

The Action for Parents¹ Programme

Because People are a resource – not a problem

Aim of the Action for Parents' Programme: Our aim is to work with parents to identify why their child/young person might be in difficulties and then to work with the client to identify how things might be improved.

Our Core Ideas and Values: We do not believe children want to fail at school, to disappoint their parents or to get into trouble with friends, neighbours or the community. We start with a presumption that the child is responding and reacting to events and situations which they may not fully understand or find difficulty in responding appropriately. We start from the belief that parents are best placed to help their child manage their future growth and development.

The Model of working: The Model assumes that the process of helping is essentially an attempt to integrate the expertise of parents with that of potential helpers, and not the imposition of expert knowledge. The development of a genuine and respectful partnership has implications for outcomes in a number of ways, including it being a vehicle for a clear understanding of the problems and therefore the basis for effective problem management, but also the self-efficacy that parents may derive from being put in control. We use the model within a child/juvenile offending/anti-social behaviour context.

Who we are: We are a group of dedicated professionals with many years experience of working with adults facing difficulties and challenges. We currently work in partnership with various agencies within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in seeking to ensure all our children can grow and achieve.

How we work: We work to support parents to be parents. We see Parents and Advisers as working in partnership and on an equal basis, but with the parent in charge of what happens and when. This is only possible if mutual trust is established between parent and advisor. We take issues of respect and understanding, coupled with strict confidentiality, very seriously.

We then follow the Model exploring all relevant issues. This is explained in detail by the Adviser. We never make assumptions about a child's behaviour nor that of a parent. We strive to and keep a totally open mind as to likely issues and causes.

Confidentiality: We take confidentiality very seriously. Individual cases will only be discussed with the Advisors personal supervisor. Only in exceptional circumstances of immediate danger or threat to life and wellbeing will any information be disclosed to a relevant partner agency. If this was to happen the parent/s would be told as soon as possible.

Feedback and Development: The Action for Parents' programme is constantly reviewing its performance. We carry out both on-going and cumulative evaluations.

Origins of the Action for Parents' Programme: The origins of the programme can be linked back to the pioneering work of the Centre for Parent and Child Support www.cpcs.org.uk based at the Monroe Centre, Guys Hospital. All the Advisors have had specialist training from the CPCS.

This model has been further developed by the Shircore Consultancy for use with children facing social or educational exclusion (www.healthpromotion.uk.com). The following agencies have also

¹ Otherwise known as the Parents Advisory Service of the Centre for Parent and Child Support www.cpcs.org.uk – Munroe Centre, Guys Hospital

been influential in shaping our approach: Oregon Social Learning Centre www.oslc.org and Dr. Mel Levine of www.allkindsofminds.org.

Frequently asked questions:

- 1 What happens if a client does not “get on” with an Adviser?** A different Adviser will be allocated.
- 2 How long does the programme last?** This is negotiated between the client and the Advisor. Activity has ranged from a single session to meetings over many months. A rough guide would be 5-7 sessions.
- 3 How long are the individual sessions?** The initial sessions will take at least an hour. How long subsequent sessions take will be jointly decided between the client and their Adviser.
- 4 Where/How do clients meet with their Adviser?** This is open to negotiation. Some parents like to meet away from the home environment; others like to discuss issues and progress over the telephone.

For further information on how the Action for Parents’ Programme can support parent and child mental health, social and educational inclusion agenda call Richard Shircore on: 01753 274112, mobile 07943 404 388 or email Shircore@healthpromotion.uk.com