

# 7 Minute Briefing

## Think Family - a whole family approach

### A whole family approach

A 'think family' approach to our safeguarding work with children and adults and their families is essential.

A lack of coordination between services can mean missing opportunities to:

- support adults with physical or mental health problems
- protect children / adults from harm
- support children to ensure that they do not suffer adverse health, development or educational consequences.

### Think family

- Practitioners must have an understanding of the relationships with each member of the family, how each family member impacts on the others (including extended family).
- Be alert to considering the impact of any event on other family members and engage with the person's circle of support.
- While families are made up of individuals, their challenges and successes are interdependent.

### Further Reading

- [Walsall SCR W7](#)
- [Think child, think parent think family](#)
- [Care Act and Whole Family](#)
- [Wolverhampton Learning Lessons briefing, family E](#)



### Gathering information

When completing assessments we need to take opportunities to see, feel and recognise risk and enquire deeper.

Being open minded and curious will help to make an informed decision about the child's, adult's or families' lived experiences.

### Support

Reflective practice and regular supervision are ways to support think family approaches which will help with preventing or delaying situations reaching a point of crisis.

### Good Practice

- The impact of plans and interventions and the results being achieved should be reviewed in relation to both the individual and the whole family.
- This includes consideration of any unintended consequences for other members of the family
- Interventions should be as early as possible to avoid crisis
- Practitioners should build on family strengths and promote resilience.

### Working across organisations

We need to incorporate a whole-family approach at each stage of a family's journey through our services. Which involves coordinating services and support so that they work around the family. This means breaking down professional barriers and achieving changes in culture that mean practitioners work across organisations and service providers to achieve the best outcomes for the whole family. Not working in silo's but engaging with those services also involved.