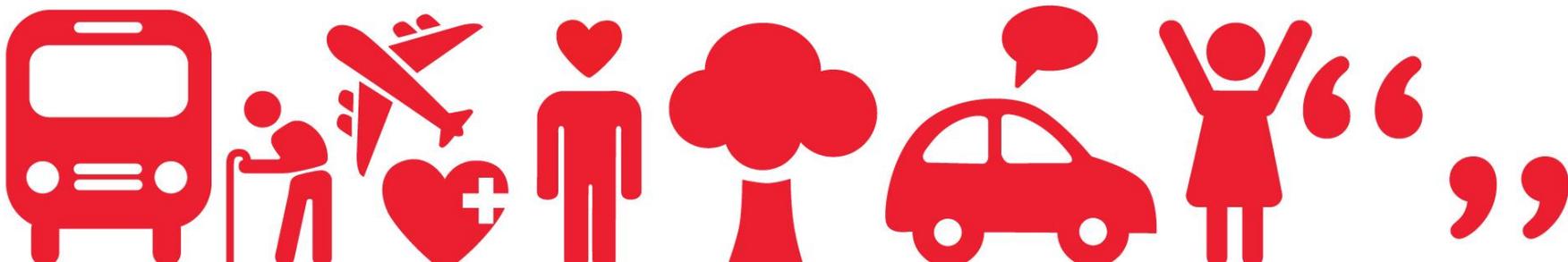


Tough Love for families

How well are family intervention services (formerly FIPs) working?

Clarissa White

National Centre for Social Research



Agenda

- Rationale for family intervention services (formerly FIPs)
- The original FIP model
- How well are they working?
- What is critical to their success?
- Challenges for the future

The case for family intervention services

- Families with multiple problems make significant financial demands on a wide range of local services
- Duplication and lack of co-ordination between services supporting the same family wastes money and can reduce their effectiveness.
- It is estimated that a family with severe problems could be £250,000 - £350,000 in a single year (Sheffield Hallam University 2006)
- Contact with many different services is confusing for families with multiple problems. (*Breaking the Cycle, 2004*)

The Family Intervention Project

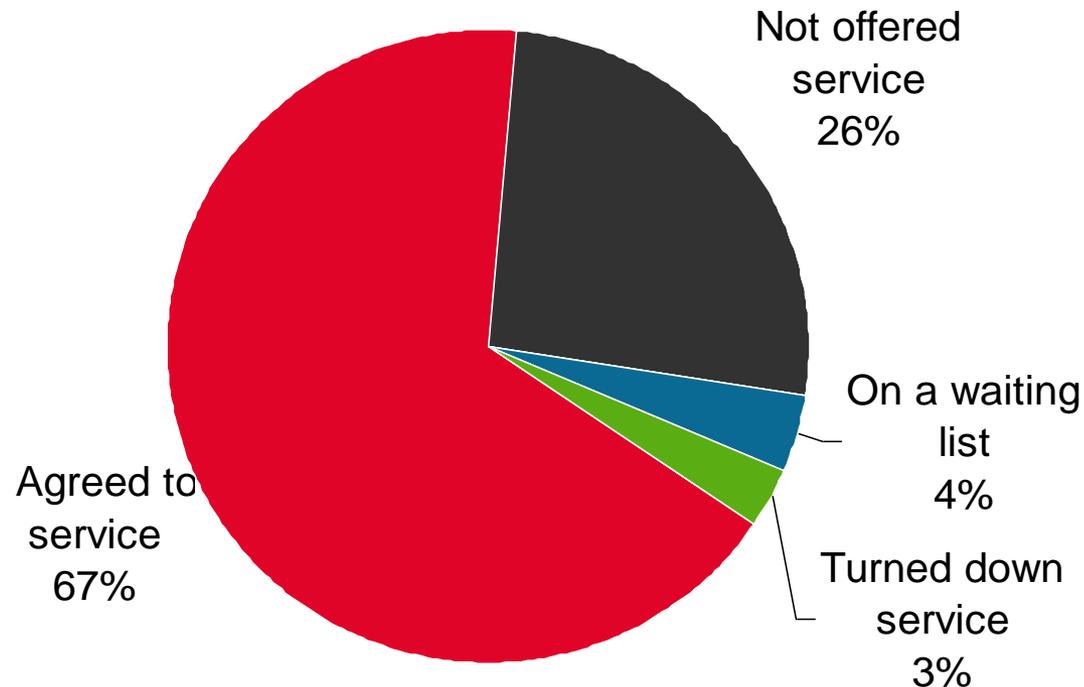
- FIPs developed out of the Respect Agenda
- Set up to reduce ASB, prevent homelessness and improve outcomes for families and children
- A dedicated key worker with low caseloads
- Focus on the whole family
- Use of a contract - setting out changes expected, support to be provided and possible consequences if change is not made
- The use of persistent and assertive working methods to challenge and support families to address behaviour
- Leverage in and work alongside other agencies
- Now cornerstone of policy for families with multiple problems



