



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Re-imagining family support

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The Relationship Between the State and the Family

Universal Services

Family Support

Family Preservation

Alternative Care



Level of Need	Focus	Service Response
Level 1	Early Help	Children with no identified additional needs. Their needs are met through routine universal services.
Level 2		Children with additional needs that can be met by targeted support by a single agency or practitioner.
Level 3		(Team Around the Family) Represents children with additional needs that can be met by targeted support by a multi-agency support package.
Level 4	Statutory Social Work Intervention	(Child in Need) Represents children with significant needs that persist and have not been met by targeted support.
Level 5		(Safeguarding/Looked after Children) Represents children with complex and enduring needs at the highest level of vulnerability that will be met by multi-agency support from specialist services led by Children's Social Care.

Devaney (2019)



Existing Evidence Base

- Children as part of a family, who are within a community
 - Importance of prevention
 - It's not just about the early years
 - Providing early help
 - Providing sustained help
 - Supporting responsive relationships for children and adults
 - Strengthening core life skills
 - Reducing sources of stress in the lives of children and families
 - Structural issues, such as poverty, gender inequality and racism matter
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“Working in partnership to deliver support services at the right time for families to help them stay together and thrive”

Glasgow’s Family Support Strategy Consultation
March 2019



Framing how we understand and approach support for families

**The Critical Few or
the Many?**

**Crisis Driven or Asset
Based?**



The critical few or the many?

- There tends to be a focus in many family support strategies on children who are directly known to children's social care
- For example, 16,500 children in Scotland have a parent in prison on any given day compared to 2,700 children with a child protection plan
- Thresholds for access to children's social care are usually felt to be too high
- Funding models for provision of family support tend to be skewed towards statutory services
- We need to talk about rationing, rather than thresholds



Crisis driven or asset based?

- Many of the children with the greatest needs live within the most disadvantaged communities
- Many of the children with the greatest needs also live within families whereby parents/carers are least able, for a variety of reasons, to access/use community services
- A real sense that the parents of the 'right' children are not accessing available support
- Asset-based approaches emphasise the need to redress the balance between meeting needs and nurturing the strengths and resources of people and communities



Broadening Our Vision

- The current focus on adversity in childhood is a helpful one (Spratt, Devaney and Frederick, 2019)
 - Relationships and services can seek to compensate or mitigate for the consequences of adversity
 - We need to see adversity as having both an individual and a structural dimension
 - We need to start talking about the temporal nature of adversity e.g. a lifecourse perspective
 - Working with communities is at least as important as working with individuals
 - A shift has occurred – strengths-based and relational practices are once again coming to the fore
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Trauma, Psychological first aid, Caring communities

OPERATION ENCOMPASS

For more information please contact info@operationencompass.org  

FOR EVERY CHILD...

WHAT WE DELIVER
Operation Encompass directly connects the police with schools to secure better outcomes for children who are subject to or experience police-attended incidents of domestic abuse. Rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short-, medium- and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

WHAT WE DO
Operation Encompass provides an efficient, confidential channel of communication between police forces and Key Adults within schools. This enables the immediate and discrete recognition of the child's situation by the Key Adult, ensuring a secure and sympathetic environment is provided and the broader effects of abuse are addressed.

WHO WE ARE
Operation Encompass is a charitable organisation set up in 2011, which has since enabled effective interventions to many thousands of children who've experienced domestic abuse. Our volunteers, trustees, and patrons are working tirelessly to ensure that police and schools throughout the country are able to address victims of domestic abuse consistently and coherently.



The Youth-nominated Support Team is a psychoeducational, social support intervention. Adolescents nominated “caring adults” (mean, 3.4 per adolescent from family, school, and community) to serve as support persons for them after hospitalization. These adults attended a psychoeducational session to learn about the young person’s difficulties and treatment plan, suicide warning signs, communicating with adolescents, and how to be helpful in supporting treatment adherence and positive behavioural choices. The adults received weekly supportive telephone calls from YST staff for 3 months. The study found a significant reduction in deaths over an 11-14 year period.

King et al. (2019)



Concluding Thoughts

- Who are the children who aren't part of the family support conversation at present?
- Should family support strategies be centred around children's social care at the hub or communities (however these might be defined)?
- How do we make better informed decisions about how finite resources are best used in multi-agency/multi-sectorial working?



References

- Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership (2019) Glasgow's Family Support Strategy (Draft Version 7)
<https://glasgowcity.hscp.scot/consultation-glasgows-family-support-strategy>
- King et al. (2019) Association of the Youth-Nominated Support Team Intervention for Suicidal Adolescents With 11- to 14-Year Mortality Outcomes. Secondary Analysis of a Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA Psychiatry*, doi:10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2018.4358
- Spratt, T., Devaney, J. and Frederick, J. (2019) Adverse Childhood Experiences: Beyond Signs of Safety - reimagining the organisation and practice of social work with children and families. *British Journal of Social Work*
- Devaney, J. (2018) The trouble with thresholds: Rationing as a rational choice in child and family social work. *Child & Family Social Work*