use as a springboard for creating their place within the world. Often it is the commitment of mothers and fathers to do the best for their children which motivates the family to overcome the challenges which life throws at them.

Each of our Departments are committed to helping families succeed through everything which we do. If families are to thrive, they need effective health and education services and decent, affordable housing.

Of course all families experience problems from time to time. For some, timely advice from a friend, trusted professional or signposting to a source of help is all that is needed. For others, for example where a family member is experiencing a long-term health problem, has a child who has got into trouble with the police or has been excluded from school, more intensive help may be needed. Taking wider family needs into account when helping individual family members is key to success. Children whose mothers and fathers have attended positive parenting programmes experience far fewer behaviour problems for example. Understanding that someone has child care responsibilities or is motivated to succeed because of their children's or partner's needs, can help ensure that the support they are offered to find a job or overcome a health problem, aids rather than hinders them.

The Social Exclusion Taskforce in their *Families at Risk* review estimated that around 140,000 of the 13.8 million families in England experience entrenched problems of the type which are often passed from generation to generation. The children of these families are, for example, ten times more likely to be in trouble with the police and eight times more likely to be excluded from school. This is despite the support which is often provided from a large number of different agencies. But evidence shows this support often doesn't succeed because it is poorly co-ordinated and does not take into account the wider family problems which lie at the root of those experienced by individual children or adult family members.

*Think Family* practice – making sure that the support provided by children's, adults' and family services is co-ordinated and focused on problems affecting the whole family – is important for everyone, and is the *only* effective way of working with families experiencing the most significant problems.

This is why the Government is committed to a national programme of reform and culture change which involve all schools' and children's services, the NHS, Jobcentres Plus, police, probation and prisons:

- to improve the *identification and support* of adults experiencing problems who are parents or carers; and
- to *co-ordinate the support* that is provided by different agencies to each family, especially those experiencing significant problems.

Since April 2009 all local authorities are able to access extra funding to support these reforms and introduce targeted services for parents and families experiencing particular problems.

This Toolkit sets out some of the ways in which these practices can be developed 'on the ground' and represents an important step towards setting out how *Think Family* can be made a reality in day-to-day practice. Much of what it contains has been developed locally and reflects the enormous commitment and ingenuity of those working with children, mothers, fathers and families. Our endorsement of this Toolkit reflects the shared commitment between our Department to support them in this important work.



*Dawn Primarolo*

Dawn Primarolo,  
Minister for Children, Young  
People and Families, DCSF



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Housing and Planning,  
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Government

## Introduction

1. **Think Family means securing better outcomes for children, young people and families with additional needs by co-ordinating the support they receive from children's, young people's, adults' and family services.**
2. *Think Family* can also be seen as building the family dimension into everything we do. It refers to a specific set of reforms developed by the Social Exclusion Taskforce that found families experiencing multiple and inter-generational disadvantage were still achieving poor outcomes despite significant improvements in outcomes across the rest of society. The complex and inter-generational nature of the problems some families face mean that it will take a significant amount of time and effort to achieve change. Nevertheless, the Government is committed to doing more to enable and support communities and services to drive forward and embed reforms that research and the experience of families and practitioners suggest will make a real difference.
3. *Think Family* is based on *evidence-based practice* and is closely linked to the *early intervention framework* set out in the White Paper: *Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system*. It is important that every local authority develops a framework and processes for identifying children's needs and ensuring they are met, and the roles and responsibilities of different services working with both individuals

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and families. A consultation document will take forward the commitment in the White Paper to set out what a national framework should look like and how this should be implemented locally.

4. Since 2007 *Think Family* approaches have been tested in 15 pathfinder areas, and as announced in the recent Youth Crime Action Plan and The Children's Plan *One Year On Report*, from April 2009 all local authorities now receive extra funding to:
  - implement *Think Family* reforms to local authority and health service systems and services;
  - set up Youth Crime Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) to provide intensive support to families in the greatest difficulty;
  - offer Parenting Early Intervention Programmes (PEIPs) to help improve parenting skills of mothers and fathers of children (aged 8–13) who are at risk of poor outcomes; and
  - continue to fund Parenting Experts and Parenting Practitioners in all top tier authorities.
5. In addition, some local authorities continue to be eligible for significant additional funding to support the development of family-based approaches to tackle anti-social behaviour and child poverty.