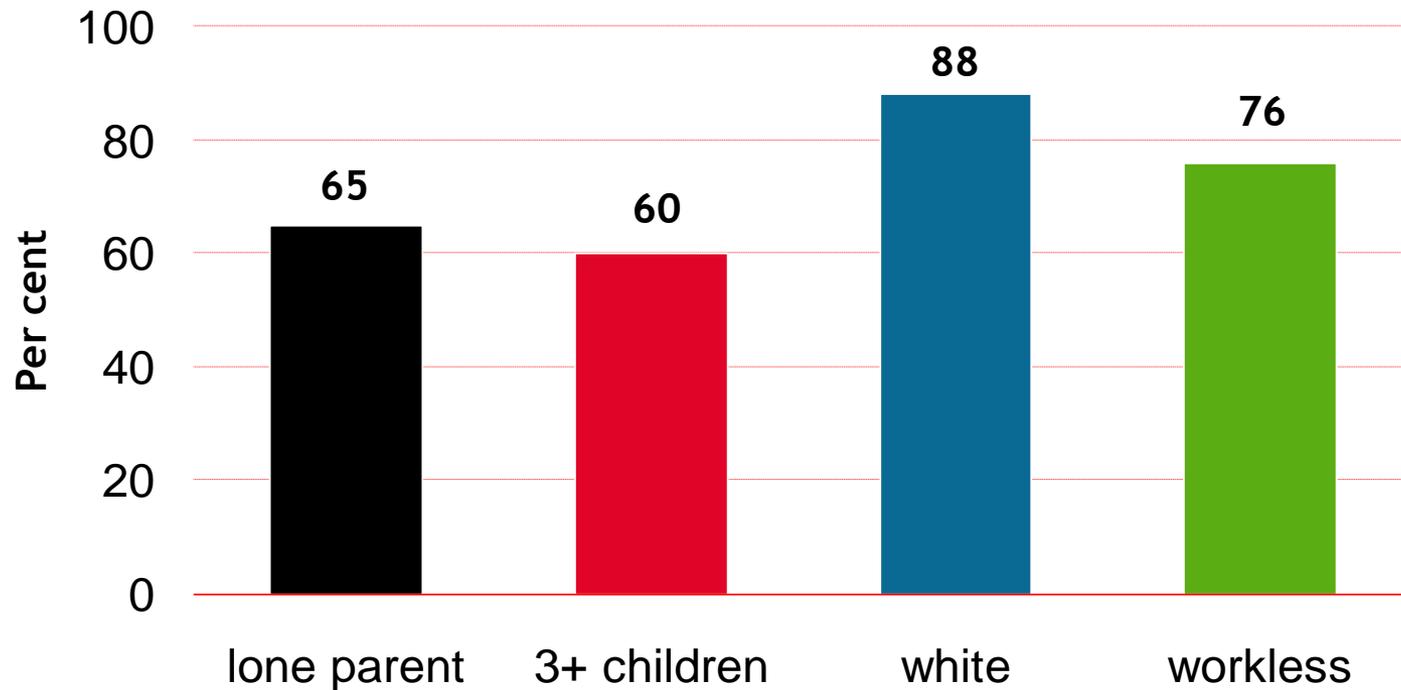
**How well are they
working - the evidence
for intensive family
services?**

7,231 families referred by March 2010

What happened to families referred to the service?



