**Building Strong Families Team - TAF**

**Family -** Family comprises mother, father and four children.

**Referral/Concerns**

A referral was made by the parents due to their worries about one of their children, Thomas, being unable to manage his feelings and emotions at home.

**Needs identified by the Family First Action Plan**

After an initial assessment with the parents it was agreed that Building Strong Families (BSF) intervention would support Thomas and help him understand and manage his big feelings and emotions so they had less of a negative impact on daily family life. Thomas’ parents actively supported Thomas and were eager to explore new strategies to improve family relationships

A Family First plan was discussed with the family and Thomas and his parents came up with the following goals:

* To help Thomas recognise his emotions, understand their impact, and learn strategies to manage them effectively.
* To provide parents with Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) Techniques to address difficult behaviours.
* Improve both parents’ communication abilities to promote healthier interactions and relationships.

**Support provided**

The family received support through 11 direct work sessions, with a mid-way review after session 6. Weekly 1:1 sessions were held with Thomas at school, while parents received support at home, by phone and online.

**Understanding feeling and emotions**

Thomas was supported therapeutically to recognise and understand his emotions and feelings, allowing him to explore how they impact his behaviour. He enjoyed using UNO colours to discuss specific feelings and implement strategies based on the 'calming' colour.

Thomas made great progress in recognising his emotions and identifying triggers. By understanding how each emotion feels within his body, he was able to take significant steps towards emotional awareness which is crucial for his emotional development and helps him manage his responses more effectively.

Together, Thomas and the worker explored coping strategies like deep breathing, mindfulness, and physical activities that Thomas can confidently use at home and school. These strategies help him navigate his emotions effectively, fostering resilience and adaptability. Thomas’s parents have been supported to consistently reinforce these strategies in both environments.

Thomas was able to be brave in talking about his anger and its effect on his family, particularly his siblings and to learn about, and understand, his triggers. The work has empowered Thomas to manage his emotions more effectively, enhancing his relationships with his parents and his siblings and improved his overall well-being. Techniques like using a quiet space, engaging in sensory activities, and practicing relaxation exercises have been particularly beneficial. Support at school has also been crucial for helping him managing his anger effectively. The worker has communicated Thomas's sensory needs to school and will work with the school to help them implement strategies like sensory breaks, sensory tools (e.g. fidget toys, noise-cancelling headphones), and a sensory-friendly environment at school. These measures will help Thomas feel comfortable and focused in his learning environment.

**Helping Parents to find safe and effective behaviour strategies to remain calm in challenging situations.**

The BSF team worked with Thomas’s parents to equip them with NVR techniques to help them work with Thomas’s aggressive behaviours. Role-playing scenarios helped them respond calmly and assertively to difficult situations, providing a safe space to rehearse and build confidence.

Regular family meetings encouraged open discussions, positive behaviours, and a cooperative home atmosphere. These interventions helped parents apply NVR principles effectively, enhancing their ability to manage challenging behaviours and improving family dynamics for a more harmonious environment. Thomas’s parents have successfully set boundaries, used positive reinforcement, and sought professional advice to manage Thomas's dysregulation, supporting his emotional and behavioural development.

BSFT provided all the children with a safe space to talk about their feelings, enhancing their emotional well-being and resilience.

**Improve overall wellbeing and collaboration with outside agencies.**

Working on improving family well-being and communication, the worker provided sessions on effective communication techniques like active listening and "I" statements. The worker also undertook regular stress management and self-care sessions which created a more harmonious family dynamic. The worker met with Thomas's school and convened two TAF meetings. Working with the family and school enabled a consistent environment of support for Thomas. The school agreed to an INREACH referral for neurodiversity assessment and consultation with an educational psychologist.

Thomas has been able to manage his emotions better at school, but sometimes still struggles at home. It is hoped that the InReach consultation with the educational psychologist will identify if he requires a referral for an ND assessment. It is hoped that identifying the reasons for these behavioural differences will help provide the targeted support Thomas needs.

**Coping Strategies**

The family has practised various coping strategies during sessions and gained confidence to implement them at school and home.

**Outcomes**

The family has enjoyed the direct work sessions and actively participated in the Building Strong Families intervention. They communicated openly about their emotions, feelings, and worries, taking ownership to achieve the goals set in the Families First plan.

Thomas has a clearer understanding of his own feelings and emotions, how these impact on his body and his behaviour towards others.

The whole family have learnt new coping skills and have built a toolbox of techniques to use confidentially when feeling anxious, worried, and upset.

All outcomes have been achieved with feedback received.