## What is Think Family practice?

6. *Think Family* means reforming systems and services provided for vulnerable children, young people and adults to secure *better outcomes* for children, by *co-ordinating* the support they receive from children's, adults' and family services so that they can:
  - identify families at risk of poor outcomes to provide support at the earliest opportunity;
  - meet the full range of needs within each family they are supporting or working with;
  - develop services which can respond effectively to the most challenging families; and
  - strengthen the ability of family members to provide care and support to each other.
7. Services of all types – statutory, voluntary and independent – may all come into contact with families at risk of poor outcomes. The implications of *Think Family* are far reaching and extend to both universal and targeted services working with adults, young people, children and families and working across all sectors.
8. *Think Family* reforms should form an integral part of local strategies to improve children's well-being and in particular Children and Young People's Plans (CYPP) and other local strategic plans.

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### Islington Family Pathfinder – progress implementing systems change

Islington local authority has introduced a *Think Family* Programme Board which is chaired by an Assistant Director from Adult Mental Health, and has a Children's Social Care Service Head as deputy chair. The Board is attended by senior managers from adults' and children's services from both the statutory and voluntary sector. The Board drives forward the programme of change via its feedback to the Family Support Strategy Group (FSSG), which leads the early intervention and prevention work for families at risk. The FSSG reports to the Children's Board and, ultimately, to the Local Strategic Partnership.

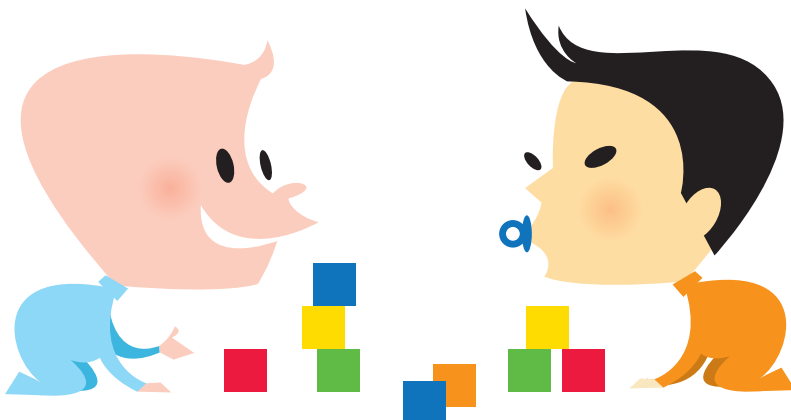
A *Think Family* service based upon joint working between adults' and children's services has been established and agencies referring families to the team are expected to remain involved in the first phase of an intervention with a family. The team undertake multi-agency, whole family assessments based upon the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). Identified unmet needs and support to build upon family strengths are set out in a support plan, developed at multi-agency 'Team Around the Family' (TAF) meetings and regularly reviewed.

An extensive workforce development programme is embedding integrated working practices amongst staff working with children, young people and parents. The *Think Family* team delivers training on *Think Family* approaches, services available locally and referral routes into these. 'Safeguarding Children' training has also been arranged for adult mental health services and an adult mental health practitioner is working with the Local Safeguarding Children Board to deliver training for new social workers in both adults' and children's services.

9. When working with families it is important to 'Think Fathers' as well. Fathers can have a significant, positive impact on their children's outcomes. For example, research shows that children with highly involved fathers do better at school and are more empathic in the way that they behave. More and more fathers want to be involved within their family and in their children's upbringing even if they are no longer living with the children and their mother. However, many fathers find this difficult and feel they are not recognised or encouraged to get involved by schools or health services. Children's services can still be very mother-focused and fathers can, often inadvertently, be made to feel unwelcome or uncomfortable when they try to use them. Managers and commissioners should therefore make sure that their services take account of the needs of fathers and actively look for ways to engage them. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) publication *Dad Test* sets out practical steps organisations can take to remove these barriers to fathers' participation.