Socio-demographic profile of families

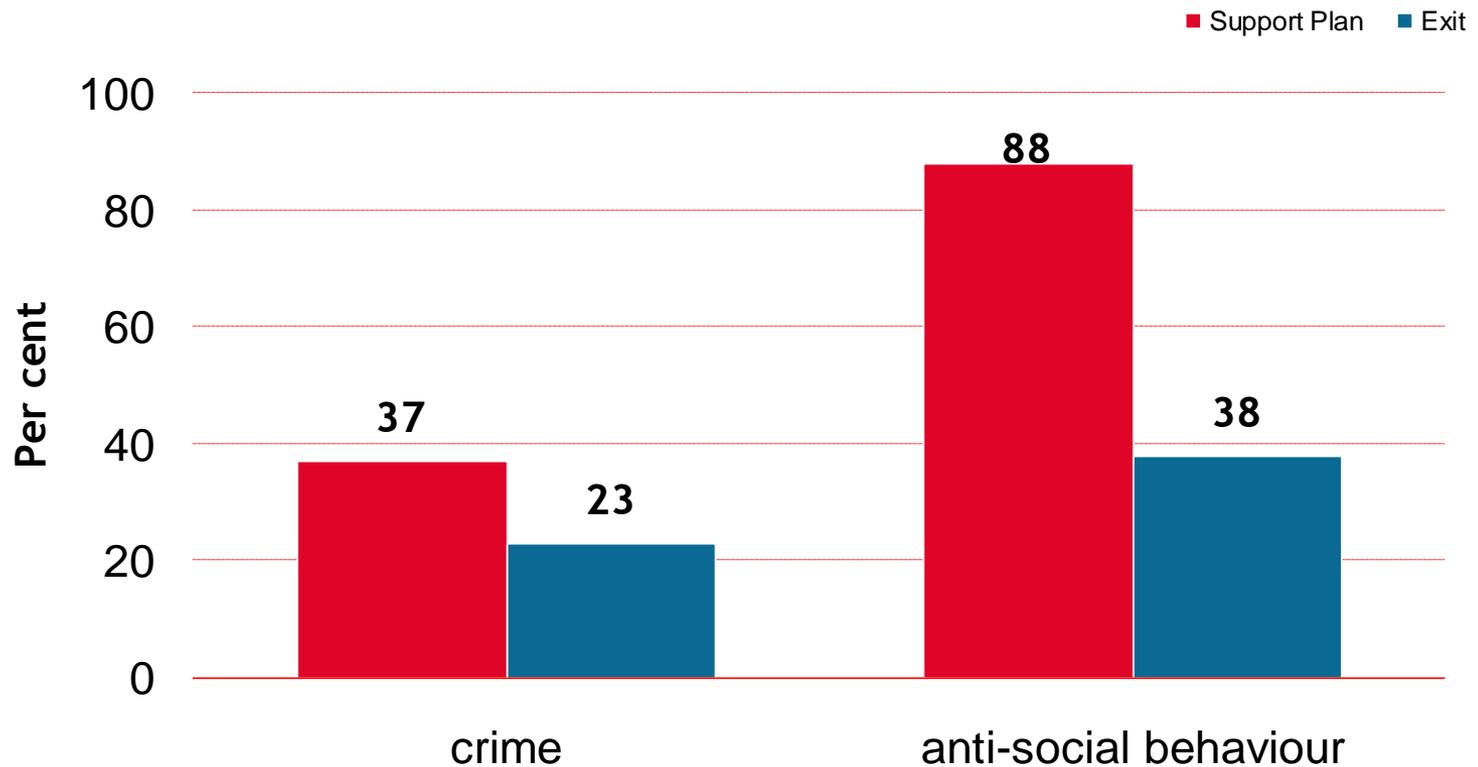


Base = 3,665 families at start of service (Support Plan)

