Problem Families
Dealing with the Simpsons
Blackburn with Darwen

- Industrial heritage
- Diverse population, including 22% of Pakistani/Indian heritage, many also from Eastern Europe
- 60,000 households, 17% owned by social landlords
- 17/354 most deprived Borough in England
- 31% under 19 years old
WHAT IS ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR?

- youths
- trash
- Mini Motos
- noise
- damage
- swearing
- drugs
- graffiti
- gangs
Why bother working with anti-social families?

Improve the quality of life of:

- The Family (children and adults)
- The Community (sense of safety, house prices, creation of ‘no go’ zones)
- Reducing costs to other agencies e.g. Police, Environmental, Welfare, Landlords, Churches
- Prevent moving the problem on to the next community!
Previous Response

Mistrust of Agencies

Complaints to agencies

Social Exclusion & family Breakdown

Eviction

Displacement

ENFORCEMENT

ASBO/Injunction

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Time for a different solution......

• Political Landscape 1997 Election; ‘tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime’

• Crime & Disorder Act 1998 - 3 pronged approach:
  • Prevention and Early Identification
  • Enforcement
  • Resettlement

• Research: 1. Dundee (Scotland)
  Evaluation by Dillane et al 2001 Glasgow University
  2. Pioneering Families Project
  Evaluation by Nixon et al Sheffield Hallam University 2006
Blackburn with Darwen Family Intervention Project (FIP)
...and a 360° tour!
Anti-social behaviour issues identified in families
Family Characteristics

– 39% of children in families at ‘very high /medium’ risk of being taken into care

– 50% of children ‘frequent’ non attendees at school (30% experienced school exclusion)

– 28% of children had learning difficulties (18% with ADHD)

– 19% of parents with depression

– 17% with child drug/alcohol problems
The Family Intervention Project Model

- Whole Family Approach
- Intensive support from Key Worker (10 hrs/week)
- Persistent and Assertive style
- Challenge and Support Combination
- Contract of work – both family and agencies
- As long as it takes
So how does it work in practice?

A Case Study
Simpson Family

Miss Simpson
Aged 35

Lisa Simpson
Aged 14

Bart Simpson
Aged 3
The problems

• Complaints to police and landlords
• Undesirable visitors to the property
• Noise nuisance
• Drunkenness/late night parties
• Visitors urinating outside of the property
• Child Protection Concerns – including child crime!
The support contract

- Motivation to change?
- Knowing the sanctions?
- Addressing the issues
- Writing the contract:
  - Strategies to enable Miss Simpson to turn away visitors
  - Addressing alcohol issues
  - Multi-agency working
  - Child Protection
  - Relationships
What we did...

- 6 weekly multi-agency meetings
- CCTV, front door lock installed
- Referral to women’s centre
- Referral to Community Alcohol Team
- Access to nursery provision
- 1:1 parenting sessions
- 1:1 family sessions
Involvement

• 18 months intervention

• Intense support (up to 10 hours per week)

• Reviews held every 6 weeks
Outcome

• The children are no longer subject of a Child Protection Plan
• There is no longer a risk of eviction – no ASB!
• The Police make regular visits to ensure Miss Simpson is ‘ok’
• Miss Simpson is no longer misusing alcohol
• New, positive, relationship
• The Family Intervention Project have now closed the case.
Actual comments from ‘Bart’!

I like Allan and I like myself and I like the changes Allan thank you for coming and I like going to my old nursery and playing and thank you for going to my old class at my old nursery.
Police Secondee - PC FISH
Response
Project Interventions

Access Support Groups: 19%
Benefit Claims: 24%
Social Skills: 28%
Depression Management: 28%
Anger Management: 28%
Home Management: 32%
Managing Visitors: 32%
Money Management: 35%
Access Housing Services: 37%
Dealing with ASB Complaints: 43%
School Attendance: 43%
Increasing Confidence: 46%
Challenging Behaviour: 52%
Challenging ASB: 56%
Parenting Skills: 57%
Emotional Support: 61%
Tenancy Management: 63%
Accessing Services: 65%
Benefits of Police Secondment

• Personal Perception

• Improved links between Family Intervention Project and Police

• Legal advice regarding criminal proceedings
Fantastic Outputs!

• Since 2003, 260 families referred to the Family Intervention Project, (197 met criteria for program)

• 41 of the 197 were on verge of being evicted (only 5 needed to be evicted by end of intervention)

• These 197 families represented 809 individuals, including 550 children/teens
## Significant Changes!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception that ASB a problem</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teenagers Hanging Around</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubbish &amp; Litter</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Taking &amp; Dealing</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism, Graffiti, Damage</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunk &amp; Rowdy Behaviour</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noisy Neighbours</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Base: Blackburn with Darwen Place Survey All valid responses Ipsos Mori 2008
Fantastic Outcomes!

Between September 2007 and 2008:

- The proportion of families with poor parenting, domestic violence and child protection issues was halved.

- The proportion of families reporting education/learning problems (e.g. truancy, exclusion, bad behavior at school), was reduced from 72% to 45%.
Developments since 2007

- Parenting work, including…
  - Parenting Experts
  - Delivery of Evidenced Based Programmes

- Dispersed service

- Youth Crime Action Plan FIP

- Secondments: Police, Housing, Domestic Violence and Drugs Service
September 2009
Gordon Brown (Prime Minister) states…

• By 2015 around 50,000 families, over 100,000 children and communities will benefit from the support of a FIP

• Predicted saving as a result of this investment could be as much as 400 million a year.

• www.dcsf.gov.uk/ecm/thinkfamily
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