Family Support Mapping Exercise Report - December 2020

This report highlights the findings of the Family Support mapping exercise undertaken in Edinburgh in September 2020 by the Locality Operational Groups (LOGs) with the support of the Lifelong Learning Parent and Carer Support Development Officers. The exercise was completed in response to a request from Jackie Irvine, Chief Social Work Officer from the Childcare Partnership. The exercise aimed to highlight the Family Support services currently operating in each area and help identify any gaps in support.

Family Support Mapping Survey

Approximately 150 organisations were contacted and invited to contribute to the process. There were a total of 145 responses. Some organisations completed a response for more than one project. There were 101 responses from the Voluntary Sector, 31 from City of Edinburgh Council services, 6 from NHS and 5 responses who were offering a partnership project e.g. between City of Edinburgh Council and the Voluntary Sector.

Services who offer Family Support

A list of all services who participated in the initial survey has now been updated to include service contact details in **Appendix A**.

Gaps in Support

Organisations were asked to highlight any major gaps in provision. Some organisations identified gaps specific to their service, some identified perceived local or citywide gaps, some of these were specific currently to COVID-19 e.g. lack of access to safe outdoor spaces for families. Many organisations described a number of different gaps. These were condensed and separated into categories and some common themes emerged.

A sub-group of each locality LOG have now carried out a wider exploration on each of the themes where gaps were perceived. Giving consideration to any information available of local or age-related gaps. This information is summarised in **Appendix B.**

It became apparent that some gaps were identified due to a lack of awareness of services who could support a particular issue. It was therefore felt important that the sub-groups also listed and explored services who could potentially address some of the gaps. These are identified in **Appendix C**. Already professionals involved in the process, are reporting an increase in awareness of a range of family support services.

Feedback from School Communities

It was recognised there was a lack of information from schools in the initial mapping survey. An additional survey was distributed to allow staff who work in school communities to respond to the findings of the Family Support mapping exercise. There were **50 response** to the survey. A summary is included in **Appendix D**. Participants were asked if they were aware of gaps within each theme, if they were aware of any services which may help to address these gaps and if they felt there were any other local gaps in support for families who attend their school. The survey findings confirmed many of those identified in the initial mapping exercise.

Schools Staff Awareness of Gaps within each Theme

Theme	%
MH/Trauma/ Counselling Gaps	92%
Additional Support Needs Gaps	88%
Gaps in Parenting Groups/ Programmes	73%
Digital Access/ Financial/ Employment/ Housing	71%
Gaps in Befriending/ Mentoring	65%
Gaps in Support for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Communities	63%
Gaps in Family Learning Activities/ Transitions/ Outdoor Spaces	50%
Gaps in Support following a Child becoming Accommodated	35%

Parent Consultation

A Parent/ Carer consultation survey was distributed through the Parent and Carer Support Collaborative and a range of services. The survey was developed to gather information on the impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on families and collate their views on Family Support. An overwhelming **2424 parents and carers have responded to the survey**, a separate report has been collated and will be used alongside the Family Support Mapping exercise to inform next steps.

Identified Priorities from LOG Sub-Group Explorations on Gaps	
Outreach Family Support	➢ Accessible, responsive, experienced outreach support for families who are struggling or at the point of crisis ➢ Intensive Family Support for families where the child is at risk of being accommodated or returning home following a period of being accommodated
ASN Support	➢ Family Support for families with a child with additional support needs, particularly when challenging or violent behaviour is present ➢ Evidence based parenting programmes specifically for parents of children with ASN ➢ Respite for Families with a child with ASN ➢ Mental health support for children with ASN and their families ➢ Diagnosis and follow on support for families with a child with ASN
Mental Health Support	➢ Therapeutic interventions including parenting programmes for families who have experienced trauma or adverse childhood experiences ➢ Community based mental health services including free counselling for children, young people and parents/carers ➢ 1-1 or mentor support for children experiencing mental health issues ➢ Online sessions for parents of children/teenagers with mental health issues offering much needed reassurance, peer support and signposting at this difficult time
Support for BAME Families	➢ Commitment from services to increase awareness of issues faced and reduce barriers to increase accessibility and availability of support for BAME families
Parenting Groups/ Families Activities	➢ Access to community buildings to ensure face to face groups and parenting programmes, family activities can run safely for isolated families including new parents
Family Learning and Digital Access	➢ Support for families to develop confidence and skills in home and family learning using digital devices
Housing	➢ Families in temporary accommodation
Domestic Abuse	➢ Disseminate emergency guidelines across sectors

Key Considerations

➢ There is a complex landscape of services who feel they offer 'Family Support' ranging from providing information to intensive support. Many have a different target group or access criteria, work with different age ranges or are funded to work in different areas. This makes it challenging to have a clear mapping overview and improve coordination

➢ Some systems can create barriers to a joined-up approach for families and early access to experienced support when families need it e.g. the ASAP process can be lengthy to access Edinburgh Together, often more than one referral is submitted to different services as it's unclear if there is capacity or meets the threshold

➢ Although a service may be listed as able to address a gap, information on their capacity, waiting lists or funding security has not been collated and does not remain static

➢ It is apparent that some of the gaps were listed due to a lack of knowledge of the support available by professionals or organisations. A greater awareness of services and specialist roles

not only allows professionals to access their expertise, it enhances the holistic support for families

➢ A lack of long-term funding security impacts on the availability and consistency of services for families. A change in funding criteria, or funders looking to only fund new initiatives can leave services that already meet the needs of families vulnerable and is not necessarily considering the need in that community

➢ There is a strong need for future funding to still support existing services not just prioritise the identified gaps to prevent gaps just being moved

➢ There is strong evidence to indicate services need to have the flexibility to extend the time period they work with families with complex needs to ensure sustainable outcomes for the child. Targets set in contracts need to have a degree of flexibility to take account of families who may need long term support

Recommendations/ Suggested next steps

➢ The information used should inform the allocation of Community Mental Health and Wellbeing and Family Support funding,

➢ The information gathered should be taken into consideration when commissioning, developing or restructuring services

➢ The Locality Operational Taskforce and Groups should continue to prioritise discussions around the urgent and local Family Support issues raised

➢ Exploration of how an immediate response to family support provision could be developed for families who are in urgent need but do not meet social work thresholds. Enabling an assessment of need and package of support to be quickly coordinated before longer term support can be accessed.

➢ Members of the Parent and Carer Support Collaborative should consider the findings, identify key priorities and develop an Action Plan to ensure relevant Next Steps and Recommendations are implemented

➢ Parent and Carer Support Collaborative to update the *Supporting Parents and Carers in Edinburgh 2017-2020 Framework for Practitioners*. Taking account of the information gathered in the Family Support Mapping Exercise, Parent Consultation and recommendations from The Promise and Scottish Government Leadership Group.

This report had been compiled by the Lifelong Learning Parent and Carer Support Development Officers with the support of Tessa Williams, EVOC and Locality Operational Groups (LOG) subgroups in each locality.

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