The intensive family service

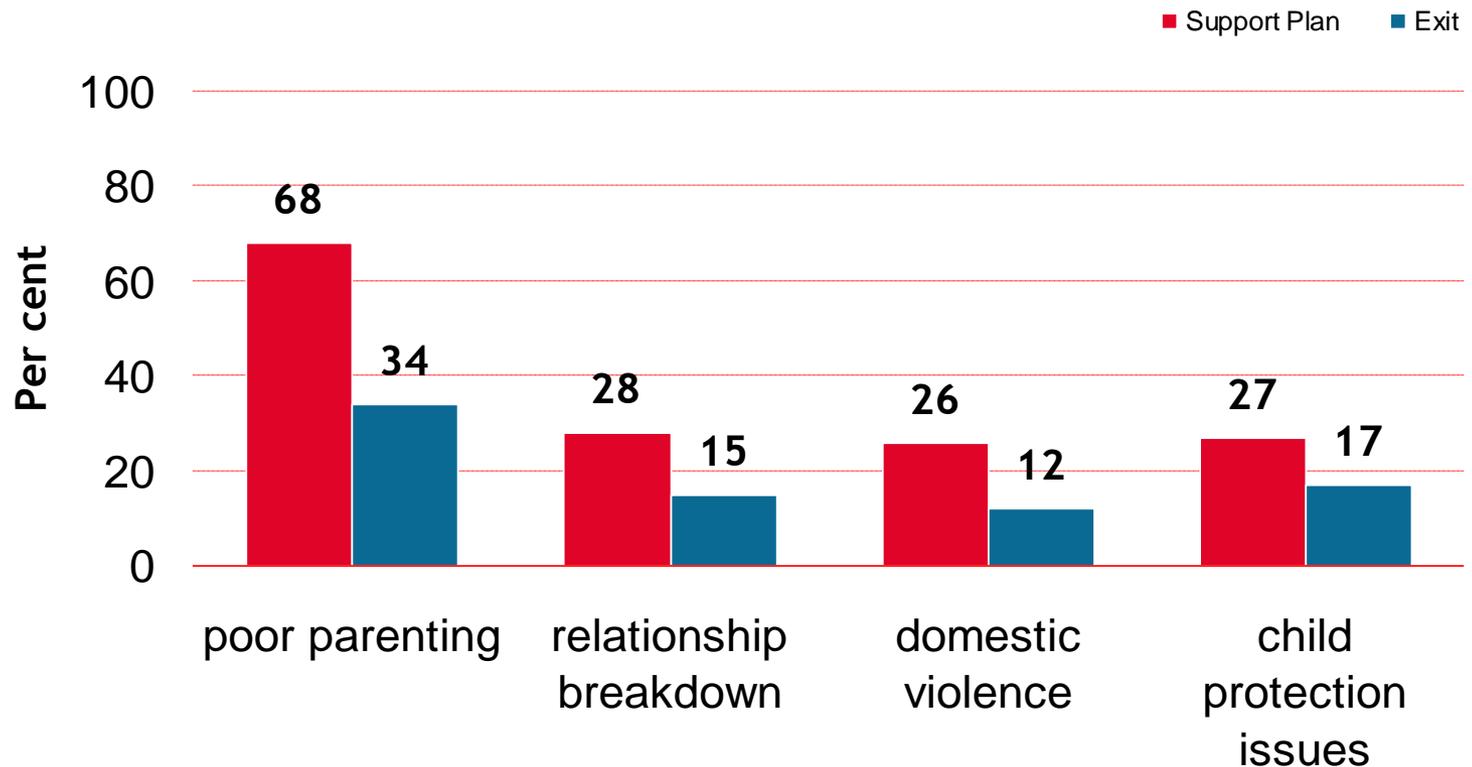
- Typically work with families in homes for around 13 months
- Activities include: challenging ASB, parenting support, supporting children into education, setting up activities for families, managing risk of eviction, improving the home environment, financial management, finding education, training and work for parents and young people, support to stop offending
- Contact time decreases during service
- Majority of families work with same key worker
- 76 per cent families recorded as leaving for a successful reason
 - 14 per cent for an unsuccessful reason

