

IMPACT REPORT

2016



coreassets
CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CEO FOREWORD

A YOUNG PERSON SAID:

"I had been feeling really let down by other professionals so I am really pleased I could have you as my support worker. The work we did last time is the first bit of work that actually helped."

What better way to start the introduction to this, our second Impact Report? Listening to young people, gathering feedback about our services and reporting outcomes achieved has been key to our ongoing success this year.

Making a difference to the lives of young people who live with domestic violence, who are struggling to transition to adulthood or whose families need support is what is really important to me and all the Core Assets Children's Services staff. Increasing the numbers of adopters with children placed and achieving adoption orders has been another highlight this year.

In this Impact Report, you will see great examples of the work that's being carried out across England and Wales and of course our work for the Ministry Of Defence in Germany with our British Forces Social Work Service.

Sally Melbourne

A very proud CEO.





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Our People - Michelle Grimshaw



- 2008 FCA Support Worker
- 2010 CACS Casual Support Worker
- 2012 St Helens Edge of Care Service Manager
- 2013 Halton Domestic Abuse Senior Support Worker
- 2014 Masters Degree: Dynamics of Domestic Abuse
- 2016 Interim Contracts Manager

“ Nine years ago, I started working as a Children and Young People Support Service Worker with Foster Care Associates (FCA), who are part of the Core Assets Group. During my time working in this role, I became aware of the challenges of responding to Domestic Abuse situations and decided to begin learning more.

My passion and interest soon became focussed on domestic abuse services. FCA's sister company Core Assets Children's Services (CACS) was starting to gain experience in this field, as well as working with vulnerable families with a diverse range of complex needs. This prompted me to become a Casual Support Worker with CACS to build my experience of facilitating supervised contacts, before becoming employed full time overseeing the St Helens Edge of Care Service. The CACS management structure supported me at all times and pushed me to reach my full potential, giving me the opportunity to work on the Halton Domestic Abuse Family Support Service, which enabled me to gain valuable experience in my preferred field.

In 2015, I attended a company run event where Ruth Jones OBE spoke about her experiences of domestic abuse. I was so astounded by her achievements that I wanted to push myself further, so I followed Ruth's advice and applied to do a Masters in the Dynamics of Domestic Abuse at the National Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence and Abuse based at the University of Worcester.

It was from this point that my expertise began to really form.

I was consequently promoted to Senior Support Worker overseeing the Halton Domestic Abuse Service and, as my experience grew, so did my job role. I supported the writing of tenders for new domestic abuse services across the country and, as we secured more contracts, I took on the additional role of managing these.

Today, I hold the role of Interim Contracts Manager, managing domestic abuse services and Edge of Care family support across the UK. I am so passionate about the work that I do and thoroughly enjoy building new opportunities whilst supporting the company to improve its response to domestic abuse as Senior Domestic Abuse Champion.

During my time in post, we have developed a domestic abuse service model based around asset building and have implemented the new domestic abuse policy for staff.

Although at times it is difficult to see the horrendous experiences of victims and children, this is far outweighed by seeing our service users progress positively and safely from their experiences. I have supported some amazing victims of domestic abuse who have made huge improvements to their lives and I hope that CACS can continue to build on this success in the future.

”



In 2016, Core Assets Children's Services worked on over **90 distinct contracts**.



We delivered a total of **124,724 hours...**



through **51,364 sessions** over our two workstreams...

Ambition for All

- Disability + Inclusion
- Alternative Education
- Youth Engagement
- Independent Support

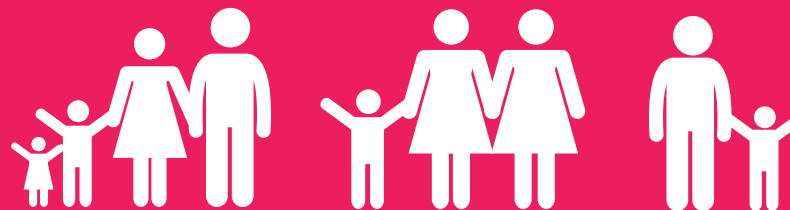


Family Support

- Parenting Support
- Edge of Care
- Contact Services
- Therapeutic Services



During 2016, our statutory social work services in Germany dealt with a total of **417 enquiries and 131 referrals**.



To date, our adoption agency, Adopters for Adoption, has dealt with **926 enquiries, achieved 23 adopter approvals and successfully found families for 25 children**.

Safer Stronger Families (SSF)

Our intensive family support multi-modal intervention model, **Safer Stronger Families (SSF)**, is built on the firm evidence base of Triple P Level 4, Solution-Focused Brief Therapy and Team Parenting®.

