Date: 2nd November 2021

Implementing Family Hubs

Workshop: Coproduction

Speakers:
- Julie Greer, Regional Coordinator for South West, South East and East of England at the National Centre for Family Hubs
- Dina Koschorreck, Parent Participation Worker at the National Centre for Family Hubs
- Valdeep Gill, Senior Research Manager of Ecorys UK
- Harry Angus, Programme Support Manager of Bristol City Council

Julie Greer – 00:01

- Why co-production, I just wanted each of us here just to have a little think very quickly about the time recently when you have felt disempowered or thought the system is not listening to you.

And I think probably the pandemic has brought that right to the forefront. Often this is in relation to health or finance or employment issues or sometimes difficulties relating to a child or young person or family, such as exclusion or special needs or disabilities. So, these are all areas which where our emotions often become very engaged, often making us more vulnerable as well. So, for many of our vulnerable families, including those with protected characteristics, this is not an occasional experience.

This is not something we can just say, I guess that happened last, you know, a couple of months ago. This is a way of life, and it leaves families isolated, lacking trust, and sometimes spiralling further away from those who could make a difference. And that's certainly one of the reasons why co-production is so important to the work that we're doing and where local authorities and the voluntary sector have already really successfully engaged in co-production, it has made a difference. But there are also those aspects in which it will make us feel uncomfortable and there are things that need to be acknowledged and adapted.

I just wanted to raise this list here it'll change the way we think we have to think about our unconscious bias and our own lived experiences and as workers and service users, as well as if we are a family member engaging those services as well. The way we speak, the language that we use, the way we communicate, written word or if it's graphics again, you know, it's really good today that we're modelling using signage, using transcripts and such like, these are all things that need to be consciously thought about and brought in to make the difference to those that we're working with.

The way we listen, the way that we can ensure that we are non-judgmental, the spaces we use. And that was lovely to hear Isle of Wight talking about that, as well as Cornwall. The resources that we use. So, are they appropriate, are they culturally appropriate and are they relevant?

And the expectations we make, particularly around things like child care. You know, what's our expectations from working families? What are they supposed to do with the children or the number of meetings? You know, in my previous life where the meeting was held, you know, when children were not in school, for example, and that obviously has a huge number of additional difficulties.

So, it's about how we think about those aspects as well, isn't it? And acknowledging the barriers. And I know that Harry's going to be looking at some of that with us today. You'll have access to these slides.

So, I'm just putting a few links on around, particularly with children, young people. Some aspects that are really helpful in some areas where they've been successful in working within co-production with children and young people.

And lastly, very much walking that talk, we want this to be the co-production module is not there, we want you to be part of evolving that as well. So, we will share that with those of you. If you get in touch with me, or with the enquiries there, and we will share the module with you as it is so far, and you'll be able to continue helping to develop that and engage with that as well. So, I'm going to stop sharing my screen. I'm going to hand over to Dina and she'll bring her own insights as a parent participation advisor for the centre on co-production. So, over to you Dina.

Dina Koschorreck – 00:03:46
I think those are really good points you made there. Let me just share my screen. Good morning, everyone, I'm Dina Koschorreck. I'm a parent participation worker at the Anna Freud Centre and I'm going to talk about co-production from a service user's point of view. My background I'm an adoptive parent of two girls aged five and six at placement who are now teenagers. We're a transracial family. My husband and I are white and my daughters have an ethnic minority background.

We have direct contact with their older siblings, who are in care and care leavers, and we are also unusually still in contact with social workers and foster carers, as well as with the social worker of a sibling. I wasn't quite sure how much experience everyone has with participation, so I thought I'd talk a little bit about participation at the Anna Freud Centre.

For the session, I'm using participation and co-production the term slightly interchangeably, just for simplicity. So, the Anna Freud Centre has a participation programme with about fifty parent champions, youth champions and parent participation workers, and the champions are volunteers, and the participation workers are being paid.