## Services which Think Family

10. All services which *Think Family* need to consider the family situation in all areas of their work, and:
- use assessments to establish how the needs of other family members affect their client and whether meeting those needs might benefit their client;
  - work with other local agencies to identify, refer and plan how the needs of wider family members can be met alongside their client, for example referring a parent to drug or alcohol services, or helping them claim financial support they are entitled to;
  - seek out specialist advice and support when multiple or complex needs are identified, for example multi-agency whole family support;
  - agree how information can be shared to identify those in need or at risk of poor outcomes and plan the most appropriate support;
  - champion *Think Family* practice through joint staff training and recruitment and the information they provide to service users and the public;
  - prioritise the safety and welfare of children within the family, involve the child's social worker and follow Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures when children may be at risk of suffering from harm (when domestic violence is suspected or a child appears to be neglected for example); and
  - consider the involvement, potential contribution and (when appropriate) the risks associated with all of the adults who have a significant influence on a family, even if they are not living in the same house, or are not formally a family 'member'.



## Children's Trusts which Think Family

11. Children's Trusts which *Think Family* identify strategic *Think Family* champions who lead and account for progress in reforming systems and services, and:

- secure the agreement of adults', young people's and children's services to use *Think Family* approaches and practices and agree with partners the contribution on how this will help deliver national and local targets and reduce demands on other services;

**Note:** *Think Family approaches and services could help to deliver existing local targets to meet the needs of vulnerable children, young people or adults as set out in Local Area Agreements, Children and Young Peoples Plans and Parenting Strategies. Planned reductions in the cost burden on the criminal justice system, care system and health service expected to follow interventions with families which have made significant calls on these services in the past could also be estimated.*

- seek out and respond to the needs and preferences of family members when designing or reviewing strategies, policies and services;
- ensure that universal services like Sure Start Children's Centres, Family Information Services, and schools, including extended school provision, act as a gateway to more intensive help;
- commission targeted parent and family support services for families with complex needs. These should use an evidence-based approach and a good knowledge of 'what works for whom and how' locally and draw upon good working relationships with a wide range of service providers including the third sector;

**Note:** *These can include parent and family support provided through Sure Start Children's Centres, extended schools, parenting support programmes, and voluntary sector and community organisations. More intensive support for families is usually co-ordinated and in part delivered by key workers (usually a family worker who provides or arranges for practical support and evidence-based interventions and may also take on the role of a lead professional for some or all family members). The key worker is then backed up by a multi-agency panel or team. Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) are based on this approach.*

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- share information needed to assess and support family needs (with their consent and in line with national guidance/local information sharing arrangements) and use staff training, family assessments and budget pooling arrangements to intervene earlier, co-ordinate and 'join up' support for members of families at risk.

**Note:** In 2008 the Government published Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers. This guidance is applicable to practitioners and managers in both children's and adults' services. The guidance and supporting material can be found at: [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/informationsharing](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/informationsharing)

### Case study – County Durham, targeting families 'at risk'

County Durham operates a Family Pathfinder, Family Intervention Teams and a Parenting Early Intervention Programme which together are able to work with at least 450 families each year. Following a robust analysis of local data three teams were formed to work with families 'at risk' in the three areas of the County with the greatest levels of need.

Adults' services are represented at all levels of the Family Pathfinder project and a pathway to help adults' services to access support for their children of their service users. The CAF and whole family assessment are used to identify the needs of every member of the family. Another initiative developed with adults' services and using a *Think Family* approach has piloted work to support parents with learning difficulties who are experiencing parenting problems.

