Ealing Intensive Therapeutic and Short Breaks Service

Seeking to prevent residential care for young people with learning disabilities and challenging behaviour

West London Mental Health NHS Trust

in partnership with

Ealing ITSBS is a collaboration of:

Clinical Psychology + Social Care + Short Breaks

We work in the community with children/young people with LD who are at imminent risk of needing a residential placement due to challenging behaviour. We aim to support children to continue living with their families and accessing their communities for as long as possible (ideally into adulthood).

We provide intensive psychological assessment and interventions led by a Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) and Systemic approach. We work closely with the child’s allocated social worker to develop a package of community care (short breaks) and to train up all family members, carers and professionals in the PBS plan. We also offer psychological therapy to the parents, child and siblings as required.

Key outcomes to date (2008-present):

- We have offered the service to 30 children at imminent risk of residential placement.
- 25 of these young people have continued to live with their families.
- 5 of these young people eventually went on to need a residential placement (though another 1 of these has since returned to live back with his family).
- We found significant changes in challenging behaviour and parent’s ability to cope on standardised outcome measures (Reid, Sholl & Gore, 2013).
- We have received positive feedback from families who have accessed this service (see Sholl, Reid & Udwin, 2014).
- Ealing council report that their numbers of children with LD in residential care have drastically dropped since the ITSBS started. They also report that funding the ITSBS is a significant cost saving for the LA versus funding residential placements (a paper is in progress with LSE analysing these cost differences in community versus residential care).

Recommendations:

- Families should be offered an option of an intensive community intervention before they/professionals make the decision to move their child to residential care due to challenging behaviour.
- A successful community intervention is likely to need to include a cohesive multi-agency approach informed by PBS and Systemic thinking.

References:


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