Crime and anti-social behaviour



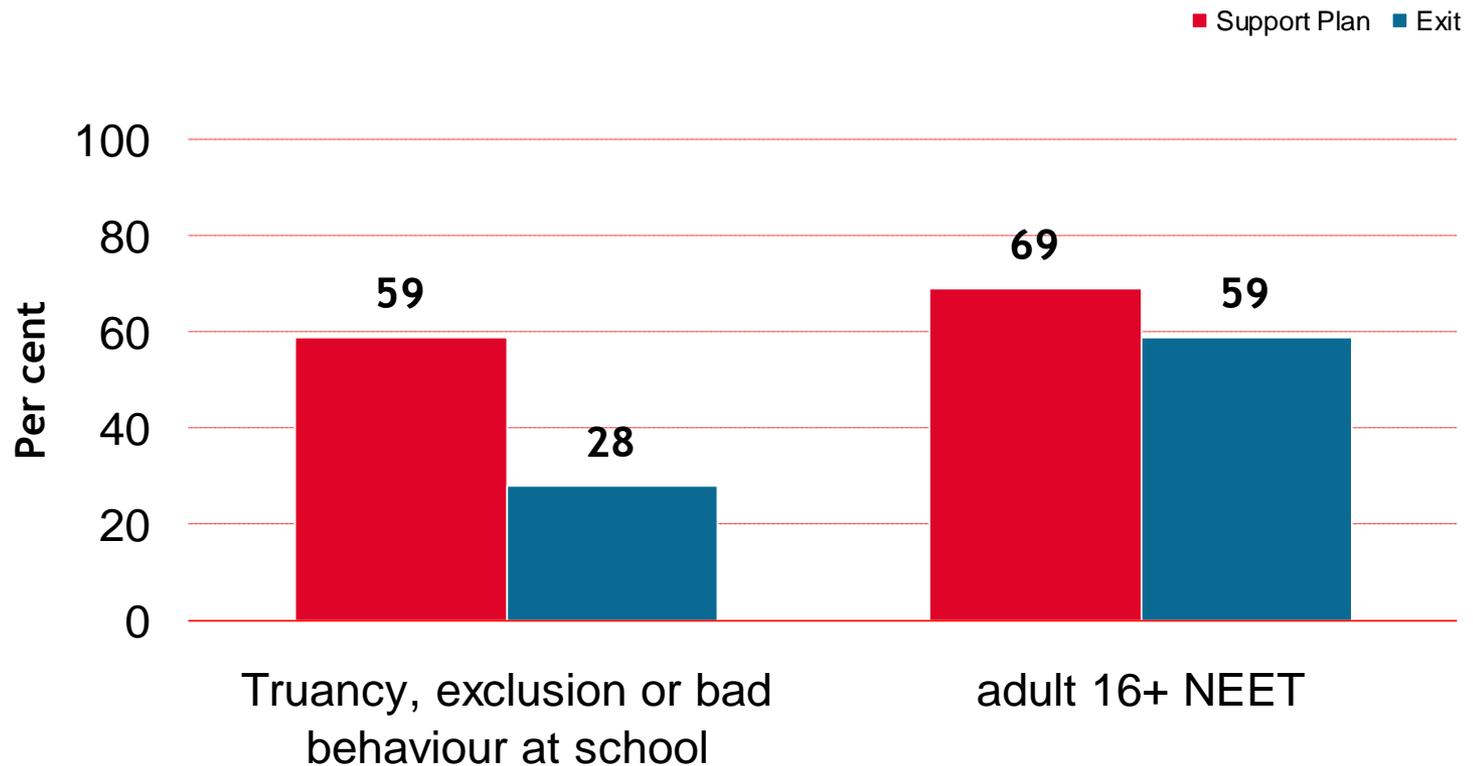
Base = 1,788 families who exited service

