



Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Well-Being

PSB Scrutiny Performance Panel
27th February 2018

Public Services Board Best Start Workstream Update

Purpose:	This report provides the Panel with an update of the PSB Priority on Early Years.
Content:	The report outlines project progression and highlights to date, and future planned developments.
Councillors are being asked to:	Discuss the report and identify if there are any comments and/or recommendations to be reported back to the PSB.
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1. Background

- 1.1 There is considerable international evidence from a wide spectrum of leading academics and practitioners that investment in the Early Years (EY) will break the cycle of disadvantage by changing children's life chances so that they are better able to make a positive contribution to society and at the same time reducing the need for very costly remedial services across the Public Sector.

“Action to reduce health inequalities must start before birth and be followed through the life of a child. Only then can the close links between early disadvantage and poor outcomes throughout life be broken.” The Marmot Review Fair Society, Healthy Lives

- 1.2 As a result of the over whelming evidence, the focus on the importance of multi-agency action to improve outcomes for children from conception to school age was initiated by Swansea's Healthy City Board working in collaboration with the Institute of Health Equity (Marmot Review team).
- 1.3 In line with the evidence base for tackling health inequalities, a set of key messages were developed, with the engagement and involvement of parents/carers. These messages form the central element of the Best Start campaign to raise awareness of what families and services can do to support children's development before they start school. See appendix 1.
- 1.4 Best Start Swansea is a universal strategy with the targeting of services on a proportionate basis in relation to need so that individuals all the way along the social gradient are lifted up to the same level as those at the top.
- 1.5 The Best Start Swansea Communications campaign is therefore an important universal element of the overall Early Years Strategy and approach. Its premise is to get parents to engage with the messages and to achieve attitudinal change and build a culture of these being "the norm" in Swansea in the way that parenting is approached.

2. Public Services Board Project

- 2.1 Swansea's Public Services Board (PSB) identified Early Years as one of its 5 priorities for 2016-17. Whilst the focus of the PSB was progressing the Best Start Communications Campaign there was also an interest in being kept informed about wider developments.
- 2.2 The key elements of the Best Start Priority for the PSB were to:
 - Develop the key messages
 - Develop the marketing material
 - Promote the messages via the marketing material across Swansea
 - Developing the knowledge and awareness of the "workforce"
 - Develop a website and social media capability
 - Attend or organise events to promote the messages
 - Report on wider targeted projects.
- 2.3 PSB Partners were asked to actively support and promote the campaign through their individual workforces and stakeholders. This included re-tweeting Best Start messages, linking up on facebook, promoting the messages via the use of the posters and hosting and attending events.

2.4 Regular reports were provided to the PSB detailing progress.

3. Progress Best Start Campaign

3.1 During 2016-17 the messages were developed into a communications Campaign. Nearly 500 primary school children were directly involved in the development of the branding for the campaign helping to bring the Jack Family characters to life.

3.2 The social media activity accounts spread the messages to a wider audience. There have been 1,426 tweets, the impressions (the number of people that have seen the posts) have exceeded over 167,000 on twitter and over 12,000 on facebook.

3.3 The number of social media followers is also growing month on month, although there is still some work to be done. The reach is over 302,000 however the true reach is larger still, as by utilising the wider network that have been involved in the Best Start campaign, partner organisations have also been sharing the messages, with one tweet around bedtime routines being shared by SCVS to over 70,000 as a consequence.

3.4 The initial workforce development awareness has been ongoing over the last twelve months, with over 29 sessions delivered to over 630 staff on a multi-agency basis. The number of organisations that have received the awareness sessions is varied and ranges from, amongst others, Health visitors to library staff and from Childcare workers to Foundation Phase co-ordinators. Sessions have been run with the Third Sector, the Local Authority, Health and also the private sector. We are also working closely with SVCS to develop a third sector Best start Champion scheme with different voluntary organisations promoting the messages consistently.

3.5 Over 5,500 people received information about the Best Start Messages through attending outreach events over the summer including National Play Day, Health Visiting Week events, Ageing Well Morriston, Teddy Bear's Picnic etc.

