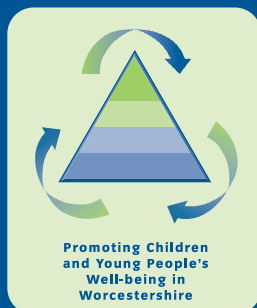




Early Support
Helping every child succeed



Issue 20 - Oct 2009

Newsletter

Promoting Children and Young People's Wellbeing in Worcestershire.
Common Assessment Framework, Lead Professional and Information Sharing.
Visit the website: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp

Welcome to the October edition of the IWP newsletter! The project team are still enjoying supporting the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), especially when we hear fantastic outcomes from it, a latest one being the prevention of a young person becoming homeless.

CAF is a powerful early intervention tool and a latest serious case review outlines to us again that communication between agencies and coordination of support is vital early on to prevent children and young people reaching crisis point.

This edition has lots of useful information, including a spotlight on our CAF coordinators.

For any queries about CAF please email jglenn@worcestershire.gov.uk

Jessica Glenn, Project Manager

CAF statistics as at 1st October 2009

358
completed
common
assessments

Think Family

'Think Family' is a DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families) initiative that aims to secure better outcomes for children, young people and families with additional needs, by co-ordinating the support they receive. This is achieved by assessing the full range of needs of each family member and taking into account how individual problems can affect the whole family. A package of support is then provided to meet the requirements of the whole family while improving outcomes for each child.

The Common Assessment is already used as a tool for assessing children with additional needs, and considers parental needs. Thinking Family ensures that existing integrated working tools such as CAF are used effectively, and agencies continue to share information, with the family's consent, to provide evidence based support to families.

Watch this space for further information about 'Think Family' in Worcestershire....

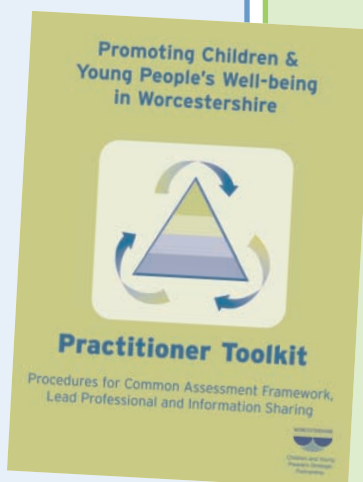
The New Common Assessment Form and Revised Toolkit

Attention all Practitioners!!! The toolkit has now been revised!!! The Promoting Children & Young People's Well-being in Worcestershire Practitioner Toolkit has been updated and revised following consultation with local practitioners.

Key changes are:

- CAF form has been updated.
- Coordinated Support Plan has been revised.
- Early Support Guidance has been included (see Early Support articles over the page).
- Early Intervention Budget guidance has been included (visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp and click on Early Intervention Budget).

Anybody who has a copy of the old toolkit (dated September 2007) but would like updates/ the revised toolkit, should visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp, contact the CAF Project Team on 01905 766082 or email: cafraining@worcestershire.gov.uk



Are you a trained CAF Practitioner? Are you trained to manage/supervise CAF Practitioners? Still no experience with the CAF process?

Practical Workshops - using real examples by practitioners who have used the CAF process, including...

- How the common assessment was initiated
- The progression, any issues and how they were addressed
- The outcomes achieved for the child/young person and family
- How the common assessment is working in Worcestershire with the latest statistics.

The workshops aim to increase practitioner knowledge and confidence around using the CAF process.

Thursday 12th November 2pm to 4pm

Bishops Wood Centre

Friday 27th November 2pm to 4pm

Perdiswell Young People's Leisure Centre

To book places please e-mail

castraining@worcestershire.gov.uk

or call a member of the CAF Project Team on 01905 76 6082

Book your training!

Don't forget to book your CAF training.

We now have dates available.

There are 3 different training sessions available

- 1 hour Briefing session
(*Or alternatively please try our e-learning package which will give you an excellent overview of the CAF process from the comfort of your own desk! If you would benefit from refreshing your knowledge around the CAF process, or would like to try out the e-learning package, please get in touch on the contact details below*)
- 1 day Practitioner training
- 1/2 day Manager/Supervisor training

For further information on the above courses, or to book places please

visit our website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp

or contact 01905 766082.


ContactPoint
because every child matters

ContactPoint is a quick way for practitioners to find out who else is working with the same child or young person, making it easier to deliver coordinated support. It is an online directory available to authorised staff who need it to do their jobs, enabling the delivery of coordinated support for children and young people. It is a key element of the Every Child Matters (ECM) programme, to transform Children's Services by supporting effective prevention and early intervention. The programme's goal is to improve the health, well being and safety of all children.

If you are interested in having a briefing or learning more about ContactPoint, please email contactpoint@worcestershire.gov.uk

Completing my first Common Assessment!

