

Telephone Parenting Support – Family Learning Team

Parent Support Workers have a timetable of availability to give telephone parenting support to families. Workers will be able to contact a PSW to ask them to make a support telephone call to a family who may benefit from parenting advice / support. Contact numbers and availability for each PSW are detailed on the separate timetable, together with contacts for Gill Downey, who leads on parenting within the Family Learning Service.

The process for telephone parenting support is as follows:

The worker contacts the PSW using the PSWs work mobile number to request telephone parenting support for a family. They discuss the family's issues with the PSW and the parenting support / advice that could be given.

(NB - If the worker has any particular concerns, they can contact Gill Downey to discuss before contacting the PSW. Likewise, if the PSW has any query/concern about how they should respond to the family or needs more advice, they will contact Gill Downey before making the call.)

When the support is agreed, the worker contacts the family and arranges a time for the PSW to call them.

The worker texts the parent's name, telephone contact number and a time to ring to the PSW's work phone. (This provides a secure record for contact details - if e.g. the PSW needs to keep the contact details to make a follow-up call. It avoids PSWs needing to make a note of any names and phone numbers.)

The Worker ensures that the PSW has their contact number. They should be available for feedback from the PSW straight after they have finished the call, or to be contacted if the PSW has an immediate concern arising from the call.

The PSW contacts the family and provides parenting advice and a 'listening ear'. Some general guidance is listed below.

- Every situation will be individual, but essentially referrals will be for parents who are struggling to manage their children at home for a variety of reasons. Issues will be individual to each household, but responses should come from Solihull or Triple P, with the general message that all families are stressed at this time. Parents should be encouraged to consider the situation from the child's perspective.
- Where there is tension and conflict, PSW's first response should be to support and encourage parents to try to calm themselves and defuse the immediate situation by e.g. advising the parent to distance themselves from the children, go into the garden, to the bathroom etc (if it's safe to do so).
- PSWs can reassure parents that they should not feel guilt or have unrealistic expectations about their parenting – these are not normal times and there will be tensions and conflict within all families.
- Parents don't need to try to be teachers. If possible, they should try to do some nice things with their children (PSWs could make suggestions, depending on the children's ages). If parents do have issues with children's education, the PSW can take advice from KM/GD about where they could go for resources or support.
- Solihull strategies can be used to help parents help children to calm down.

- Triple P strategies e.g. setting rules and boundaries, family meetings, quiet time, time out, logical consequences, interesting activities, creating a plan etc. can be used for e.g. where there is conflict between siblings.

The advice/support that PSWs give needs to be realistic (avoiding making any commitments that we may not be able to follow up) and limited to general parenting advice. They should make a note of any non-parenting issues that arise during the conversation and tell the parent that they will relay them to the worker. (For example, if someone tells them that they are struggling to get to the shops etc).

(If the parent complains about the support that they are receiving or about their worker, the PSW must not get drawn into this. They must say that they can only pass on the parent's concerns to the worker.)

NB - If during the conversation, the PSW has a serious immediate concern, ie that there is a serious issue or a safeguarding concern, they must tell the parent that they need to break off the conversation and contact the worker immediately. When they have done this, they need to contact GD, KM to update them.

*After the conversation the PSW makes a brief record in their work diary (ie paper diary): worker's name, time they called the parent, what was discussed with the parent, any advice / strategies, any issues / concerns etc. These must be completely anonymous ie **NO use of names, initials, address or any other information that could identify the family.** The PSW then telephones the worker to give verbal feedback and provide the information that they have recorded for the worker to use to update their records.*

*If there are no immediate issues arising from the call, the PSWs could arrange a time to make a follow up contact with the parent to see how things are going. **The same procedures for recording and passing on information from follow-up calls need to be applied.***