Family functioning



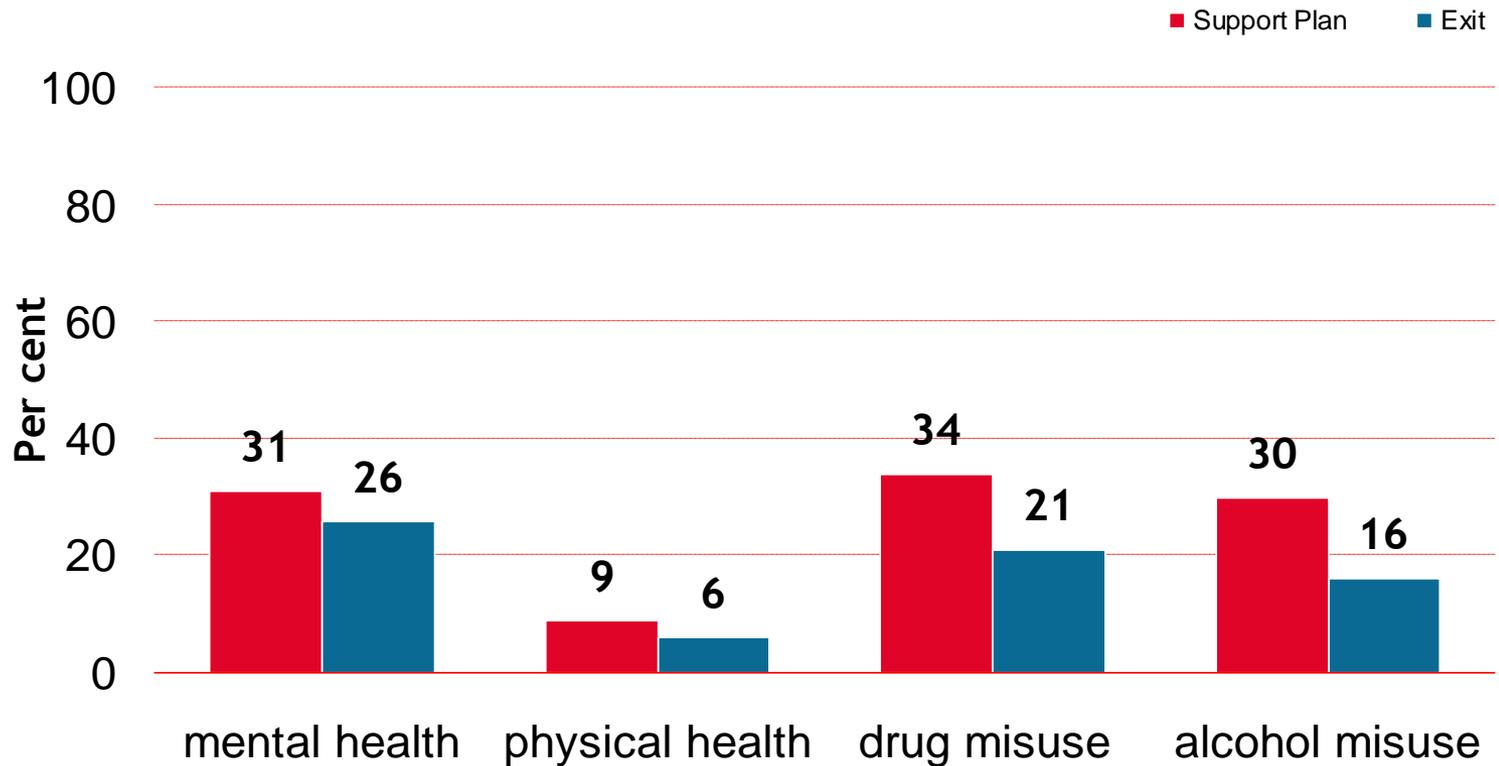
Base = 1,788 families who exited service

