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**Blaenau Gwent Early Intervention Family Support Case Study – Flying Start**

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| **Date** | March 25 |
| **Author** | Flying Start Family Support Worker |
| **Who was the Lead Programme?** | Flying Start |
| **Family Composition** | Mum is a single parent of three boys, aged 5 years, 3 years, and 7 months. |
| **Referral Source** | Eligible for Flying Start |
| **Background information** | The family live in a Flying Start catchment area and have been known to the service for 5 years. The family are currently being supported by Social Services and have recently moved from a Child Protection Plan to a Care and Support Plan. Mum experienced significant domestic abuse and received support from Phoenix DAS and suffers from poor mental health. She was previously employed full-time as a childcare assistant with a private organisation, however, lost her job when her children's names were placed on the Child Protection register. The family faced financial difficulties and have accumulated a considerable amount of debt including rent arrears. Mum states that she wants to relocate to be nearer to her support network; however, her current debt with the housing organisation prevents this move. |
| **Other Agencies Involved?** | Supporting Change Team |
| **What worked well (Family Support Worker Support)** | The Health Visitor requested additional support regarding diet and weaning. During a visit by the Family Support Worker, the mother reported that she had started to wean Child R (at 6 months) but stopped due to financial constraints in purchasing expensive jars of baby food for weaning. The Family Support Worker discussed the homemade food versus baby jar foods, particularly in terms of cost and nutritional value. The Family Support Worker recommended starting with pureed vegetables to monitor Child R's response, then gradually introducing lumpier textures of vegetables and fruit, following the child's cues.  The Family Support Worker helped the mother re-apply for the Healthy Start scheme, advising her to buy fruit, vegetables, cereals, and milk. The 'Infant Feeding Crisis' grant funded fruits and vegetables to encourage healthy weaning for Child R, and a food steamer was purchased for meal preparation. The mother was invited to a 'Weaning Party' at the Flying Start Hub for more advice, guidance and nutritional, budget-friendly meal ideas. |
| **Any problems or challenges** | Mum had very little knowledge of preparing healthy and nutritious weaning foods for her baby. She also had a very limited budget, which she was using to but expensive jars of baby food.  The debt that mum was in was quite significant, preventing any potential house moves due to arrears  Mum’s mental health sometimes impacted on her engagement |
| **Outcome of family intervention – Next Steps** | * Mum was able to obtain food for Child R's weaning despite financial difficulties, thanks to the Infant Feeding Crisis funding * The mother is now utilising her Healthy Start Scheme card. * The mother is preparing homemade meals/weaning foods for the family that are budget friendly and have adequate nutrition * Mum is saving money on gas and electricity by using a food steamer * Mum has been able to access support from Citizens Advice regarding her debt and finances * Family Support Worker is supporting mum to budget effectively * Mum to continue accessing support for her mental health |
| **Quote from Family** | “I am so glad I’ve got my Health Start Card back, I’ve been shopping and bought a load of fruit and vegetables. I’ve also been using my steamer. I absolutely love it; I can’t believe how easy it is and how nice the veg tastes and I’m saving money because I’m only using one hob. The kids are loving the home-made cooking too.” |
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