In order to equip children, young people and their families with the skills and coping mechanisms to reduce unwanted behaviour, increase positive family functioning, and build their resilience, the model:

- follows an assertive outreach approach
- uses a systemic, strength based technique
- allocates each family a dedicated Key Worker

Our 12 week programme, followed by a 10 week step down period, will focus on those areas of need identified in a Family Action Plan and have the overall aim of creating resilience and self-confidence.

The Safer Stronger Families model, currently used in a number of our contracts, is built on a firm theoretical understanding of the underlying motivators that promote or inhibit capacity to change in families where there are concerns. Based on relevant research, such as the Centre for Child and Family's 2014 research into capacity to change, the model acknowledges that change can be hard and complex and, while it can be supported through a multi-disciplinary approach, it cannot be imposed. Therefore, the cornerstone of our model is ensuring families take and maintain ownership of their own plans.



Cheshire West and Chester SSF

The service aims to provide targeted family support for families across Cheshire West and Chester with children aged 0-19 or up to 25 years for those with additional needs. The service began in July 2016 and, by the end of December 2016, we had supported:

147 young people and parents over **1471** hours of delivery

resulting in:

90%
of children and young people reporting improved resilience and emotional wellbeing

88%
of parents reporting improved behaviour from children

81%
of children and adults showing an improvement in overall SDQ results

Looking Ahead

In the spirit of continuous improvement, we have been listening to 'what works' for families, practitioners and partner agencies in our existing SSF services. We are excited that our next phase of development continues to strengthen the **Teen Triple P**, **Solution-Focused Brief Therapy** and **Team Parenting®** elements of the programme, improving the way we measure success by formally adopting the **Outcomes Star™** as a validated outcomes-focussed measurement tool. We are embedding our practice learning in to our new Safer Stronger Families services in **Lewisham** and **North Somerset** over the coming months.

“

Your input has been vital and life changing. I'm a stronger parent as a result of new strategies and my children are more united for a harmonious family life. Your investment gave me my daughter back and provided the platform for a happy, secure future.

”

PARENT

“

We are better as a family and we don't always have arguments and my behaviour has got a lot better.

”

YOUNG PERSON

“

Thank you also for all the work that has gone in to this family which has enabled them to turn around a deeply entrenched pattern of behaviour and make life significantly different for the boys.

”

SOCIAL WORKER

Kent SSF

In Kent, we have provided a countywide comprehensive adolescent support service to support families in crisis for four years. The purpose of the service was to maintain, wherever it was safe to do so, young people aged 11 to 17 within their families and local communities. At the end of the four years:

589
cases were officially opened

resulting in:

96%
of the young people prevented from entering the care system

39
young people being stepped down from a Child Protection Plan

84%
of parents feeling in control of the issues that brought them to the program

Keeping Safe

Kent Harmful Sexual Behaviour Service

We were commissioned by Kent County Council and the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to deliver a countywide service for children and young people between 0 and 18 who present with sexually harmful behaviours.

Our aim is to support their overall emotional wellbeing, as well as promoting recovery and strengthening skills. By the end of 2016, we had completed 32 Risk Assessments.

48% of the young people accessing the service were Children in Need, 32% were Children in Care and 6% were on a Child Protection Plan.

“

For the first time since consulting professionals, we felt that someone actually listened to what we were saying and to OUR opinions.

FAMILY

”

Redcar + Cleveland Therapeutic Outreach Service

We are currently working in the Redcar and Cleveland area, delivering support to children and young people affected by domestic abuse.

Our service delivers support through five different elements: Individual Support, Play Safe, which is aimed at 5 to 11 year olds, Stay Safe, for 12 to 18 year olds, joint family sessions and consultations to professional networks.

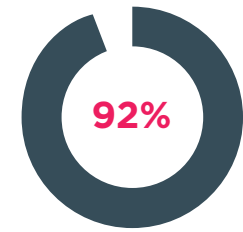
We use a robust set of measurement tools to support impact and progress analysis, including SDQ and Family Functioning Scales.

“

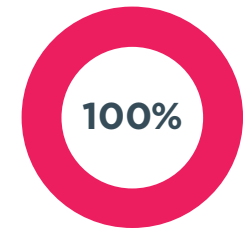
Thank you so very much for everything you have done for me. I feel like a new person and people have noticed that I am so much happier.

YOUNG PERSON

”



of children and young people agreed or strongly agreed that the worker helped them change things



of referrers were either satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of our risk assessments



of children and young people reported having a greater understanding of domestic abuse

Lancashire Domestic Abuse prevention Service

We were commissioned by Lancashire County Council to deliver specialist support to staff in Lancashire maintained schools, and to targeted children and young people, in relation to domestic abuse.

