**Case study – West Family Hub**

Sydney\* is a single mother of four children (Blake\*, Tom\*, Nicole\* and Ryan\*) aged 12 and under. She came to the attention of the Early Help Coordinator (EHC) after one of the school attendance officers got in touch. Sydney has a positive relationship with this school setting.

The family had witnessed the father collapse and die at home, which was traumatic for all the children. Sydney was struggling with her own mental health and didn’t realise the effects on the children from seeing their father die before them.

Sydney had no one she could turn to for support and started to feel physically and emotionally exhausted. All of her children have complex needs and many services are involved with them. School, the play specialist, the specialist respiratory nurse and physiotherapist at St Luke’s Hospital were all seeking support for her. Sydney had already started to receive support for her mental health through INCIC. When the school got in contact, the EHC soon realised that there were a number of agencies involved with the family that needed coordinating.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the EHC contacted the different agencies for information. It became apparent that there were a lot of health concerns for the family and that re-housing was necessary. Blake’s mental health was drastically deteriorating and the family needed urgent support. After discussions it was agreed school would be the Lead Practitioner (LP) and complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

This resulted in the following actions which supported Sydney:

* The family’s needs were identified through the completion of an EHA;
* Sydney has visited the GP to discuss her mental health;
* Communication between home and school is good and Sydney is often in contact with the DSL at the high school;
* Sydney has been allocated the highest number of points and is now considered priority on the housing list;
* Blake is receiving support through first response for his suicidal thoughts/attempts and they are looking at CAMHS support for him;
* Blake has been into school twice this week after not attending since the return of in-person teaching post-lockdown;
* Tom is receiving emotional support through the school counsellor, and is progressing well in discussing how he is feeling about his dad and his mum’s mental health;
* Tom is receiving the highest care at St Luke’s Hospital for his heart issues;
* Nicole is receiving support through primary school where there is a team who supports her when she wants to talk about her dad;
* Ryan is receiving support at nursery and they have a plan for his food allergies;
* Sydney is happy with the support she is receiving and wants to move forward**;**
* All professionals are kept up to date and understand each other’s roles in supporting the family through regular Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings.

\*Names have been changed.