

# Evidencing the Impact of Hertfordshire's Early help offer

**"High level analysis of the impact early help services on cost avoidance to the public sector"**

**1,047**  
*Families First Assessments carried out in 2018*

**£11,887**  
*Average cost avoidance per families first assessment*  
(based on 27 audits carried out)

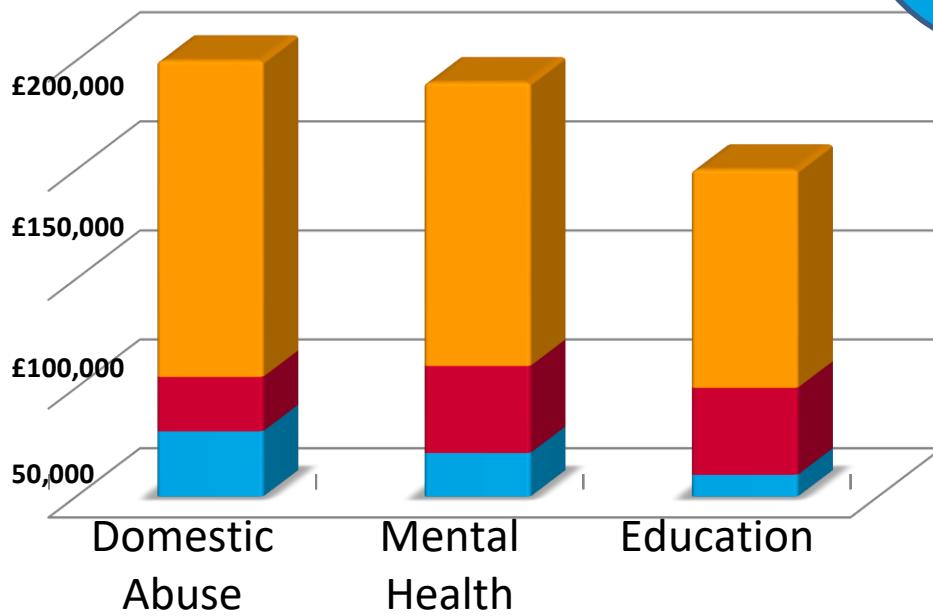
**£12.4 Million**  
*Estimated Cost avoidance for 2018 alone*

Case tracking analysis suggests that when looking at just three of the many areas families may need support with the cost avoidance is undeniable.

**6x**  
Less spent on Domestic Abuse after Families First intervention

**10x**  
Less spent on Education after Families First intervention

**6x**  
Less spent on Mental health after Families First intervention



- Pre Families First intervention
- During Families First intervention
- Post Families First intervention

# Evidencing the impact of one family

Family C – 2 Adults and 3 children

- Out of Hours referral and call out
- Educational welfare officer
- Adult mental health Support
- C&F assessment
- Initial contact and assessment



**Pre** Families First  
Intervention cost  
**=£8,558**

Keyworker-Intensive family support team



- Families First Assessment
- Referral to HYH mediation
- Referral to CGL for drug misuse
- Parenting programme
- SALT(Chronic health issue/disability)

Families First  
**Intervention cost**  
**=£4,476.32**

Family – 2 years since Families First intervention



- Initial contact – closed with advice and guidance

**Post** Families First  
intervention  
**=£186.00**

Evidence suggests that a **decrease** of as little as **10%** in funding for Early help will significantly impact on social care demand

Figures below show the impact of a 10% decrease in funding

Estimated Increase in social care referrals = 567

Estimated Increase in Child in Need Plans = 318

Estimated Increase in Child protection plans = 25

Estimated Increase in children looked after = 23

If the average cost of a year long foster placement is suggested to be around £50,000 a **decrease of as little as 10% could cost the local authority = £1,150,000 in the first year**



**Families First in Hertfordshire =**

**£12.4 Million**  
**Estimated Cost avoidance for 2018 alone**

## Analysis carried out in 2019 has suggested that:

- That Investment in Early help services continues to provide substantial cost avoidance for the public sector
- The smallest change to funding for Early Help services will have a significant impact on local authority spend associated with an increased social care demand.

## Evidencing the impact in real terms.

### What we did

54 cases were randomly selected to be audited, The criteria being that the families had to have been post intervention by at least 18 months. Out of the 54 cases only 27 contained enough data to enable a robust analysis. All the evidence within this report is based on these 27 cases.

### How it worked

The presenting needs of the families were broken down and support provided was costed out accordingly. The families were then supported through a Families First Assessment and that was again broken down and costed accordingly. Finally any intervention received following the closure of the Families First assessment was broken down and costed.

### For Example:

#### Family C



**Presenting needs** - Out of hours referral and call out, educational welfare officer, adult mental health support, customer service centre contact, child & family assessment – **Valued at £8,558**

**Early intervention** - Families First Assessment, Referrals to HYH mediation, CGL for drug misuse, Parenting programme and SALT(Chronic health issue/disability) – **Valued at £4,476.32**

**Post Intervention** – Initial contact to customer service centre, closed with advice and guidance – **Valued at £186.00**

### What was discovered

After all the analysis was carried out it was found that on average the cost avoidance to the public sector for each family amounted to a £11,887. The cost avoided was calculated by assuming that without the Families First Assessment the costs associated with pre-intervention would have continued over the next two years.

## **What this means**

To understand the significance of this £11,887 cost avoidance you must first understand the volume of Families that are supported by Families First in Hertfordshire.

In 2018 alone 1047 Families First assessments were carried out. With an average cost of avoidance of £11,887 per family, **Early intervention has potential saved the public sector £12.4 Million.**



## **The importance of funding and the impact of change**

Whether a public, private or voluntary service, we are all aware of the funding we receive and the impact that any change has on our services.

It is very important to focus on the impact that any decrease in funding would have on Early Help services, not only to the families that are currently supported but also on the ability to support families in the future. Any decrease in funding for Families First in Hertfordshire would ricochet throughout the whole of Early help services causing a snowball effect on Children's social care in terms of time and money.

### ***For Example***

Analysis indicates that a 10% decrease in funding for Early Help will see a rise in social care referrals by 567 in the first year, the snowball effect of this is an increase of 318 Child in Need Plans, 25 Child protection Plans and 23 more children becoming looked after by the local authority. The total cost of this increased activity would be approximately £1.5 million (based on the average cost of a child looked after being £50,000)

## **Why is evidencing impact everyone's responsibility**

By evidencing the impact of Families First we are able to build the business case that early intervention has sustainable outcomes for families. By supporting families earlier and preventing needs from escalating, families are less likely to require more costly services, enabling a significant cost avoidance to the public sector

The aim of evidencing the impact of the Families First model in Hertfordshire, is to show that the funding given is used smartly and is effective in delivering what it is supposed to.

## **How you can help**

It is important to understand the importance of recording information about the families you work with on the EHM (early help module) system so that that data can be used in the future to evidence the amazing work being carried out in Hertfordshire. If you would like further information on how to record on the EHM system please contact the Families First Helpdesk on 01438 737575.