



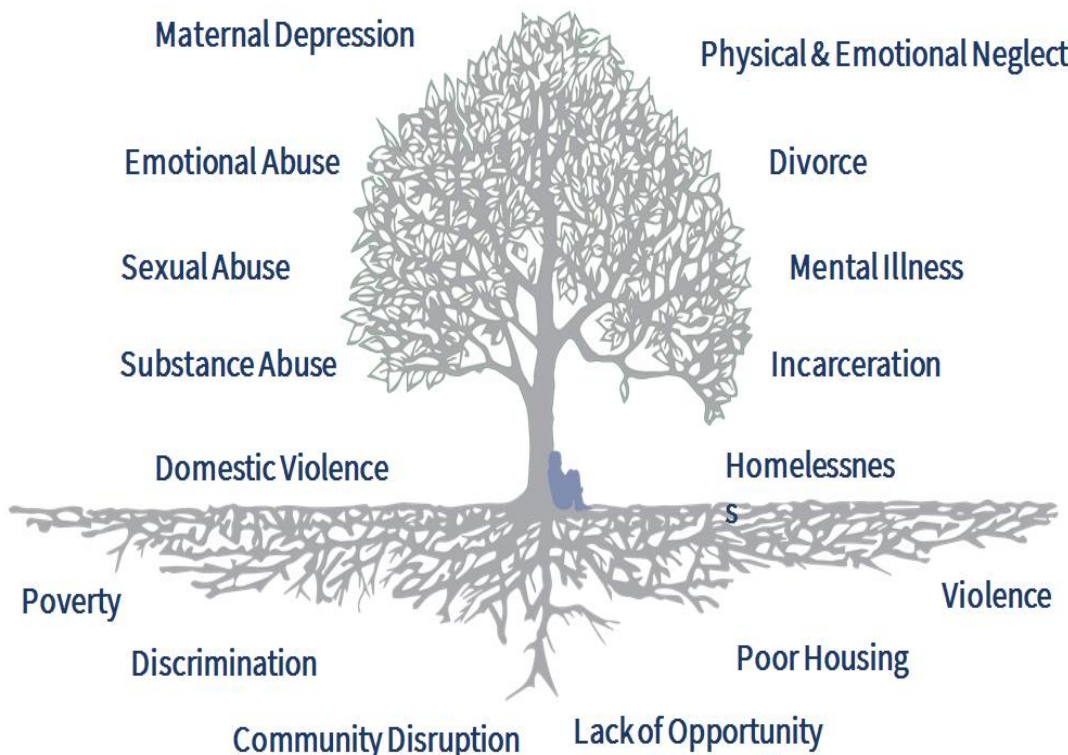
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

14th April 2022

Subject: Overview of the work delivered by the OPFCC Early Intervention Family Support Team

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events which occur during childhood that can have negative and lasting effects on a person's health and behaviour.



- 1.2 The Early Intervention Family Support Team launched in February 2019 to identify families in difficulty at an early stage and to step-in and offer support. The team support families across Northamptonshire and provide advice and guidance on a range of issues such as domestic abuse, healthy relationships, parenting, online safety, mental health of parent or young person, substance misuse, parenting issues and school exclusions. The team fill a gap in early intervention and prevention that is not currently provided by partners.

2. The Work of the Team

- 2.1 Almost half of all referrals to the team are a result of a Police Public Protection Notices (PPN). During the numerous lockdown periods, the team have received reduced referrals from schools, however referrals for support did increase when schools reopened. The team worked throughout the pandemic, supporting families by phone, video conferencing and when permitted, meeting with a young person in school, or in an agreed safe outdoor area.
- 2.2 Since January 2021, the team have initiated a family feedback project which aims to provide qualitative feedback about the service and most importantly gives a voice to how the families view their current situation and if they feel they are in a better place. This feedback also helps identify any further support required.
- 2.3 In January 2021, two domestic abuse (DA) support officers were established to help people who have received a police officer call out for an incident assessed as "standard" low level domestic/family conflict. The team referred some families to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) after gathering further information and assessing the presenting risks. The advice, guidance, support and referral to specialist domestic abuse agencies educates and empowers adults and children to consider making changes to their personal circumstances and gives the practical expertise to do this. Additional support with finances, housing, legal issues and safeguarding is also offered and these support elements decrease the opportunity for further domestic incidents and increases the likelihood the police will not be called.
- 2.4 This project has been put together in response to the growing number of Police callouts for domestic/family conflict related incidents unlikely to result in prosecution. The Early Intervention Domestic Abuse Practitioners contact every family who have had the police respond to a standard-graded domestic incident within 48 hours. The practitioners have extensive knowledge and experience of supporting victims, perpetrators, children and young people who have witnessed or experienced domestic abuse and work in the same way as the rest of the team, uncovering the underlying reason for the incident.

3. Early Help Assessments

- 3.1 The EHA allows the family to tell their story once and the assessment is a dynamic document that will sit alongside the family show casing positive progress or highlighting additional areas where support would be needed.
- 3.2 Where staff think it necessary, they will start the EHA and hand over to a lead professional when the support work is completed.

4. What the Team Don't Deliver

- 4.1 The team do not work with entrenched multi-generational problems as they have a short timeframe of around 3 months where the team will work directly with the child, young person and their families.
- 4.2 They look to unpick the root causes of problems that if left, could have a long-term impact. The service is consent-based and cannot work with families who do not consent for support.

5. Referral Process

- 5.1 The Early Intervention team is growing, and from 31 March 2022, has been able to take direct referrals from professionals.
- 5.2 Any professional working with children & families can refer to the Team by completing an online referral form via a web link. Referrals are assessed for suitability and where not suitable for the service the referral will be returned to the referrer to consider alternative services.

6. Looking Ahead

- 6.1 Longer term, the ambition is to deliver the following:
 - An outcome for all PPNs completed for a domestic incident ("An outcome" refers to contact being made for all domestic non crime incidents assessed as standard)
 - Increase the Force's professional curiosity and knowledge of trauma informed practice
 - Better identification and classification of domestic incidents
 - Improve consistency of domestic abuse referrals across the county.
- 6.2 The EI Family Support team now has the skills and experience to provide a much-needed service that will meet the needs of couples and families who, without some support, are highly likely to come into contact with Northamptonshire Police and ultimately may enter the criminal justice system. By getting upstream we are able reduce the demand on front line policing and hopefully provide beneficial outcomes for those who need our help or support.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 That the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel notes the continued progress to date and future ambitions for the Early Intervention Family Support Service.

Stephen Mold
Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner