

Good practice: Early years and early intervention strategy

Providing effective support for families with young children across the Western Isles.

What was the identified issue ?

Services recognised that vulnerable families with young children did not always have effective support, wherever they live. Managers reviewed families' support needs and considered the resources available to help young children and their families. They made a plan for families to get help when they need it. The aim was to ensure all children have the best possible start in life.

What have staff in services done together?

Managers have improved existing services and developed new ones. Staff now identify when pregnant mothers and families with young children are struggling to cope or having a crisis. They ensure families get help quickly for six weeks while an assessment is carried out. Help is continued for a longer period where families need it. Support can be provided by home carers, childminders, day carers and nursery or other early years staff.

What are the benefits for children/young people and families?

Children and families benefit because their needs are identified early and they can get help quickly. Parents with young children can seek support directly and get help to meet their own particular needs, in ways that suit them. Parents are being helped to establish routines and to better manage their children's behaviour. They say they are listened to and report feeling less isolated and stressed. Reviews of services show that the support provided is helping to improve children and families' lives.

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=11850&type=12>