"As a manager I have been supporting a number of youth workers in using the CAF, but in September I was given the privilege of being able to initiate and lead my first Coordinated Support Meeting. Experiencing the process first hand was very powerful as it has given me an insight into what incredible impact the process can have in a young person's life. Enabling the lead professional and young person to sit around the table together, and explore solutions to the identified issues allowed us to provide the relevant support to renegotiate a Housing Tenancy and prevent a young person from becoming homeless.

As a result of my experience I feel that I'm in a better position to support youth workers in using the CAF as a tool to improve the outcomes for young people."

Isabel Vanderheeren

Team Manager, Youth Support Services

If you want to complete your first Common Assessment, to help you identify a child/young person's needs, and coordinate support, call your CAF Coordinator (See back page for contacts).



Early Support

Early Support is a set of materials and information to support families with babies and young children who have disabilities and/or complex health needs.

Early Support Event

On Thursday 24th September 2009 the Early Support Event took place at Worcester Rugby Club, to celebrate the Early Support way of working with babies and young children with disabilities and complex health needs in Worcestershire.

Around 140 Practitioners and parents attended the event which was facilitated by Chris Parker, Service Development Manager, Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs.

Two parents, Lisa and Nicky (pictured with Chris Parker - right), who have children with a disability made the event very special by outlining their experiences of using the Early Support materials, and how they have made a difference to their lives.

The event was a huge success and the feedback from attendees extremely positive. However we would just like to take this opportunity to not only thank all those who attended, but also apologise to those who could not get a place at the event due to the fact it was heavily oversubscribed!



Some of the attendees comments

"Listening to the parents speak about their personal journeys with their children was excellent..."

"The Early Support Event highlighted the need for not just a child focus but also a family focus..."

"I liked that there was a wide range of people; professionals, parents, all in one room – amazing and great to see!"

"It was great to be able to speak to a variety of different parents and professionals, some who were aware of the Early Support materials, others who were not..."

"Thank you for giving parents an opportunity to voice their concerns and ideas."



Early Support Training

Early Support Training courses are now available for Practitioners and parents who have a child with a disability and/or complex health need. All levels of staff including Practitioners, Supervisors and Managers from Children's Services, Health, CAMHS, Voluntary Organisations, Schools and Early Years settings should attend these courses.

Participants will get an overview of Early Support, understand how to use the Early Support materials and how they link in with the Common Assessment Framework and the confidence to use the Early Support materials. Staff looking to attend this course should have attended the CAF Practitioner Training as the Early Support course covers linkages between the two.

For bookings or further information, and to enquire about availability of this course please telephone 01905 766082, or email Cafraining@worcestershire.gov.uk or visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp.





Meet your CAF Coordinators!

Sarah McMorrow



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AREA: North West Worcestershire (Wyre Forest, Hagley, Tenbury & Droitwich)

BACKGROUND: Having been in post from when Worcestershire implemented CAF, two years ago, I can look back and see just how far we've come. Throughout the implementation of CAF the support from the Project Team has been invaluable, not least their enthusiasm but their ability to see what we need to do next and to put everything in place to support us doing that.

I have particularly enjoyed meeting everyone and getting to know practitioners from different services. I am always overwhelmed by just how much there is going on to support children and their families. I learn something new everyday. My advice to practitioners is, be prepared to give families a chance to make changes, but also be clear about seeking further advice and support, and sharing the responsibility.

TOP TIPS: Be creative & flexible in the way that you work. If you're not sure ask, be open & honest with everyone involved in the process. Try a common assessment!

Jeff Barnard



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01527 556168

AREA: North East Worcestershire (Redditch & Bromsgrove)

BACKGROUND: Like Sarah I have been in the CAF Coordinator post since the beginning and I must say I have been extremely impressed by the number of staff and practitioners in Worcestershire who are using creative ways to help families. The CAF is an excellent tool for staff to assess children and young people's needs, support the whole family and explore different ways of supporting families by working together.

TOP TIPS: Do as little or as much as is needed to help a family. The time invested at the beginning when doing a Common Assessment is time well spent and can save a lot more time in the future.

Donna Parker



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dparker@worcestershires.gov.uk
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AREA: South Worcestershire (Evesham, Pershore, Malvern, Martley & Worcester)

BACKGROUND: I am very new to this role, having been in post since 1st September this year, but am very much enjoying it.

In my previous job, I have managed and supported staff in the CAF process, and have found the whole process to be very constructive, with some extremely positive outcomes for children. It is a very structured process to follow, involving the child or young person and their family throughout. It brings professionals together in a timely manner to support a child and family, and ensures the child tells their story only once.

My experience of CAF is very positive, and I hope to be able to pass this onto others who may not yet have seen the benefits of CAF.

TOP TIPS: If you are working with a family who may need additional support in some way, then think CAF. If you have any queries at all about CAF, call your CAF Coordinator. **It works – try it!!**

For further information or to become involved, contact Jessica Glenn, Project Manager

Email: jglenn@worcestershires.gov.uk **Tel:** 01905 82 2025



Children and Young
People's Strategic
Partnership

For more information on the common assessment framework, lead professional & information sharing you can visit: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk