

CREATING A LOCAL FAMILY OFFER

OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT TOOL



ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

Between 2015 and 2017, 12 local authorities across the UK were involved in the DWP funded Local Family Offer (LFO) programme. The programme gave them access to expert support from Innovation Unit and OnePlusOne, as well as funding to develop a Local Family Offer focused on improving the quality of inter-parental relationships (IPR) with a view to improving outcomes for children.

As part of the LFO programme locality teams were invited to use an **Opportunity Assessment Tool** to engage with their local data and make sense of their local case for change. This proved really helpful in targeting their offers.

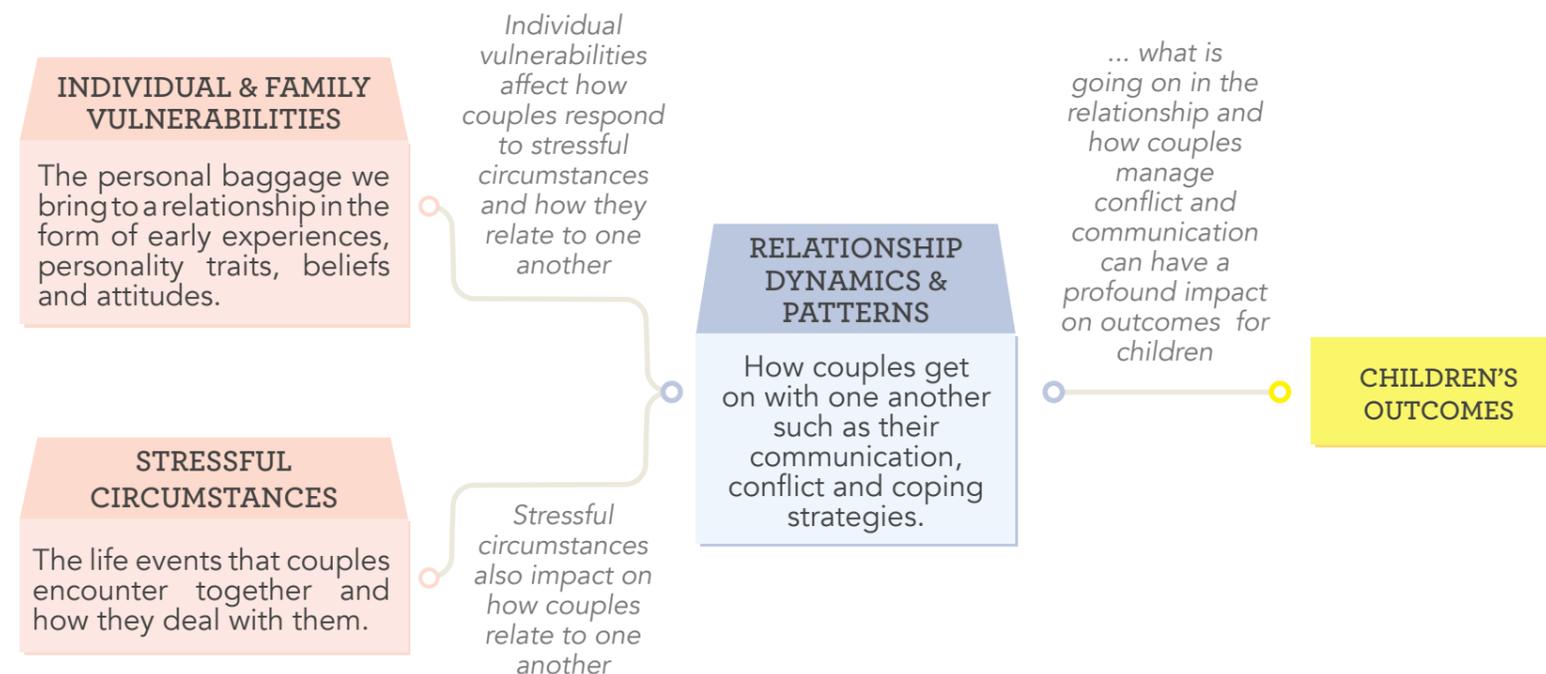
The Opportunity Assessment Tool will be helpful to those who are persuaded that supporting inter-parental relationships is important and want to think in more detail about how and where to focus efforts within their local system. It should help you to:

- Develop a deeper understanding of local factors of vulnerability in inter-parental relationships and identify population groups in your area that are most vulnerable to risks and poor outcomes

- Identify opportunities to add value to work you are doing with vulnerable groups by taking account of the couple relationship
- Develop a local case for change to get buy in to the inter-parental relationship agenda from across your local system

The tool is designed to prompt strategic conversations about the focus of your local offer. Print it out, fill it in and talk with colleagues about what your data tells you about your local case for change.