The service began in April 2016 and, by the end of December 2016, we had delivered 309 hours of one to one support to children and young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse. 100% of these agreed or strongly agreed that the service was very beneficial.

We also delivered 143 hours of whole school staff training, where 96% of staff felt more equipped to support young people.

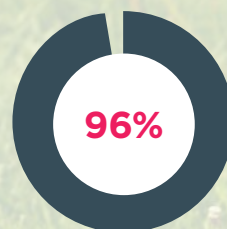
Separated Parents Information Programme

Working in partnership with Cafcass, our Separated Parents Information Programme is aimed at separated and separating families within the private law arena.

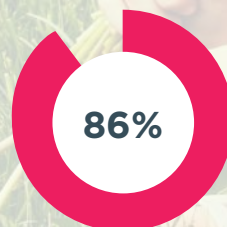
In 2016, 1,350 people accessed the programme, which plays a vital part in supporting separated parents and families with the planning for their child when there is a disagreement relating to contact issues.



of the young people thought that the service was very beneficial



of school staff felt more equipped to support young people in relation to domestic abuse



of service users were positive about the SPIP and its delivery

Ambition for All



2016 Snapshot

Disability and Inclusion

29,400

hours of face to
face support

10,609

hours of group
activity

2,367

clients across
30 contracts

Alternative Education

5,012

delivery hours over
10 contracts

Oxfordshire Activity Groups

Our provision for Oxfordshire County Council focuses on providing a short breaks service that builds young people's skills and independence whilst giving them the opportunity to meet others and participate in fun activities.

Of the children and young people in attendance, 50% were on the autism spectrum, 16% had a physical difficulty and 11% had a severe or moderate learning difficulty. In 2016, we delivered:

193

After School Clubs

67

Holiday Clubs

9

Youth Groups

“““

I cannot think of any ways that the group can be improved as I think it works brilliantly.

PARENT

Birmingham Youth Promise

We work in partnership with the Birmingham Looked After Children team to provide bespoke mentoring, ensuring young people at risk can secure successful and sustained progression into education, employment and training (EET) post 16.

A 12 week programme of sustained mentoring and support begins once the young person has entered EET – ensuring key milestones are met and solutions continue to be positive. We also hold timely sessions with the EET provider to obtain feedback on progress. By the end of 2016 we had received:

200

referrals

with

86

young people successfully entering and sustaining EET

“““

I cannot believe the change I have seen in [young person] through the past 3 months. He has achieved more in this time frame than he has in the past 3 years. Without the right support network this would not have been possible.

SOCIAL WORKER

Independent Support

Core Assets Children's Services was commissioned by the Council for Disabled Children to deliver Independent Support to young people and their families in 22 Local Authorities.

We focus on offering families help and support to progress through the Education Health Care assessment and planning process. This includes home visits, drop-in sessions in the local community and website or email support. In 2016, we received 2,538 referrals from parents, carers and young people and delivered:

531

group sessions

to

8383

parents, carers and young people

“““

I was so impressed with your professionalism, depth and breadth of knowledge, and advice on so many areas during our conversation. You gave me an incredible amount of help and support. Nothing was too much trouble and simply being there to discuss all my queries, concerns and issues was simply amazing.

PARENT

Statutory Services

British Forces Social Work Service

British Forces Social Work Service delivers a full, 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week statutory social work service for children, vulnerable adults and their families across the whole service community, including serving military personnel, their families and civilian staff who work with them.

In 2016, a total of **438 contacts** were made to the service. At the beginning of the year, there were **12** children subject to Child Protection Plans, by the end of the year this figure had reduced to **six**.

In June 2016, an External Independent Review of the service reported overall positive findings, with elements of **good to excellent practice**.

“

Our involvement with the Social Worker has positively impacted on our parenting. She has changed my whole perception about the Social Services in a positive way. The support and advice has been fantastic.

FAMILY

”

Cheshire West and Chester Caring to Care

We deliver a wrap-around emotional health and wellbeing service in Cheshire West and Chester supporting looked after and adopted young people as well as the system around them, including foster carers, adoptive parents, schools and other professionals.

In 2016, a total of **110** children and young people received an intervention. We managed to close **52** cases, with **85%** of these achieving their outcomes.

Anger and relationship difficulties are regularly the primary concern of the interventions, often contrary to what is reported in the referral to our service - demonstrating our commitment to exploring the **Voice of the Child**.