A 'Think Family/Think Community' strategic group has been set up to drive *Think Family* implementation across the County. This group includes senior representatives from adults' and children's services including the Primary Care Trust's adult and child health commissioners and housing services. The group provides an overarching strategic approach to the commissioning, co-ordination and development of local services to families and communities.



## Think Family is more effective and cost-effective

12. A small number of families are responsible for a disproportionate amount of the workload of many different agencies. These families experience multiple problems and need significant amounts of support, sometimes for a long period of time. But although schools, health services, the criminal justice system and housing services may all have regular contact with the same family this does not mean that all of the family's needs are being identified or met.
13. There are powerful economic arguments for targeting intensive and co-ordinated support towards families with complex problems. The estimated cost of a family who is being evicted from their home for anti-social behaviour is estimated at between £250,000–£350,000 per annum, whilst the cost of a FIP working with one family, that could prevent the family being evicted and children being accommodated, is £14,000 per annum. Potential savings for a range of local services can be calculated based on the outcomes of the first families leaving FIPs as set out in Toolkit Guidance Note 4.
14. Assessing and identifying broader needs of all family members and supporting them all in a co-ordinated way can minimise duplication by frontline services and free up resources to provide additional support to the families that need it most. Adults' services working

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with, for example, a disabled mother or father can help ensure that children in the family are supported and protected and that family members are better able to support each other in future.

15. The duty placed on all statutory bodies to secure the safety and welfare of children means that all those involved in the planning and delivery of whole-family interventions, and most importantly the child's social worker, should be satisfied that the support being provided to the parent is in the best interests of the child or children involved. When a child is thought to be at risk in any way local safeguarding procedures should be followed.



## Think Family, prevention and early intervention

16. A vital part of *Think Family* practices are the steps taken by children's, young people's and adults' services to identify child and wider family needs which extend beyond the individual they are supporting. Intervening early with a *Think Family* approach can help avoid problems escalating to crisis level and reduce the number of families and individuals who need intensive support in the future.

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## Supporting the families with the greatest needs

17. *Think Family* approaches help to provide responses to the most vulnerable families and reduce inter-generational cycles of poor outcomes. By following evidence-based models for intervention intensive family-focused interventions with the most chaotic families and those with complex problems, such as FIPs, have been remarkably successful in engaging and bringing about change for families with whom services have not been successful in the past<sup>1</sup>.
18. Children with health or behavioural problems or who are involved in anti-social or criminal activity, poor school attendance, and parents with mental or physical health problems or drug and alcohol dependence have all been shown to benefit from this approach whilst reductions in anti-social behaviour and risk of homelessness overall have been particularly impressive.

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1 National Centre for Social Research, **Family Intervention Projects – An Evaluation of their Design, Set-up and Early Outcomes (2008)**.  
[www.dfes.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectId=15499&type=5&resultspage=1](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectId=15499&type=5&resultspage=1)



### Case study: Nottingham Family Intervention Project

The Police, social services and education agreed to refer a family to the Nottingham FIP following reports of regular anti-social behaviour, non school attendance, concerns about child neglect and a threat of eviction. The four eldest children had not been attending school in the past 18 months and the two youngest children who were accessing education were at risk of permanent exclusion due to their very challenging and aggressive behaviour. The children's parents showed little evidence of being able to set boundaries, exercise discipline methods and could not communicate well with their children. The father had acute mental health difficulties and the mother was alcohol dependent and suffered depression.

A multi-agency conference was convened and the family's support needs were prioritised and arrangements for the co-ordination of a number of other services agreed.

- The FIP prioritised the family's housing situation and secured the local authority housing provider's agreement to suspend plans to evict the family while the FIP worked with family members.
- The FIP worker visited the family daily, early (7am) and late (midnight) to help establish parenting routines.
- Both parents were also asked to sign parenting contracts and anti-social behaviour contracts were served on the children.
- Alcohol services and counselling were arranged for the mother.
- Education/training was arranged for all the children, including a statement of educational need for one child.
- Specialist emotional and mental health support was provided by child and adolescent mental health services and adult mental health services.
- Tenancy support and debt management were provided.
- A multi-agency team around the family met every six weeks to review progress in dealing with their many complex needs.

