

# Grasping the nettle: Early intervention for children, families and communities



# Early intervention – areas to cover

- Aims and background
- Key messages
- Next steps



# Aims

- Understand how whole system is working
- Learn from effective local practice
- Learn from international experience
- Influence national policy agenda
- Support capacity building in sector
- Promote value for money

# Background – C4EO Expert Group

- Offer challenge and fresh thinking
- Chaired by ADCS with broad membership
- Identified priority areas for follow-up call
- Endorsed brief for international review
- Endorsed practice guide, *Grasping the nettle*

# Background – Calls for Evidence

- Joint calls from C4EO and ADCS
- First call general, second more focussed
- Over 100 submissions received:
- Submissions continuing to come in

# Five 'Golden Threads'

Constitute a strategy for whole system change:

- The best start in life
- Language for life
- Engaging parents
- Smarter working, better services
- Knowledge is power



# 1. The best start in life

## Compelling case for investing in early years:

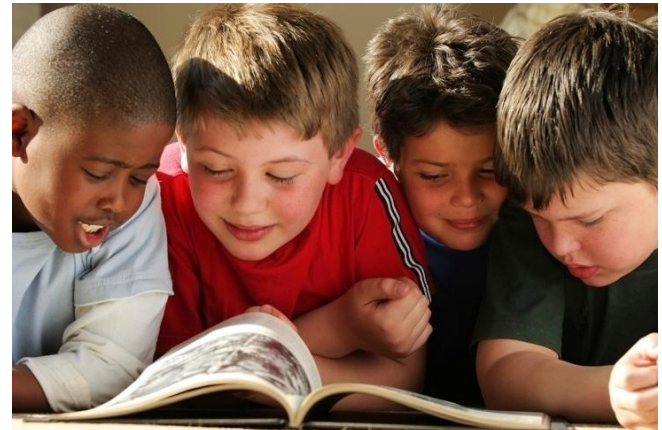
- Science of early brain development
- Research into origins of violent behaviour
- Experience from Sweden and Netherlands
- Success of Nurse Family Partnership
- Benefits of breastfeeding



# 2. Language for life

## Language and communication skills:

- Awareness remains generally inadequate
- With right support, children can catch up
- Age 5½ is a critical window
- Key issue for workforce development
- Local effective practice having a marked impact





# 3. Engaging parents

Parents are *the* major influence on children:

- Good parenting is crucial to good outcomes
- Disadvantage is not a block to good parenting
- Key area for workforce development
- Parenting programmes
- Whole society attitude shift is needed



# 4. Smarter working, better services

**Considerable progress but still much to do:**

- Leadership and effective commissioning are key
- A continuum of services is needed
- Children's centres lie at the 'hub' of continuum
- CAF: some confusion and inconsistency
- Local effective practice is having marked impact



# 5. Knowledge is power

## Evidence is integral to process and innovation:

- Learning from C4EO validation process
  - use of data is systemic weakness in England
  - key characteristics of effective practice
- Can learn much from abroad
- Alberta School Improvement Initiative



# Recommended spending priorities

- Children's centres and early years:
  - Breastfeeding initiatives
  - Nurse Family Partnership
- Speech, language & communication needs
- Parenting programmes
- Targeted family support
- Young people on the edge of care

# Next Steps


- Disseminate and act on C4EO practice guide
- Support Graham Allen's review
- Deploy C4EO Sector Specialists
- Continue to gather evidence of what works:
  - redesigning services around whole system change with early intervention at their heart
  - localities with reduced demand for acute services (offending/re-offending & children entering care)

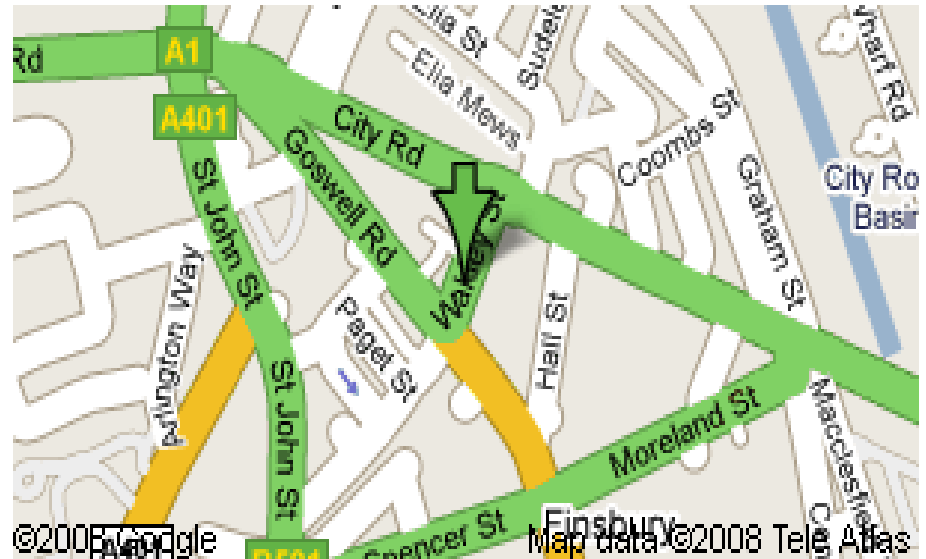


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