“

These sessions have helped me a lot and I am feeling a lot happier and confident in myself.

YOUNG PERSON

”

Birmingham Short Breaks Service

Our family-based short breaks service provides day and night time care to disabled children and young people with assessed needs, referred by Birmingham Disabled Children's Social Care Team.

Children are placed with families who have been assessed and approved (under Fostering Regulations) as short break carers to provide a secure, warm, safe and supportive environment.

In 2016, a total of **41 cases** were opened. **50%** of these children had autism spectrum disorder, **12%** had a physical disability, **5%** had down syndrome and **5%** had cerebral palsy.

“

The short breaks I receive are excellent, with continued help and support. This support has made a major change to our family.

PARENT

”

Adopters for Adoption

Adopters for Adoption is an adoption agency set up to have a positive impact on the way people are supported to become adoptive parents.

Developing an expertise around the placement of older children and sibling groups, Adopters for Adoption has found families for **25** children, all of whom were over the age of two years, with **13** of them being older than four years. We have placed **three** sibling groups of two and **two** sibling groups of three.

Focusing on improving support for all adopters, Adopters for Adoption was awarded a grant from the DFE Practice and Improvement Fund to set up a Safer Stronger Adoptive Families programme. The purpose of the Safer Stronger Adoptive Families service is to maintain, wherever it is safe to do so, young people aged from 9 to 18 years old within their adoptive families. The service will work with adoptive families to enable them to develop strategies to prevent the breakdown of placement.



926
Enquiries

95
Assessments
completed

23
Adopters
approved

25
Placements
delivered

0800 5877 791
contactus@adoptersforadoption.com
www.adoptersforadoption.com



Innovation

Outcomes for Children

Outcomes for Children (OfC) is the Core Assets Group's Certified Benefit Corporation. It develops and implements innovative Social Impact Bond contracts with their Social Investment Partner, Bridges Ventures, to improve impacts for beneficiaries and drive system and cultural change in the social care arena.

OfC works alongside existing Local Authority services to embed new ways of working through a strong payment by results model. One such example is the OfC Birmingham contract, working with Birmingham City Council to give vulnerable young people the opportunity to 'Step Down' from residential care to specialist foster care.

This four year contract offers outcome based payment by results based on the key indicator of placement stability, measured after a 52 week focussed programme of support. Other impacts include personal outcomes for the young people themselves such as improved school attendance and attitudes to learning, involvement in positive activities, reductions in offences and fewer episodes of being missing from care.

Other exciting new contracts being delivered in 2017 include the North Somerset 'Turning the Tide' programme, delivering embedded family support interventions using the Core Assets Children's Services Safer Stronger Families model.

Safer Stronger Adoptive Families

In September 2016, Adopters for Adoption were awarded a grant from the DfE's Practice and Improvement Fund to deliver the Safer Stronger Adoptive Families model free to Local Authorities across England, with the aim of evaluating its efficacy in supporting and sustaining adoptive families.

Of the 64 programmes available free to Local Authorities, 16 families are already receiving a service.

The purpose of the Safer, Stronger, Adoptive Families service is to maintain, wherever possible, young people aged from school year 5 (aged 9-10 years old) to 18 years old within their adoptive families. The service will work with adoptive families to enable them to develop strategies to prevent the breakdown of placement.

Safer, Stronger Adoptive Families is an intensive 12 week family support service that improves family functioning so that adopted children will benefit from parents with more confidence in their parenting skills.

The model has been developed by combining evidence-based Triple P, Team Parenting®, which is underpinned by attachment and systems theory, and Solution-Focused Brief Therapy. It is delivered by experienced and trained Family Support Workers.

Additional learning will be gained through being part of the independent evaluation carried out by the Rees Centre at Oxford University, which will provide invaluable guidance on best practice for supporting adoptive families.

The Way Ahead

In 2017, we will maintain our commitment to the delivery of safe, high quality services with a focus on outcomes and ensuring that children, young people, families, customers and staff have a voice.

We recognise the challenges for our Local Authority customers and will look to develop service models that are both targeted and cost effective. In particular we will focus on:

- **Replicating our Safer Stronger Families delivery model**
- **Strengthening our domestic abuse offer**
- **Increasing our education and learning delivery, namely SEND and NEET support, with a focus on preparation for adulthood and raising aspirations**
- **Innovating within the emotional health and wellbeing space.**

We will continue to adapt our resources and be responsive to customers' changing needs.

To find out more about us, our approach and our commitment to children and families, please get in touch. We'd be delighted to find ways to work together and make a difference.

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coreassets
CHILDREN'S SERVICES

BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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