In the last six months there have been no complaints of anti-social behaviour. All the school-age children are now in full-time education with over 90 per cent attendance. The mother has benefited from the specialist counselling support, her confidence has risen, the household is now functioning in a structured manner and she has attended employment training. There have been major improvements in parenting including by some of the children (who are also parents) and little evidence of the squalor previously found in the household. This family have now left the FIP and these positive changes have been sustained.

## Estimating the number of families needing intensive support

19. The Government's *Families at Risk* review estimated that around 140,000 of the 13.8 million families in England experienced at least five of the risk factors that are known to be linked to poor outcomes. The risk factors included in this analysis were:
  - no parent in the family in **work**;
  - family living in poor quality or **overcrowded housing**;
  - no parent with any **qualifications**;
  - mother with **mental health** problems;
  - at least one parent has a **long-standing limiting illness, disability or infirmity**;
  - family with **low income** (below 60 per cent median); and
  - family **cannot afford** a number of food and clothing items.
20. Many other relevant risk factors which could not be included within these estimates, but which can be identified through individual and family needs assessments. These include involvement in criminal or anti-social behaviour by one or more family members, learning difficulties, drug and alcohol dependence, a history of or current domestic violence, or long-term unemployment.
21. At any one time a minority of these families are experiencing such severe problems that intensive support of the kind provided by FIPs is needed. The extra funding allocated to all local authorities is intended to ensure that 20,000 families are able to receive FIP support by 2011 alongside much wider availability of parenting programmes and one-to-one support.
22. Expanding these services is a significant challenge for local authorities despite the extra funding which is now available. It means recruiting staff with a sound understanding of the skills to support families and a significant commitment from strategic managers to bring local services 'to the table' and sustain the involvement of both families and the agencies in the agreed intervention programme.
23. Equally important is the role of Children's Trust partners including mainstream local authority, health and criminal justice services and frontline services like schools, GPs and Sure Start Children's Centres in identifying families which are experiencing serious problems and ensuring that they get the support they need to prevent their situation worsening.

### Community beat officer's testimony: "I don't know what you've done, but it's marvellous" (real names not used)

At the point of referral to the FIP, Jane, a single mother with three children, was described by the local neighbourhood community beat officer as having *"gone off the rails"*. No single agency *"had taken ownership of the problem"* and as a result the family had *"fallen through the net"*.

The problem behaviour started when Jane moved into private rented accommodation located in a neighbourhood with a 'good reputation'. Her eldest daughter, who was pregnant, was in a violent relationship with a drug dealer; her younger daughter was exhibiting poor behaviour at school and was bullying others. Jane's son, who was suspected of taking part in a number of thefts and burglaries, had spent some time in care. When he returned to live with the family he did not get on with Jane's new partner and as a result Jane's partner moved out. This event was described by the community beat officer as *"sending Mum into turmoil. She ended up not going to work. Started drinking, having parties, trying to get another fella really, having people around"*. Shortly afterwards, Jane's eldest daughter lost her baby due to a cot death. Over 18 months numerous complaints were made about noisy parties, allegations of drug dealing from the premises, reports of people threatening neighbours with baseball bats, and cars coming and going at all times of day and night.

At the point of referral to the FIP, the neighbours, who were described as *"highly motivated educated people"*, had made numerous reports to the police, the local MP, and the local paper and wanted the family moved. The project worker worked closely with each member of the family to address the underlying problems. Jane was provided with support in developing parenting routines and structures; her son was assisted in getting a job as a Youth Training Service mechanic and was helped with budgeting skills; a system of rewards was established to address the younger daughter's aggressive and bullying behaviour.

