

Early Help Case Study

Intensive Family Support Team



Mum suffers from depression and anxiety. She was distrusting of professionals due to a negative experience with Children's Services in another local authority. Dad had recently moved out of the family home so she cares for her three children alone. Her support network are her parents and they often provide respite by having the eldest child, diagnosed with additional needs, overnight.

* names have been changed



* Henry (11) has a diagnosis of ADHD and ODD. He has been on a part-time timetable for over two years due to challenging behaviour. He displays aggression at home to his family.



* Chloe has difficulties with her peers. There is possibly undiagnosed needs.



* Luke struggles with peer relationships and has started to display violent behaviour towards mum.

FFA involvement : March 2022 - October 2023

The family was previously held by Letchworth Partnership of Schools from April 2021. In March 2022, a case discussion was held with Letchworth Partnership of Schools, as it was felt that the family required more intensive support than could be offered by them. The family was accepted by IFST on 18/03/2022.

Upon change of worker in IFST, mum was not sure she wanted IFST support. A meeting was arranged with school and mum to speak through mum's concerns and devise a plan to address these. Mum's main concern was due to not trusting professionals. It was therefore agreed that a slower approach would be taken with mum to build trust, and that home visits would not occur weekly. Instead, meetings with mum took place in the school, with fortnightly to monthly home visits initially. This was a theme throughout the initial period of IFST support but did improve significantly and mum then engaged with all support offered.



Interventions and Support

- School and home visits
- Team Around Family meetings held every 6 weeks
- Attendance at school PSP meetings to discuss part-time timetable implementation and reviews
- Close liaison with The Grange school, Ask SALI and SEND team
- New curtains, fleecy blanket, hat, gloves, and scarf funded through Department for Work and Pensions Winter Tangibles fund application
- Liaison with ADHD nurse at the Child development Centre regarding medication reviews
- Liaison with Safe Space, North Herts Primary Support Services and Beacon Family Hub
- Exploration of 0-25 and ARC support referral
- Anger management support
- Zones of regulation work completed with Chloe at school and home
- Supporting Chloe to understand how to raise social or academic concerns or worries at school with trusted adults
- School transition information shared with family
- Information shared for family meal plans for £1, and services in Hertfordshire where family can access free or low cost food
- Letter provided for mum to provide to Housing confirming Henry's diagnoses, the support needs of the family and services involved
- Referral made to Single Point of Access for mental health support
- Referral to Letchworth Food bank
- Provision of Edenred supermarket vouchers
- Support to prioritise own needs (mental health and physical health) and make necessary GP appointments for support
- Referral to Family Lives parenting course "Bringing up confident ADHD/ASD children"
- Regular sharing of parenting courses, workshops and support groups
- Referral to IFST Who's in Charge parenting programme
- Referral to Beacon Family Hub
- Support to implement parental controls on home devices
- Angles, ADD-Vance, SPACE, Short Breaks Local Offer and SENDIASS information shared with family
- Support completing forms to send to the Child Development Centre for consideration for assessments
- Review of all rooms in the home due to previous concerns of poor home conditions
- Information regarding free and low cost activities shared for school summer holiday period
- Booking the children on three IFST summer holiday craft sessions
- Family Star completed and reviewed every 12 weeks
- Sharing of NESSie free early help parenting support information
- Signposting mum to HCC complaints procedure (SEND support)

Feedback

Mum had a very distrusting relationship with professionals and has stated that

there are so many families out there like I was that are scared of social services and I feel my positive story could help others to work with teams like yours

Mum advised that the Family Worker had worked wonders for her and her family and the difference she has created in them since her intervention is amazing.

Mum stated that IFST didn't do everything for her, but 'gave her the tools to change her family herself.

I now recommend the support of IFST to others

mum

Summary

Mum was initially not trusting of professionals due to her previous experiences, but explained that the Family Worker swiftly overcame this by:

- listening to her
- taking everything on board
- going at her and her families speed
- didn't push her
- being transparent about everything
- not telling any lies

Progress



Mum advised she still uses the tools the Family Worker gave her. Mum reflected that she has since challenged other professionals about their approach and has told them they need to give her the tools and then support her to make changes as otherwise she isn't learning anything new and isn't benefitting long term from the intervention.