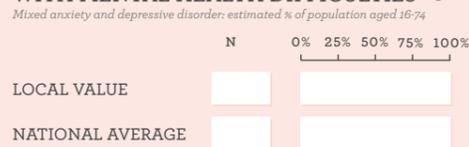
The Opportunity Assessment Tool draws on an established framework - the stress-vulnerability- adaptation model (Karney and Bradbury, 1995) - for understanding the factors that influence relationship conflict and breakdown. The framework is based on studies comprising over 45,000 marriages. It shows how relationships are influenced by three interconnected factors:



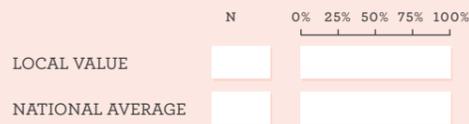
A simplified version of the stress-vulnerability- adaptation model underpins the Opportunity Assessment Tool. The tool includes a selection of indicators for which local and national data is available and easily accessible, to enable comparison. You might also have other data available to you that helps you pinpoint groups or families at risk.

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY VULNERABILITIES

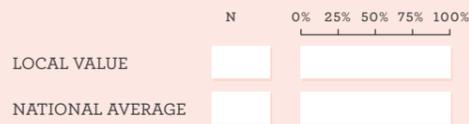
ADULT FAMILY MEMBER WITH MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES



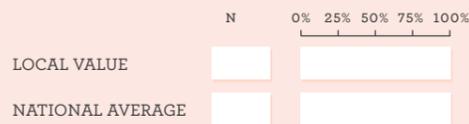
ADULTS WITH LOW WELL-BEING



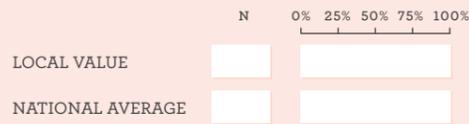
CARING FOR CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



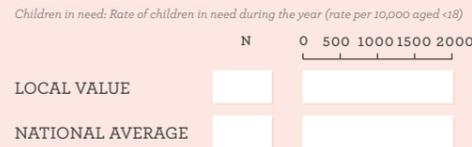
CHILDREN PROVIDING CARE



FAMILIES WITH HEALTH PROBLEMS



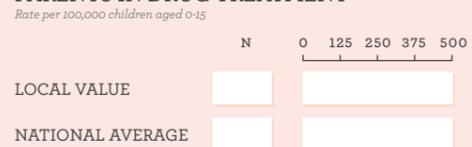
CHILDREN IN NEED



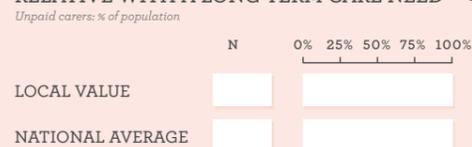
PARENTS IN ALCOHOL TREATMENT



PARENTS IN DRUG TREATMENT



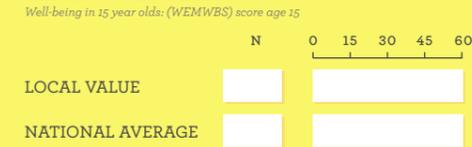
RELATIVE WITH A LONG-TERM CARE NEED



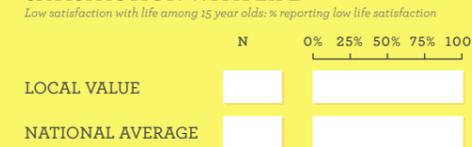
THE LOCAL FAMILY OFFER OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

CHILDREN'S OUTCOMES

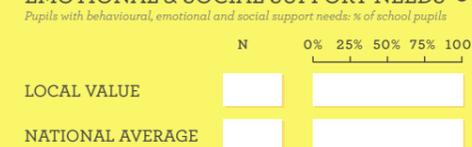
CHILD WELL-BEING



SATISFACTION WITH LIFE



PUPILS WITH BEHAVIOURAL, EMOTIONAL & SOCIAL SUPPORT NEEDS



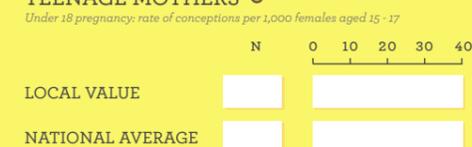
MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS IN CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE



