**Right Help, Right Time Training Workshop**

Scenario for discussion

Family Composition

**Fiona Evans** – Mother to all children, white, 38 years old

**Steve Evans** – Father to the two youngest children and step-father to Liam. Steve is black and 36 years old

**Liam Evans** – Eldest of three children, white and 14 years old. He has been in increasing trouble within the community and has had two fixed-term exclusions from school this year.

**Lewis Evans** – Lewis is 4 years old and of dual heritage

**Chloe Evans** – Chloe is 5 days old and of dual heritage

Part 1

A midwife completes a routine home visit one afternoon after the birth of Chloe Evans. She enters the family home and conditions are poor, with dirty nappies on the floor. Lewis is still in his pyjamas and constantly scratching his head. He is very active and at one point climbs onto the windowsill and opens a window and Fiona doesn’t seem to notice. Fiona apologises for the state of the house and says that she is feeling a bit overwhelmed with the new baby. The house smells of smoke. The midwife examines the baby to check her weight and general health. The baby appears unkempt, with a dirty baby-gro and overflowing nappy. When the midwife talks to Lewis she notices that his fingernails and toenails are dirty and he smells of urine.

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| What are we worried about? | What’s working well? |
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Which level is this? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What needs to happen?

The midwife has identified the following concerns:

* Poor supervision of Lewis
* Fiona didn’t appear to respond to dangers when Lewis opened the window
* Fiona is feeling overwhelmed so there may be some low-level mental health concerns
* The home environment may be having a negative effect on the children’s health (smoking)
* There are some early signs of neglect
* The midwife is concerned that Lewis isn’t at nursery
* The midwife advises on nappy care for Chloe
* The midwife refers to the Perinatal Mental Health Service, with Fiona’s consent, to support her mental well-being
* Smoking cessation is offered to the family as the house smells of cigarette smoke

The midwife liaises with the Health Visitor to ensure the concerns are passed on. The Health Visitor visits the family and gives the parents advice on the following areas:

* Home safety
* Information about a nursery place for Lewis
* Health advice to address Lewis’s head lice
* Offers mother smoking cessation information and advice around smoking near the baby
* Offers parenting around changing hygiene and home conditions
* The Health Visitor enquires about family composition and what kinds of support Fiona has.

When the health visitor returned, the situation had improved following the Early Help support and Fiona was engaging with mental health services.

Part 2

Liam’s school contact Fiona because Liam has been caught with alcohol and cigarettes in school. He is going to be excluded from school for 5 days. During the exclusion, Fiona finds it very difficult to control his behaviour and one night he goes missing. Fiona contacts the police for support and a Police Community Support Officer finds him drinking in a park with unknown adults and some other teenagers.

Fiona makes the school aware of what has happened when he returns to school after the exclusion. The Learning Mentor at the school discusses this with Liam and he says that he is, “fed up of his Mum and Step-dad arguing all the time,” and doesn’t want to be at home.

The next day, Liam doesn’t come to school. He has been identified by the school as a vulnerable child so the Learning Mentor and Safeguarding Lead complete a home visit. Mum initially doesn’t let them into the house but eventually agrees and the visitors are shocked by the conditions in the home.

The house is cold and Chloe is crawling on a dirty floor, playing with toys and wearing a nappy and a dirty thin vest. There is a large dog in the house and there is dog faeces on the floor. Lewis should be at school but he is in the house and he smells strongly of urine and is wearing dirty clothes. There is a large hole in the living room door and the house is in disrepair. There are cigarette papers and empty cans of lager on the windowsill and floor of the living room.

Fiona has a bruise on her neck. When asked what happened, she denied that it was a bruise but said it was a rash caused by some cream she had put on her neck.

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What level is this? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What needs to happen?

Liam’s school decide that this meets the need for Level 3 intervention. The school offers the family a Level 3 Early Help assessment and Mum consents to this.

The local Hub is contacted for a discussion around who will carry out the assessment and who will be the lead professional. Mum is part of this discussion.

As part of this, the school:

* Has another meeting with Mum to find out how they can support her
* Contacts Lewis’s primary school to let them know what is happening and ask for their input
* School contacts the Health Visitor regarding support for Fiona with the baby
* Links in with mental health services (with Mum’s consent)

Part 3

Fiona and the family initially engage with the assessment and Early Help work, but then they miss one of the meetings. The following meeting is attended by Fiona only. Steve Evans only attends one meeting in total.

At the most recent meeting, Fiona reports that her relationship with Steve is going well and they are getting on much better than they used to.

The next day, Lewis is late to school and appears tired and tearful. His punctuality and appearance had improved following the Level 3 intervention. His behaviour at school that day is very poor so he is taken out of the classroom. When questioned about how he is feeling, he discloses that his mum and dad were fighting the night before and he couldn’t get to sleep because he was frightened. He also says that the baby was crying a lot because his Mum was holding the baby when they were fighting. The school have not received an Operation Encompass alert. Lewis’s school contacted Liam’s school and Liam is not in school that day.

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