



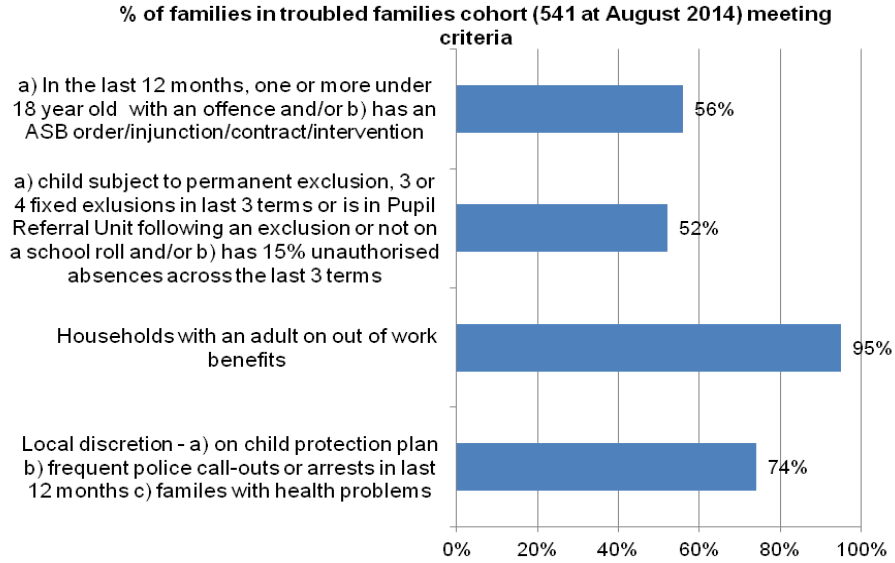
Troubled families are defined as those where parents are; out of work, children are not in school, and family members are involved in anti-social behaviour and crime. These families often face a range of other problems, such as poor physical and mental health, domestic violence and substance misuse. Nationally, children from troubled families are eight times more likely to be suspended or excluded from school than other children, and ten times more likely to be in trouble with the police.

In Cheshire West and Chester, the troubled families programme was launched in 2012 and is a multi-agency whole family intervention programme for families who meet three of four of the following criteria:

- Are involved in youth crime or anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- Have children who are regularly truanting or not in school
- Have an adult on out of work benefits
- Cause high costs to the taxpayer/ under local authority discretion

Of 529 families initially identified to take part in the programme, 197 resided in Northwich/Winsford locality, 157 in Ellesmere Port locality, 149 in Chester locality and 26 in Rural locality. The cohort showed a correlation between troubled families and concentrations of deprivation, with clusters of troubled families residing in the 30% most deprived small areas nationally. Prevalent wards in Northwich/Winsford locality included Witton and Rudheath, Winnington and Castle, Winsford Swanlow and Dene, Winsford Wharton and Davenham and Moulton; in Ellesmere Port locality Ellesmere Port Town, Grange Rossmore and St Paul's; in Chester locality Blacon, Lache and Newton. Children and young people in the cohort achieved significantly lower outcomes in education at key stage one and two than their peers in reading, writing and maths.

There are currently 541 families, 2,010 individuals, engaged in the troubled families programme. Of these families, 95% (512) meet the criteria of worklessness, 56% (302) youth crime/ASB, 52% (279) education criteria and 74% (399) meet other local criteria. As of August 2014, 63% of families had been successfully 'turned around'.



Evidence of what works

- Focus on the troubled families programme:
- The success of the troubled families programme in Cheshire West and Chester and nationally demonstrates the effectiveness of multi-agency targeted family intervention. Locally a greater number of families are being turned around than projected (August 2014 projected 60 actual 111).
 - From May 2014, the Early Support Access Team began to make referrals to the troubled families programme. This resulted in a greater number of families engaged and a 20% increase in outcomes being achieved highlighting the importance of referral at the first point of contact.
 - Outcomes in employment and supporting people back into work are below those expected highlighting the difficulty of getting complex families job ready.

Recommended actions

- Ensure the Early Support Access team is able to easily identify families at the first point of contact.
- Continue to achieve sustained outcomes for families in the existing programme and become an early adopter of the expanded troubled families programme 2015-2020.
- To work with the Department of Work and Pensions and Job Centre to improve the employability of troubled families with a focus on making them job ready.
- Explore potential work around producing detailed information on troubled families, in terms of health and links to employment.

Rationale: Families with complex needs experience significant disadvantage including; poor outcomes and life chances often across generations. They are at risk of further polarisation and a disconnection from social and economic engagement. They can also disrupt quality of life for others in their neighbourhoods and place expensive demands on public services.