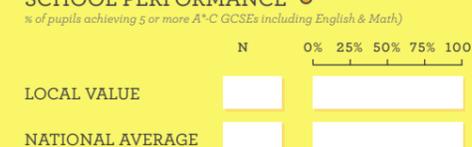
SCHOOL READINESS



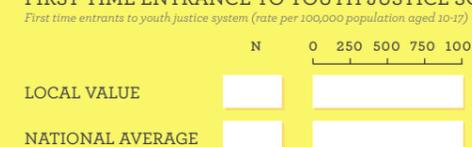
TEENAGE MOTHERS



SCHOOL PERFORMANCE



FIRST TIME ENTRANCE TO YOUTH JUSTICE SCHEME



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

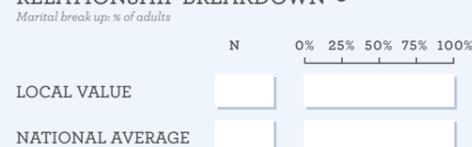


NEETs



FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS & DYNAMICS

RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN



DOMESTIC ABUSE



LONE PARENT HOUSEHOLD

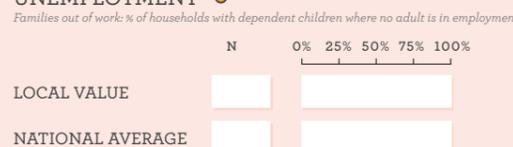


BIRTHS OUTSIDE MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS



STRESSFUL CIRCUMSTANCES

UNEMPLOYMENT



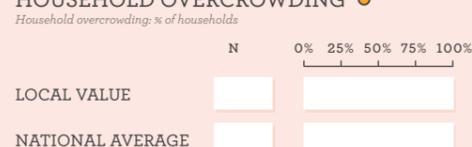
HOMELESSNESS



FAMILY POVERTY



HOUSEHOLD OVERCROWDING



SOURCES

- Public Health Profiles, PHE
- Office for National Statistics

UNDERSTANDING THE TOOL

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY VULNERABILITIES

Relationships can come under pressure as couples struggle to cope with stressful circumstances, such as ill-health, homelessness or poor housing, financial difficulties and unemployment.

You can use your local data to identify particular groups at risk of relationship difficulties, for example, if you have high levels of homelessness.

You can also use the data to help you think about if there are services, such as housing, that you could work with to identify and support parents in need of relationship support.

STRESSFUL CIRCUMSTANCES

Research shows us that individual partners' personalities, past experiences and family background influence how well couples get on. The tool includes indirect measures which could indicate difficult early experiences and ongoing vulnerabilities.

For example, drug and alcohol problems or mental health difficulties may have their roots in early life experiences but they are also likely to be exerting pressure on the couple relationship.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS & DYNAMICS

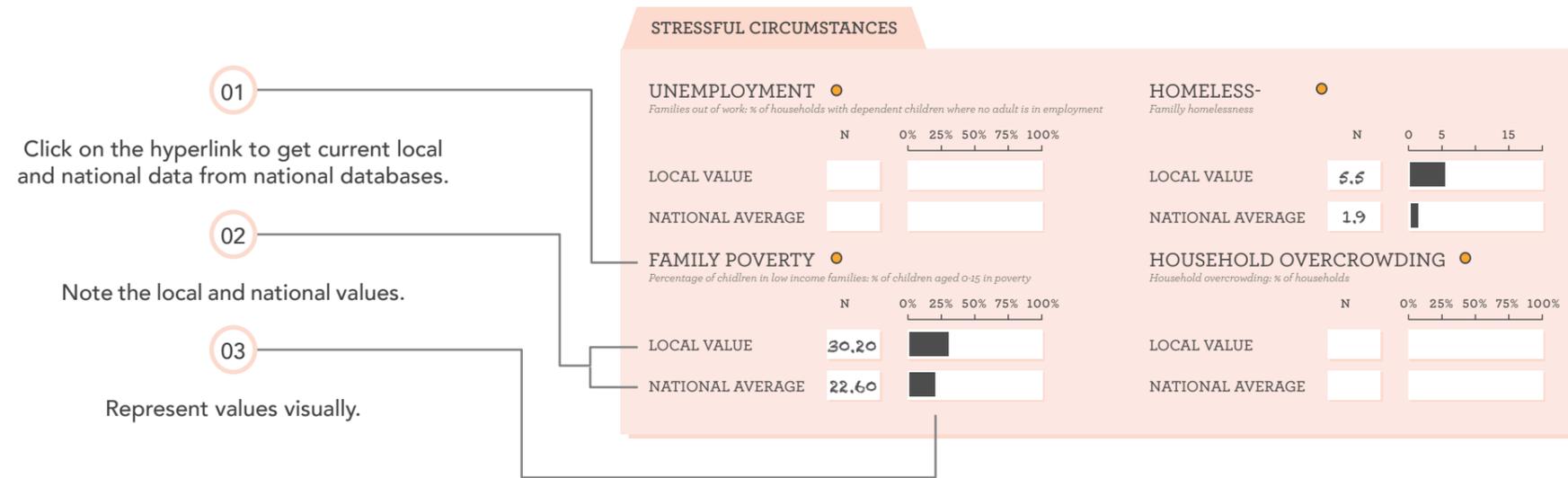
How couples get on affects how happy they are likely to be in the relationship over time and therefore how likely they are to stay together. We don't have national data on these factors, but we can see from simple indicators those couples that might be struggling. They include:

