Early Years Mental Health Service

Information for families

COMMUNITY CAMHS
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service
Who are we?
The Early Years Mental health Service is delivered by a team of five specialists working with children under the age of five years and their families.

We are members of the Community Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and are based in five Children’s Centre Clusters across Sunderland, Washington and the Coalfields area.

What we do?
We promote the mental health and emotional well being of all children up to the age of five years and their families.

We are trained to listen without judging and can help you sort out your thoughts and any concerns you may have about your child or family.

Here are examples of some of the issues we may be able to help with.

• Relationship issues, which can affect the bond and attachment between you and your child
• Your concerns about your child’s behaviour, such as sleep, feeding and toilet training problems
• Supporting you and your child through the usual developmental stages, for example worries when your child begins nursery
• We offer support with parents’ mental health problems such as postnatal depression, stress and anxiety
• We offer support with issues from the past, such as traumatic experiences, bereavements or family breakdown which might be making parenting more difficult

How do we help?
• We focus on the relationship between you and your child
• We offer support at an early stage when relationships are being formed
• We try to help you develop confidence and skills in parenting your children
• We provide group work to help support parents in their role including Social Baby parentcraft sessions, Incredible Years parenting programmes and Motherhood in Mind post-natal support groups
• We offer support to you when life stresses or mental health issues are affecting your relationship with your child

How do we work?
• We can visit you at your home or at a venue convenient to you, generally Monday to Friday between 9.00 - 5.00pm
• Our assessment usually takes place within three sessions and then we can offer a further six to ten sessions of support
• From assessment we agree with you a plan of how to best meet the needs of your child and family. This may include working with other colleagues or referring you to a more appropriate service
• We work in partnership with families and other professionals. This may involve sharing information with your consent, such as with nursery staff, midwives, health visitors, general practitioners and community psychiatric nurses
• Sessions will remain confidential unless we feel there is a risk of harm to your child or any member of your family

What information do we share?
• We will explain the data protection procedures to you and ask you to sign a Children’s Centre consent form before we share any information with other professionals. This consent will also allow you to receive information about other services that may be of interest to you
• There is also a consent form that gives you a choice of which professionals already involved with your family we can share with and gain information from, such as midwives, health visitor and nursery staff
• If there are any safeguarding concerns then it is our duty to share relevant information between agencies, with or without your consent

How do you access our service?
• Ask your midwife, health visitor or nursery manager to refer your child through the Children’s Centre
• Ask your general practitioner who can refer directly to us
Any queries or comments please contact the main office at
Valley Road Community Primary School,
Corporation Road, Hendon, Sunderland, SR2 8PL
Tel: 0191 514 1622  Fax: 0191 510 0654
Email: carl.sketchley@suntpct.nhs.uk