

Brief practice example – quick wins and embedding a Think Family approach

The sites have shown that there are some quick and low-cost actions, which can help to start the process of change. These include:

- lunchtime learning sessions
- ensuring that Think Family is included in staff inductions and safeguarding training
- liaison with key staff teams to ensure that practice is supporting a Think Family approach, e.g. that Child in Need risk screens are being completed.

These types of actions have been positive in terms of raising staff awareness from an early stage, and giving a sense of progress and achievement.

Another way of making progress is to embed the Think Family agenda in other work streams and initiatives. There are a number of other policy agendas with which work to support families affected by parental mental ill health can be linked. Linking with other strategies helps to ensure efficient use of resources and the sustainability of the work. Relevant areas include:

- **Hidden Harm** – Hidden Harm strategies are local responses to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs report on the impact of parental problem drug use on children.
- **Complex families** – We have found that similar approaches need to be taken to improve responses to other kinds of complex families, including parents with substance misuse problems, refugees and asylum seekers.
- **Parenting and early years** – It may be helpful to make links to the local Parenting Strategy. The Allen, Munro and Tickell reviews have also highlighted the importance of early intervention, and many local areas will be working to respond to this.
- **Young carers' strategies** – The practice guidance to the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 states that local authorities should have 'a protocol, shared between adults and children's services, for identifying and assessing young carers.'