

An evaluation of Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service

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What is this research report about?

We know that poor housing is linked with poor health and linked to children not going to school

Researchers from the Centre for Public Health, LJMU, carried out this research to find out how Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service helps families



What does Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service do?

- Supports local families with children who have been homeless or are having difficulties in keeping a home
- Works with the whole family
- Helps families to find a home, stay in their home and helps children to go to school
- Helps stop children and young people from being not in education, employment and training

Who we spoke to:

We spoke to 10 families (10 parents and 11 children aged 8-21) who had used Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service

We asked children to build LEGO models and draw pictures of their homes and what makes them feel happy

We also spoke to 18 Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service staff and other staff from services in Knowsley who work with families



What we found: Working with the whole family

- Families liked that they could all work together with Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service
- Families could see a support worker as a family or on their own
- Families enjoyed going to family events and day trips
- Families enjoyed spending time together. Parents and children felt happier

"It's made an absolutely unbelievable difference to our family" (Mum)



- Parents had support for housing – Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service helped them to move house, stay in the house they were already living in and helped them with home repairs to make their homes safe and warm
- Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service showed parents how to pay their house and food bills and have money for family days out
- Services in Knowsley worked together to help families

"We moved last week, it's nice and quiet" (Girl, aged 10)

"She [my Mum] is happy" (Boy, aged 8)

What we found: How did Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service help children?

- Children spent time taking part in positive activities with their families and other children
- Children spent time with their support worker
- Children had help to understand their feelings and behaviour

"She's [daughter] got more confidence in herself" (Mum)

"Before we got this house I was getting called dumb and gypsy and everything because we moved around so much. It was just horrible I got called names like every day" (Girl, aged 12)

- Children felt safer and happier at home
- Children said that their mums were happier which made them feel happier
- Children behaved well at home and in school



What we found: How did Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service help children?

- Children moved less so did not have to move schools
- Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service helped parents and teachers talk to each other
- Children were happier at school and felt more confident
- Children made friends
- Children recognised their achievements
- This all helped children go to school more often and achieve more

"I've made new friends" (Girl, aged 12)



Thank you

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The staff at Shelter's Knowsley Family Support Service

Staff from other services that work with families in Knowsley

Shannon Harvey from Shelter

Positive Destinations

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