

How we have made a difference in our community - Family Support -



About the project:

Support from the Start groups in Musselburgh, Prestonpans, Fa'side, Dunbar & North Berwick have responded to the challenge of 'reducing the attainment gap' by working with the Area Partnership and local partners to develop family worker posts.

These posts work with parents using a ['What Matters to Me'](#) approach to engagement to provide early intervention support to families that are experiencing challenges that are likely to have an impact on the home learning environment.



Two strategies are being tested – workers that focus on the first 1001 days of life (conception to age 2) and workers that work with families with children up to age 8.

Impact

The post have established very quickly in each of the areas and worked with 127 families with 191 children in the calendar year 2017. (NB. The Dunbar post did not start until Dec 2017 and only Prestonpans post has been operational for the full year) They are working with families in their homes on a wide range of issues identified by the families themselves as well as issues identified by referrers. Feedback from parents, children and referral agencies has been incredibly positive, indicating that the post are well valued by these that use and work with the post holders.

The post holders have also initiated / supported a range of group based work in response to local demand and need – including play groups, homework clubs, summer lunch / activity clubs, a groups for parents of twins and a group for mothers to be and new parents who find it challenging to attend mainstream support.

Many of the families who have been supported are addressing issues related to poverty, and monitoring of SIMD status shows that support is being targeted effectively and proportionately to those most in need.

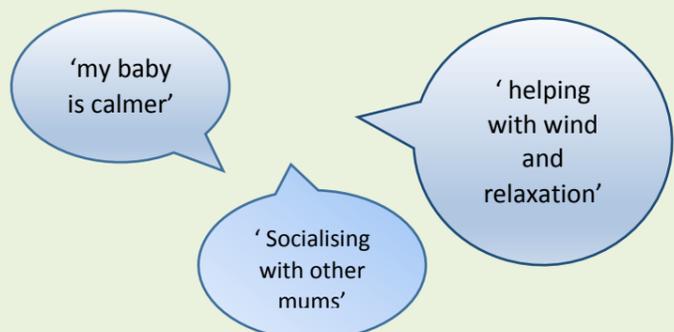
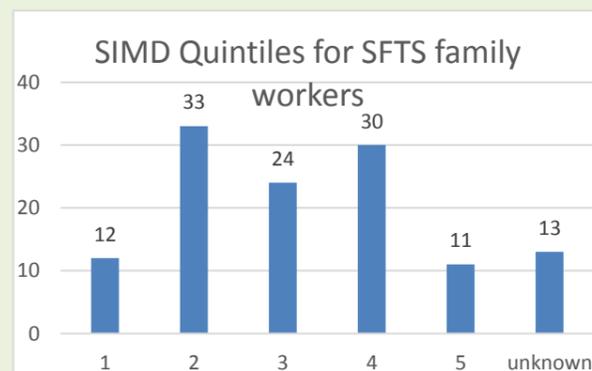
Although it remains early in the process monitoring of families perception of the family workers impact is that they are being helped to deal with stresses in their lives and to make some longer term changes.

The Future

Sustaining the posts which are currently funded with short term funds provided by the Area Partnerships is the most pressing challenge. The importance of family work for both pre and school aged early years families is clear and the Support from the Start family workers have demonstrated an ability to both work closely with statutory agencies and to work with families on what matters to them.

“Natalie's efforts to help us all individually is one of the main rea-sons we have managed with such a successful outcome. Myself and the kids, for the first time in as long as I can remember are now in the best place we have ever been. Beforehand this was un-imaginable.”

“I have only know you for a short while but I can't wait to see what the future holds. With your support so far I have come on quite a bit. Thank you !”



“This is an invaluable service. X is approachable and can be a positive influence on parents and their children. She is non-judgemental and gives advice based on experience and training. I really value the support she gives to our families.”

A Health Visitor

“I think it is a fantastic service. The impact that our family worker has had on some of our children and families in our school has been incredible. This was evident at a recent meeting. The progress that a parent had made in regard to being able to look after and care for her children independently was a result of the Family Support worker's immense support and guidance. The service could be improved if all schools had one Support from the Start Family Worker.”

A class teacher



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North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership

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