3.6 Posters have been distributed to:

- 48 GP surgeries in Swansea
- 75 Pharmacies
- 2000 leaflets to members of the public.

3.7 In collaboration with Public Health Wales, Swansea organised a First 1000 Days event in November. The event brought together representatives from a wide range of services and professions across Swansea in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in the system during these crucial early days. The Event was attended by around 100

individuals and an action plan from the event is currently being developed and will align with the steps identified for the developing Well-Being Plan.

- 3.8 Recently consultation with 63 children and young people from 33 Primary Schools took place at the first Big Conversation for Primary Schools on the Early Years section of the Draft Wellbeing Plan. The event has also served to promote awareness of the Best Start messages with the Primary school sector
- 3.8 Wider developments reported to the PSB were the Jig-so project, the Early Years Primary Care Project and the Speech and Language Project.
- 3.9 Jig-So Swansea is a team of Midwives, Nursery Nurses, Family Facilitators and Early Language Development Workers, which was established to support expectant and vulnerable young parents (16-24) from 17 weeks during their pregnancy and throughout the child's infant years. The team works holistically with parents, targeting both mothers and fathers with a view to engaging them into a pathway of support that aims to better enable them to meet their child's needs and build the resilience factors needed to thrive as a family.
- 3.10 400 families were supported during 2017. Of these 90% of parents now feel better prepared to be a parent and 91% of parents reported an improved ability to support their child's learning and development needs. In addition from a Health perspective 51% of women stopped smoking during birth compared to 5% across the Health Board's population and 63% breastfed their baby at birth compared to 63.78% across the Health Board's population. 40% of the families were open to Social Services and during the year 34% of these were closed as a result of Jig-so's intervention.
- 3.11 The Early Years Primary Care Project is a pilot project funded by the Penderi GP Cluster with contributions from the Council and the Health Board. The project supports patients referred through the GPs to get to the root of the social issues impacting directly on their health and well-being or their child's health and well-being now or where there is a risk of an adverse impact to the future health and well-being outcomes of the child and their own. The project therefore signposts, seeks opportunities for social prescribing and when appropriate provides a bespoke parenting orientated intervention.
- 3.12 Approximately 137 families were supported during 2017 with child behaviour, parental anxiety and depression being the main reasons for referral. It has been estimated that through this small project that 650 GP appointments were saved.
- 3.12 The Council working closely with ABMU Health Board secured ALN Innovation Grant funding to purchase Wellcomm packs for all schools,

including Welsh medium schools. The Wellcomm Toolkit screens the receptive and expressive language skills of pupils on entry to Nursery and provides simple interventions to develop language skills in readiness for entry to Reception. Data is expected to be available during 2018/19.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 These include:
- 4.2 To continue to collaborate with Public Health Wales in the development of a new action plan following the 1st 1000 Days Event that will also inform the developing Well-Being Early Years Priority within the Well-Being Plan.
- 4.3 To scale up the promotion of the Best Start Messages via Events, Social Media and the use of resources, such as the Best Start board game, to reach a wider audience.
- 4.4 To continue to develop the wider projects including working with local Universities to evaluate the Jig-so Project and working with GP Clusters to roll out the Primary Care Early Years Project.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Workstream has made significant progress however it should be highlighted that the focus of the PSB project was on one element of a much broader Strategy and approach.
- 5.2 There are still more opportunities to capitalise on to take the Campaign to a higher level of reach and thus impact. The continued support of the PSB will be a critical factor in achieving this which will be helped through the inclusion of Early Years as one of the priorities in the Well-Being Plan that is currently out for Consultation.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications.

Background papers: None

Appendices: Best Start Messages

Appendix 1:

In Swansea we give our children the best start in life to get them ready for school

We are the Jacks living the Swansea way

- We play with our children to have fun and keep active.
- We look after ourselves and our children by trying to be healthy.
- We have routines to help our children concentrate and feel secure.
- We enjoy talking, listening and singing with our children.
- We enjoy reading with our children to get them ready for learning.
- We know that nursery and playgroups are where our children learn and make new friends.
- We spend quality time with our children to help them develop.

BEST START
SWANSEA

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