

# Child Poverty Programme

A guide for practitioners



Opportunities for families –  
small steps, improving lives

 Knowsley Children  
and Young People's  
Services



In 2009 Knowsley Council decided to take an innovative approach to the issue of tackling child poverty. The authority secured funding for a variety of projects and established the Child Poverty Programme Team to manage the work.

The team's projects include:

- *Local Authority Innovation Pilot*
- *School Gates Employment Support*
- *Extended Services Disadvantaged Subsidy*
- *Two Year Old Childcare Offer*
- *Child Development Pilot*

The Family Nurse Partnership and the Child Poverty Family Intervention Project are also contributing to tackling child poverty in Knowsley, however, these are managed outside of the team but supported and monitored in conjunction with the other projects.

**To find out more information about these projects contact:**

**Karen Mutch (Family Nurse Partnership), Knowsley Health on 07887 898 102**

**Sandra Watson (Child Poverty Family Intervention Project), Action for Children on 489 8860 or 07545 701 055**



# Innovation Pilot - Opportunities for All Volunteer Family Mentors

## Overview

The project provides volunteers with good quality training so they can work with families in a mentoring capacity. The mentors will make a commitment to a few hours volunteering a week.

Through the support provided by the volunteer mentors, families will gain confidence and become motivated to bring about positive change in their own lives and overcome a range of problems associated with living in poverty.

The support can be around one visit per week from the mentor and each mentor will work with one family each.

## Aims

The initial support provided by the mentors is geared towards most families reaching a point where they are ready to be signposted to services/ programmes designed to engage (or re-engage) with the labour market e.g.

- Pre-employment advice, guidance and training
- Employment advice and support - with particular focus on the difficult transitional period moving from workless benefits to employment
- Retention and progression (help to improve employment prospects for parents in low paid employment through training)
- Benefit maximisation - particularly help with take up and to navigation of the tax credit system
- Advice around childcare - availability and affordability.

The Volunteer Family Mentors benefit by gaining experience and quality training as well as confidence that will help them with future employment opportunities or encourage them to move onto further education.

## Eligibility

Families who live in the North Huyton area and who are experiencing a number of the following:

- Lack of confidence or low self-esteem
- Low aspirations
- Members of the family feeling socially isolated
- Financial stress (e.g. debt)
- Parents who lack interest in their children's education
- Adults with low levels of literacy/numeracy skills
- Children struggling to achieve their potential in school
- Unhealthy lifestyles (e.g. poor diet, smoking, low levels of fitness)
- Difficult family relationships, including parenting
- Lack of opportunities for 'quality time' as a family

## Referral process/contacts

Due to the nature of the pilot and the relatively small numbers of families involved, it is proposed that agencies/organisations will 'nominate' a family/families according to their judgement, rather than use a rigid 'referral' system.

Please consider the families that your service/organisation works with or has worked with. If there is a family/families that may be experiencing some of the factors identified above and that you feel would benefit from participating in this project, please contact the Child Poverty Team on 0151 443 3277 for an initial discussion, the family will then be invited to take part.



**If you know of any potential volunteers please contact the Child Poverty Team on 0151 443 3277 for more information.**

# School Gates

## Aims

Targeting families where the second parent doesn't have a job.

Parents will be given access to information, advice, guidance and training to improve their skills and confidence and therefore chances of getting a job or setting up their own business.

The project aims to build links between schools, employment, enterprise providers and extended services to create a co-ordinated quality service for residents.

## Eligibility / target group

Potential second earners and working age benefit claimants in disadvantaged families who either live within three neighbourhoods in the Northwood and Towerhill areas of Kirkby or whose children attend schools in those neighbourhoods.

## Referral process

Parents will be approached by employment and enterprise advisors at the school gates, coffee mornings and at children's centres, to name a few of the engagement routes. The advisor will then work with the parent to develop a personal plan of activity that suits their particular needs and help them to achieve agreed aims that will eventually help them to get a job or become self-employed.

## Contact details

**Contact the Child Poverty Team for further details on 0151 443 3262 or Knowsley Outreach Team on 0151 443 6285 or 07770 966 612.**



# Extended Services Disadvantaged Subsidy

## Aims

To ensure that children from disadvantaged families receive a subsidy to attend two hours of additional after school activities. The aim is to enhance their experience of school with a view to improving their attendance and attainment whilst simultaneously improving health and helping them to enjoy and achieve.



## Eligibility / target group

Families and children who are economically disadvantaged, defined as being eligible for free school meals or who are Looked After Children. The recipients of the subsidy must attend a school in Knowsley.

Flexible secondary eligibility criteria have been developed to ensure that the subsidy reaches the most disadvantaged children in need.

## Referral process

Extended Service Co-ordinators, schools, Learning Mentors and Parent Support Workers, work together to identify the most disadvantaged children and families. Eligibility forms are filled in by the Extended Services Co-ordinators for each child, they also work with the child to identify the activities they would most like to take part in. A menu of activities is then provided via extended service partners for the eligible children.

## Contact details

**Contact the Child Poverty Team for further details on 0151 443 3262.**

# Two Year Old Pilot

## Aims

The pilot is aimed at two year olds in the most deprived communities. It will work to improve wellbeing and learning outcomes and close the gap between children from different areas and backgrounds across the borough. As part of the pilot all families will be offered family support. This enables parents or carers to develop and improve their own outcomes.

## Eligibility

To be eligible, the family must meet one or more of the criteria set out below, their:

- Child has an open child protection plan (Child Protection Plan to be provided with application)
- Child has disabilities
- Child is involved with social services
- Looked After Children (children in care) - carers must be in receipt of relevant benefits, see below
- Child has speech and language needs, including English as an additional language
- Child is in temporary accommodation



- Child has developmental or learning delay
- Child is experiencing emotional and behavioural problems
- Children from families with three or more children aged under five
- Teenage parents
- Lone parents
- Parents with health issues or disabilities (including mental health needs)
- Family has experienced domestic violence
- Family has experienced substance misuse issues
- Asylum seeking / refugee families



And be in receipt of at least one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Child Tax Credit at a rate higher than the family element
- Extra Working Tax Credit relating to a disability
- Pension Credit

## Referral process

If you think a family is eligible for this entitlement, then discuss the pilot with the parent and complete an application form. All applications must be supported by a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or for Social Care Workers a completed Initial Assessment is needed.

### Contact details

**Contact the Child Poverty Team for an application form or further details on 0151 443 3262.**

# Child Development Pilot

## Aims

To determine the effectiveness of outreach support and action planning when encouraging families to engage or re-engage in their local children's centre.

Outreach workers work with families in Kirkby or Huyton on a tailored action plan supporting them to make small steps to improve their lives.

## Eligibility / target group

Families can take part if they:

- live in Kirkby or Huyton
- have a child aged 0 - 2 and 11 months old (0 - 35 months)
- have had limited engagement with a Children's Centre, either:
  - not registered
  - registered but never attended
  - has not attended in the last six months
- are eligible for one or more of the following benefits:
  - Income Support
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
  - Child Tax Credit at a rate higher than the family element
  - Extra Working Tax Credit relating to a disability
  - Pension Credit

## Referral process

If you think a family is eligible for this entitlement, then discuss the pilot with the parent and complete a simple referral form.

### Contact details

**For further information please contact the project manager on 0151 443 3277.**

**For a referral form please contact:**

**Kirkby Team: The Eden Children's Centre on 0151 443 4321**

**Huyton Team: The Robins Children's Centre on 0151 443 5377**



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