Following six months of intensive work with the project the changes that were achieved were remarkable and resulted in neighbours writing to the local beat officer saying: *"I don't know what you've done, but it's marvellous."*



## Think Family and safeguarding and promoting children's welfare

24. *Think Family* practice and philosophy means helping parents/families secure better outcomes for their children through more effective and better co-ordinated interventions by adults', young people's and children's services.
25. Targeted *Think Family* services involve systematic contact with the families. One consequence of this close involvement, and in many cases of visiting the home frequently, is that children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, harm can be identified and safeguarded earlier than might have otherwise occurred.
26. All staff including those working with adults have a responsibility to notify children's social care services when they suspect a child may be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. This should be done by following the local safeguarding children procedures.

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## Target setting and commissioning for Think Family

27. Many national indicators and local targets can be delivered through the better co-ordination and targeting of services to families. *Think Family* approaches encourage adults', children's and families' services to identify targets and activities which could be better achieved in this way.
28. There are a range of different service models which support this approach. These include enhanced multi-agency working between adults' and children's services, the identification and referral of families and individuals at risk, joint services responsible for meeting both adult and child outcomes (mental health or substance misuse services for example), or new services such as FIPs which target intensive support for the families at most risk of poor outcomes.
29. Implementing *Think Family* practice depends on breaking down professional barriers and achieving changes in culture so that all practitioners see their clients in the context of their family and are willing to work with other service providers to help ensure better outcomes for a number of family members where this is in their own client's interest. This needs leadership and commitment across a wide range of local partnerships and a workforce change programme to ensure the skills, referral arrangements and service protocols are in place and operating 'on the ground'.



## Resources, grant requirements and monitoring

30. Funding is available for all local authorities from April 2009 to March 2011 to:

- Implement **Think Family reforms** to local authority and health service systems and services, including more effective ways of working between children's, young people's and adults' services and co-ordinating the support offered to both children, young people and adults in the families most at risk.
- Set up a **Youth Crime FIP (YCFIP)** to provide intensive support to families in the greatest difficulty with children at risk of offending.
- Offer **Parenting Early Intervention Programme (PEIP)** to mothers and fathers of children (aged 8–13) at risk of poor outcomes to improve their parenting skills.
- Continue to provide **Parenting Experts and Practitioners** as announced in *Children's Plan: Building brighter futures* published December 2007.

Details on the *Think Family* grant can be found at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/parents/ID91askclient/localauthority/fundingforparents/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/parents/ID91askclient/localauthority/fundingforparents/)

In addition:

- 15 local authorities are continuing to receive additional funding for **Family Pathfinders**. They are Bolton, Gateshead, Islington, Leeds, Somerset, Sunderland, Brighton and Hove, Westminster, Salford, Southampton, Blackpool, Walsall, Warrington, Southend and Durham. Bolton, Gateshead, Islington, Leeds, Somerset and Sunderland are six **Extended Family Pathfinders for young carers**.
- 77 local authorities are continuing to receive additional funding for **Respect Parenting Practitioners (RPP)**.
- 67 local authorities are continuing to receive additional funding for **anti-social behaviour FIPs (ASB FIPs)**.
- 12 local authorities are receiving additional funding for **Child Poverty FIPs (CP FIPs)**.

## Measurement of success

31. Local authorities in receipt of funding have been asked to record the following information:

- number of families receiving intensive outreach support in their own homes, dispersed tenancy or residential block through a FIP (including YCFIP and where applicable ASB FIP or CP FIP);
- number of families supported through the PEIP;
- number of families supported by a Parenting Experts or Practitioner (including RPPs where applicable); and
- Parenting Commissioners have been asked to submit six-monthly monitoring reports containing this information. FIPs also provide monitoring data for each family they work with on an online information system run by the National Centre for Social Research. Family Pathfinder areas contribute to a national evaluation process. Data collected from these sources will be made available in different forms to help local commissioners and service providers monitor local provision and performance.

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## Support

32. Tailored support is available to all local authorities from DCSF's Families Delivery Team to help implement *Think Family* reforms and set up targeted parent and family services. The team is made up of practitioners who have experience in effective ways of working with families at risk and of supporting local authorities in improving their practice.

33. The Families Delivery Team uses monitoring data collected from local authorities to target their work on those areas or services requiring most support. They also collect and disseminate examples of effective practice and invite key local authority staff to participate in training events and networking activities.

34. The Team works alongside:

- Government Office Parenting Leads;
- the Youth Taskforce to support the implementation of Youth Crime Action Plan commitments; and
- the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse to improve the response of family and treatment services to parents and families affected by substance misuse problems.

35. For further information contact Gill Strachan, email: [gill.strachan@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:gill.strachan@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk)

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## Annex – Relevant Government Plans and Strategies

See *Think Family Toolkit Bibliography* for web links:

### ***Carers at the heart of 21st century families and communities: a caring system on your side, a life of your own (2008)***

The carers' strategy sets out the Government's short-term agenda and long-term vision for the future care and support of carers.

### ***Child Poverty Strategy (1999 – present)***

In 1999, the Government announced its aim to eradicate child poverty by 2020. Since this commitment to eradicate child poverty was announced, good progress has been made. In 2009, the Government will introduce a UK-wide piece of legislation to further progress tackling child poverty. The intention of legislation is to provide a clear framework for national and devolved governments, as well as regionally and locally, to tackle both the causes and consequences of inter-generational poverty.

### ***Children's Plan (2007)***

In order to make this country the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up, the Children's Plan sets out how the Department for Children, Schools and Families is going to achieve that – by putting the needs of families, children and young people at the centre of everything we do.

### ***Drugs Strategy (2008–18)***

The ten-year drug strategy (2008–18) aims to restrict the supply of illegal drugs and reduce the demand for them. It focuses on protecting families and strengthening communities. This includes protecting communities through tackling drug supply, drug-related crime and anti-social behaviour; preventing harm to children, young people and families affected by drug misuse; delivering new approaches to drug treatment and social re-integration; and public information campaigns, communications and community engagement.

### ***Every Child Matters (2003)***

Alongside the formal response to the death of Victoria Climbié, the Government published the Green Paper *Every Child Matters* (ECM). In 2004 the Children Act became law. This legislation is the legal underpinning for ECM which sets out the Government's approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19.

### ***Families at Risk Review (2008)***

The final report, *Think Family: Improving the Life Chances of Families at Risk*, was published in January 2008. It sets out a vision for a local system that improves the life chances of families at risk and helps to break the cycle of disadvantage. It outlines the key characteristics of a system that thinks family at all levels, from governance to the frontline.

***Healthy lives, brighter futures – the strategy for children and young people’s health (2009)***

Presents the Government’s strategy for children’s health and well-being. It sets out how Government will build on progress through world class outcomes, high quality services and improve the experience of the children and families using health and other services and reduce health inequalities.

***Reaching Out: Think Family (2007/08)***

The Social Exclusion Taskforce conducted the Families at Risk Review from 2007 to early 2008. This work is now being taken forward by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), including management of the Family Pathfinder programme.

***Respect Action Plan (2006)***

The *Respect Action Plan* builds on the Government’s drive to tackle anti-social behaviour and reclaim communities for the law-abiding majority. It sets out a range of cross-government commitments aimed at tackling the causes of anti-social behaviour and ensuring strong actions to tackle it when it occurs.

***Youth Alcohol Action Plan (2008)***

A comprehensive plan to stop young people drinking in public by helping them make the right decisions about alcohol; and provide clear information to parents and young people about the risks of early drinking.

***Youth Crime Action Plan (2008) and Youth Crime Action Plan: One Year On (2009)***

The *Youth Crime Action Plan*, a trilateral Government programme involving the Home Office, Ministry of Justice and DCSF to tackle youth crime with a triple track approach of tough enforcement, non-negotiable support and early intervention.

***Youth Taskforce Action Plan (2008)***

The *Youth Taskforce Action Plan* sets out a strong package of actions and funding to improve outcomes for young people and tackle anti-social behaviour.





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