Education and employment



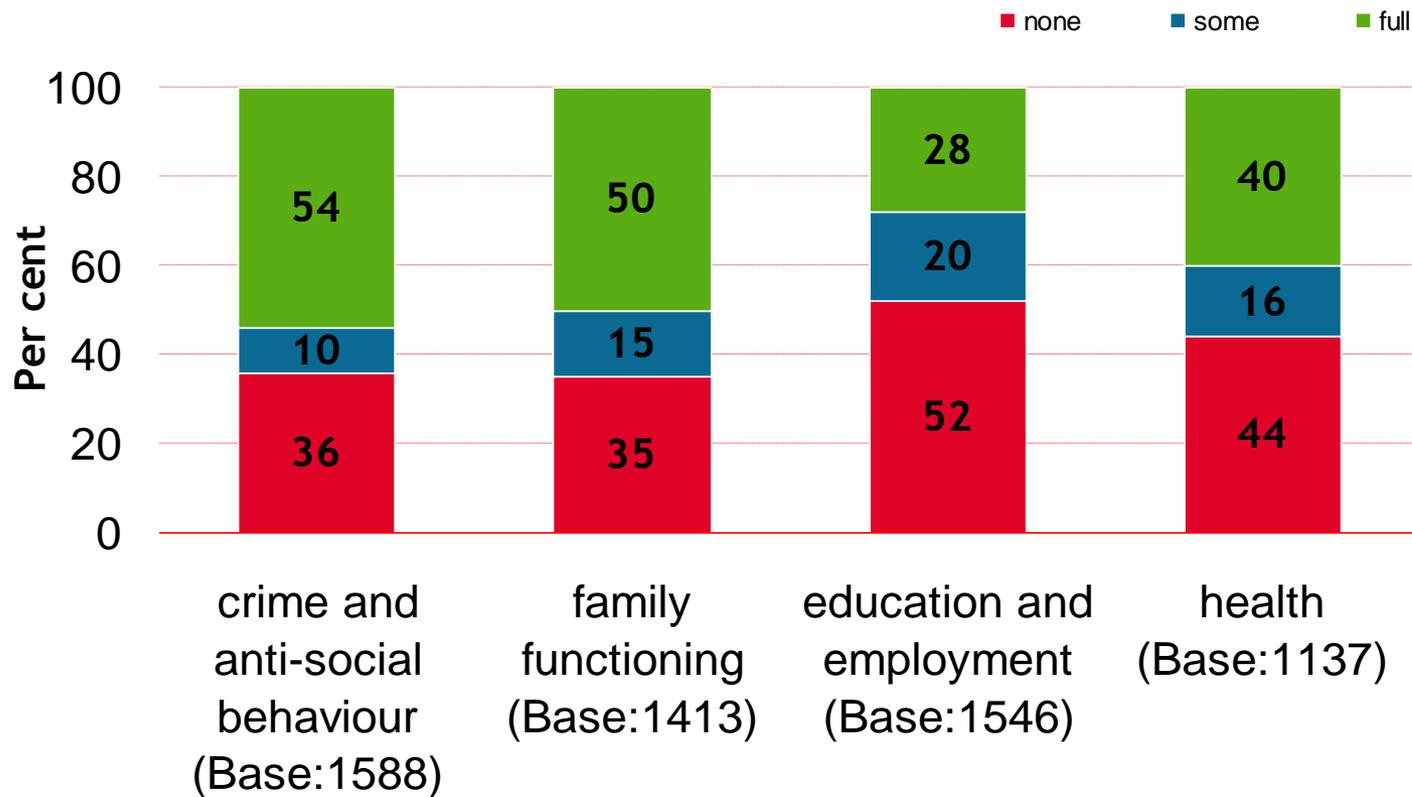
Base = 1,788 families who exited service

Health



Base = 1,788 families who exited service

Families' success in addressing problems



The evidence is promising

- Early indications suggest that outcomes are sustained for families 9 to 14 months after exit (sample only 283 families)
 - More likely to have successful outcome
- We need a robust impact assessment and cost benefit analysis to fully establish the efficacy of intensive family services. Indicative estimates suggest
 - A significant impact for crime and ASB
 - Provide value for money (Parrot and Godfrey 2008)
- We need to know more about how outcomes vary as services develop and work with a wider range of families and how different delivery models affect outcomes



Critical features for success...

Eight critical features of the model

1. Recruitment and retention of high quality staff

- Range of experience and backgrounds

2. Key worker model

- Vital for ensuring engagement and trust
- Family feel responsible to the worker

3. Small case loads

- Builds trust and rapport
- Available when families need them
- Uncover deeply rooted problems
- Supervise and coach
- Persistent and tenacious – families/agencies

Eight critical features of the model

4. Whole family approach

- Get to root of problem
- Necessary to change mindset/lifestyle
- Prevent regressive influence

5. Stay involved as long as necessary

- Can take long term approach
- Essential for deeply entrenched issues

6. Use of sanctions with support

- Encourages families to agree to work with FIP
- Helps families realise the need for change

Eight critical features of the model

7. Scope to use resources creatively

- Buy in services and goods
- Work in a flexible and holistic way

8. Effective multi-agency relationships

- Families get services and interventions needed
- Consistent message
- Reduces opportunity for families to 'play agencies off against each other'
- Enables FIPs to get to the root of family's problems

Challenges for the future

- Financial support via Early intervention Grant
 - Removal of ring fence (June 2010)
- PM campaign to work with every troubled family
 - DfE developing new approach for families with multiple problems (FMP)
 - Supporting LAs to pool budgets for FMP (Community Budgets)
- Challenging to evaluate
 - Local authorities doing different things
 - Reliance on staff to collect data via web based monitoring tool
 - Identifying a control group
 - Disentangling effect and costs of FIPs from other activities
 - Following up families in the much longer term

Sources for intensive family services

- <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-RW047.pdf>
- <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR044.pdf>
- <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000956/osr09-2010.pdf>

Thank you

Clarissa White

Clarissa.white@natcen.ac.uk

www.natcen.ac.uk

