



Newcastle
City Council



Parenting Support Strategy

a summary for
people working with
children and families

Newcastle's Parenting Support Strategy's vision:

- to provide information, advice and support to parents and carers
- to help them be confident parents with confident children.

Parenting Support means activities that allow parents (either on their own or with other people) to develop the knowledge, skills and experience they need to do this to the best of their ability by

- assisting parents to support their children's learning
- helping parents to develop safe routines and healthy choices with their children
- developing better approaches to understanding children's behaviour and communicating with them in a positive way
- any activities that help mothers and father to bond more closely with their children.

This parenting support can be developed in a number of ways – through parenting programmes, face-to-face discussions and home visits. Traditional services very often provide this as part of a wider package of family support.

The Strategy covers parenting support from before a baby is born, and covers actions that link parents to any support they need.

Why do we need parenting support in Newcastle?

Most of the time, parenting is really enjoyable. But we all know that from time to time all parents have problems, just like everyone else. When this happens parents say that what makes a difference to their confidence is having someone to turn to:

- who they can trust
- who can support them in practical ways
- who can give them reassurance, information and advice.

Having somebody like this to talk to really helps the relationship that parents have with their children, especially if they can get advice and support quickly and close to where they live. It also makes a difference if the support is well co-ordinated and consistent.

Who is in charge of putting the Strategy together?

The Government said that each local authority had to put one person, the Commissioner for Parenting in charge of making sure a Parenting Support Strategy is developed.

The Commissioner had to gather all the information we need by talking to lots of people who have an interest in bringing up children in Newcastle.

These include:

- people who provide services for parents, children and young people
- anyone who carries out the role of a parent.

After talking to all these people, the Commissioner had to make sure that we have a Strategy – an agreed way of setting out what people think are the main priorities for parents and a plan for making sure these things happen.

How did we produce the Strategy?

Producing the Strategy was a big job involving many other agencies.

We developed our Parenting Support Strategy by:

- Finding out what parents need.
- Finding out what support is available.
- Setting up a group that can make sure resources are organised in the best ways.
- Consulting parents – fathers as well as mothers.
- Finding a way of involving everyone in making decisions about what to do next.
- Producing a document that tells everyone what's going on.

The Children's Plan published by the Government in December 2007 views parenting as key to outcomes for children.



What does the Strategy say are our beliefs about parenting support?

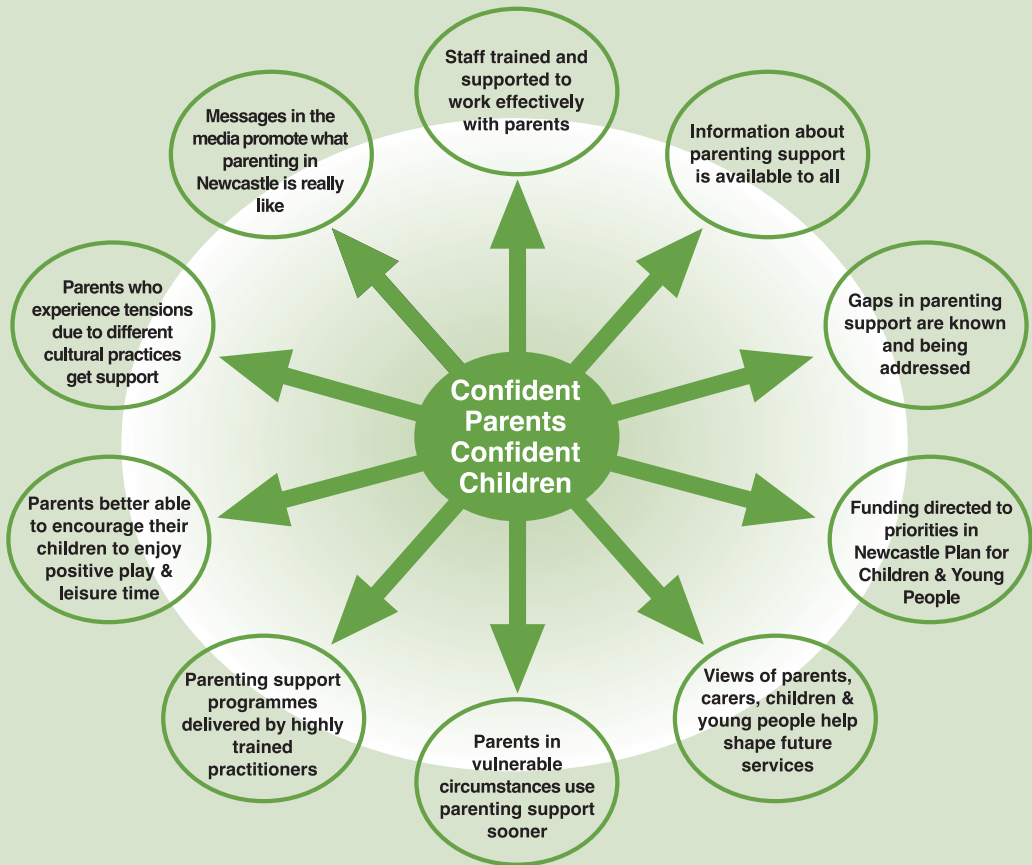
- Supporting parents is everyone's business, not just people who carry out the role of parents.
- All parents, regardless of circumstances need support from time to time.
- Support should be provided in local communities and be able to be found easily.
- Support comes from within communities and families and not just from professionals.
- We are all aware that there is unacceptable behaviour that can harm children, but understand that there is no one right way to bring up a child. Parenting support needs to respect cultural differences and beliefs.
- A range of activities and resources help to build trusting relationships with parents so they feel confident about using a support service.
- Providing good quality parenting support early, prevents problems from getting worse.
- To prevent problems from happening, we want to support fathers as well as mothers who are expecting to become parents, particularly those that live in challenging situations.

How are we going to put these beliefs into practice?

- Provide better training for staff.
- Ensure that the Children & Young People's Directory is up to date.
- Gather information about the support parents need in different areas of the city.
- Develop and apply an open & fair way of buying and arranging support for parents.
- Ensure budgets for support are targeted on the agreed priorities.
- Put in place the part of Parents' & Carers' Participation Strategy which relates to support for parents.
- Make childcare a key part of parenting support.
- Promote better ways of sorting or preventing problems early.
- Publish a range of parenting courses across the city.
- Promote support for fathers as well as mothers.
- Promote positive images of parents in the media.



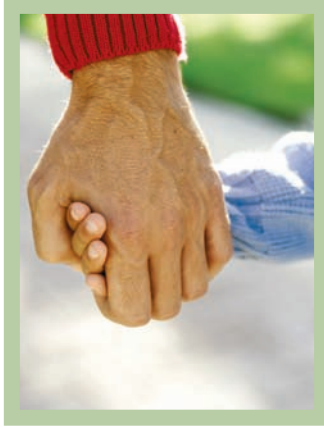
What difference will delivering the Strategy make?



This will result in more confident children and young people: able to deal successfully with changes and challenges

- remaining safely with their families
- enjoying healthier lifestyles
- having higher aspirations, attendance and attainment
- engaging in less youth offending
- having better employment prospects

'Parent' refers to mothers, fathers or carers including grandparents



Where can I find out more about how to contribute to this Strategy?

The Strategy and Action Plan are all on the Children's Service website at:
www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/parentstrategy

There are links on the website to lots of other information about parenting support in Newcastle. For more information contact:

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