

Q2 WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED TO GIVE THE BEST CHANCE OF GETTING GOING?

LOCAL CHAMPIONS

You need at least two local champions who will lead the process of set-up: one influential person from the local authority children's services, preferably the Director or Assistant Director for children and families, and one from the court, preferably a Judge. Experience has shown the necessity of commitment from both these parties and the value of these champions becoming co-leaders at the planning stage and moving into becoming joint or alternate chairs of the Steering Group (see Q3).

These will be key people to promote the idea of FDAC to a wide audience, keep up enthusiasm, give authority and support those implementing it, and lead on a proactive approach to anticipating and solving problems as they arise.

They will also have an important role in fostering momentum, commitment and interest during what can be a protracted and frustrating process of partnership development, joint commissioning, and tendering and procurement of the service model.

Champions will ensure that the right local authority, court staff, legal, Cafcass, health and commissioner representatives are on board with the development and understand the importance of communicating effectively with one another.

PARTNER AGENCIES AND PEOPLE TO ENTHUSE AND INCLUDE FROM EARLY DISCUSSIONS ARE:

- **Public Health England** – Local PH officers and commissioners will have expertise and access to information about the financial benefits of tackling public health problems, including substance misuse. They will be the commissioners of adult substance misuse services, as well as having responsibility for public health services for children, including those with young parents and parents with mental health problems. They will be involved with the local Health and Well-being Board, including its work developing the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – a possible extra information source about the extent of parental substance misuse, mental health and domestic abuse problems and the range of services available
- **Local authority and private practice lawyers**
- **Cafcass** – Guardians and their managers will need to understand the different approach required and will want to discuss how guardians can contribute most effectively to FDAC hearings. There is value in having a dedicated pool of guardians for FDAC cases.
- **Adult substance misuse treatment service providers and commissioners**
- **Adult social care**

- **Clinical Commissioning Groups** – given their responsibility for commissioning child and adolescent mental health services
- **Representatives from local authority and voluntary organisations involved in other relevant projects**, such as reducing the number of mothers experiencing the removal of successive children in care proceedings and intensive support via the Troubled Families and Family Nurse Partnership initiatives.

You can contact an existing FDAC site or an FDAC advocate [here](#) for more information about the roles of Cafcass guardians, lawyers, social workers, and adult treatment staff in FDAC cases.

Remember the advantages of early involvement in developing a new idea: as in other work, involving people from the start will increase your chances of harnessing their ownership, commitment and good ideas. General experience points to the value of involving people who are already working together in some relevant way, rather than trying to start a new project from scratch. But, if in doubt, invite people to your preliminary discussions: you won't be sure what they can offer unless you invite them to contribute.

Bear in mind that FDAC should be regarded as a mainstream service: part of the whole system that exists to support families locally, including those going through the court process. So engage early with local authority and other colleagues who are responsible for developing strategies, re-designing services and making commissioning decisions, and evaluating outcomes and user satisfaction in the longer term.