- Domestic Violence
- Lone Parenthood – this could identify parents who need support in establishing a good co-parenting with an ex-partner or parents who are in a relationship with a non-resident partner.
- Step-families often have to manage relationships with a new partner and the co-parenting relationship with an ex partner. This can mean children are exposed to more conflict in total across the multiple relationships and parents could benefit from help in managing conflict.
- Becoming parents can also be a stressful life event for a surprisingly high number of couples as they adjust to new roles, reduced income and deal with issues from their own childhoods.

CHILDREN'S OUTCOMES

The research shows that these indicators – stressful life events, individual and family vulnerabilities and how parents get on - combine to influence the poor outcomes that can arise as a result of interparental conflict.

POPULATING THE TOOL



This tool includes indicators for which local and national data is readily available on:

- ### SOURCES
- Public Health Profiles, PHE ●
 - Office for National Statistics ●

SO WHAT?

Now you have filled in your Opportunity Assessment Tool, you can ask yourself some questions about how to connect the data with opportunities in your local areas. For many LFO pilot authorities this exercise proved really helpful in revealing different perspectives on their data and supporting strategic decisions.

Look at **how your Local Authority compares to the national average** – does this highlight any groups who might be at greater risk of relationship difficulties e.g. high numbers of homeless families, large numbers of parents involved in caring for a relative, high levels of mental ill-health?

 **Croydon** identified above average levels of family worklessness, child poverty and family homelessness in its area, which is why it made sense for it to focus its LFO in Gateway, a service support centre working with families around financial and housing issues.

Do your services already interact with key groups you have identified? **What would it take to make every interaction with these groups 'a relationship interaction'?** Are there voluntary sector organisations who are already working with the vulnerable families you have identified, such as a Carers Association, that you could link up with?

 **Blackpool** identified high rates of relationship breakdown and high levels of multiple deprivation in the authority and saw the value in embedding routine questioning about relationships in their Family Assessment.

Do you have access to ward level data which means you could **identify areas with particularly high levels of relationship breakdown?**

 **Dorset** identified that one of its wards, Weymouth and Portland, had the fourth highest rates of divorce in England and decided to focus their LFO in one area.

How does the data picture fit with what you know from practitioners or service level data?

 **Blackburn** drew on their knowledge of the multiple disadvantage facing some of its residents, alongside data from the Opportunity Assessment highlighting high rates of new births and high rates of domestic violence (which also echoed with their experience) to build questions into their Adverse Childhood Experiences assessment tool used by the Early Help service.

LFO partners used the **Opportunity Assessment data maps to talk to colleagues about their Locally Family Offer programme** and to demonstrate the rationale behind the approach their Local Family Offer programme were suggesting.

“The opportunity assessment was really helpful! It put everything in context and was a real resource that we used as we talked to senior people about the project, getting them onboard.”

- Gavin Bradshaw, Team manager,
Family Intervention Team, Gateshead Council

This guide was created by Innovation Unit and One Plus One.



About Innovation Unit

Innovation Unit is a not for profit social enterprise.

We create new solutions that enable more people to belong and contribute to thriving societies.

We develop alliances for change with places, organisations and systems, to ensure that innovation has lasting impact at scale.

www.innovationunit.org

About OnePlusOne

OnePlusOne is a research and innovation charity that is all about helping people to build stronger relationships. We do this by equipping them with the skills and knowledge they need, so that couples, parents and children can be happier, healthier and more successful.

Everything we do starts with monitoring relationship science across a range of sources such as primary research, data gathering and practice based intelligence to generate knowledge and insight about relationships. We use this to provide evidence based digital resources for the public, continuing professional development for practitioners and support to local authorities in developing services.

www.oneplusone.org.uk

Together we combine evidence with experience to create resources that help people improve their relationships, and empower them to make positive choices for themselves and their children.

OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT TOOL



THIS TOOL IS PART OF THE RESOURCE PACK
FOR CREATING A LOCAL FAMILY OFFER

link of website to hyperlink things
(indesign was not hyperlinking things correctly)

[http://www.pdfescape.com/open/?87344A61C388A-
B374A8426AFB57A94D5F71244C1F410A802](http://www.pdfescape.com/open/?87344A61C388A-B374A8426AFB57A94D5F71244C1F410A802)