We are involved in all areas of the Anna Freud Centre's work except for therapy. So, we're taking part in recruitment, research, and training. And my involvement in the National Centre for Family Hubs,

I've been part, I've taken part in the recruitment panel of a communications officer. I've given input at workshops when we created modules for the toolkit, and I've given feedback on the actual toolkit modules. Here we go.

Since I am a parent participation worker, I thought I speak about my experience and for us, as a family, the central problem has been that we've not been listened to and that spans mental health services, schools and the social care sector, particularly the foster carers and our family and children in care and that weren't listened to due to structural problems I think more so than professionals not wanting to listen.

And interestingly enough, that was irrespective of their level of education and or experience. And not making mental health resources available. So mental health resources weren't made available until too late for some children in my family, even in very high risk cases, some of the children in my family had scores of ten out of ten ACEs and noticeable mental health problems from a very early age.

And even though foster carers pointed this out various times, they weren't offered any services. Due to the lack of listening, we've been offered services not at the right level of need. We've been confronted with lack of knowledge about trauma and mental health in schools and some mental health professionals who were not trauma informed and because they didn't recognise our expertise, they didn't listen to us.

So, all this results in issues not being tackled at the stage where most impact can be made. We all know from research that in mental health, early intervention is key and in the end, the most vulnerable are being failed. And in the long run, that massively increases the cost to society, of course. The challenges we've encountered are the high turnover in social workers and mental health professionals, so it was very difficult for the children in my family to build trust.

Professionals didn't communicate enough with each other and with my family members and me. There's a general lack of transparency. Decision making processes sometimes are very unclear to us, and all of that has a negative impact on my family's mental health and the sense of identity of the children in my family.

So, how could co-production improve this? Well, listening to service users is at the core of co-production and participation. Co-production gives service users a voice and openly acknowledges their expertise.

But it's not...co-production is not just about listening, it's about putting that listening into action and by giving service users a voice, it turns something that's often seen as a problem, a mental health disorder, into actual strength and asset. It's an expertise, and that can very positively impact a service user's sense of identity and strengthen their self-esteem.

And that's something that I've seen first-hand in my family. Co-production impacts the power imbalance between service users and service providers and gives service users the chance to influence structures and procedures.

And that's, of course, where the listening is being put into practice. And while co-production often focuses on creating or improving structures and services, it also gives service users the opportunity to voice concerns about problems they've experienced at an individual service user level.

So, it really covers the whole breadth of experiences of service users and makes an impact on various levels. Co-production improves the communication between service

provider and service users and changes their relationship, it changes the power balance.

The service user is seen as an expert and not just as somebody with issues, and so their relationship changes, which hopefully reduces high turnover due to increased job satisfaction for the professionals providing services that would at least be my hope. Therefore, the previously mentioned problems could be improved upon by good co-production.

Some final remarks. I have several family members who are involved in participation in co-production who feel that they've not been listened to in the past, and that this has negatively impacted their mental health, their current life and their future prospects, and they take pride in their participation and their expertise.

That goal is to make sure that others will have a better experience and will get access to mental health services earlier. And my hope is that co-production, not my hope, but I think that co-production can really help achieve this. Thank you. So, that was it from me, and I would now like to hand over to Harry.

Harry Angus – 00:11:37

- Thanks for asking me to unmute there, I completely couldn't find the button at all, I don't know where it went. Hi, everyone, my name's Harry Angus. I'm a programme manager at Bristol City Council and today I'll talk to you a bit about Bristol's context and journey while laying the elements around co-production and how we considered it and what steps we've taken to implement it.

And so, Bristol's Family Hub journey was still very much developing. But we spent the last twelve months really getting what I like to term Family Hub ready. And so, as we all know and are aware from the speakers earlier today, this is a very rapidly changing and emerging area of policy, with lots of learning still to be had.

And so, we've consciously moved slightly slowly on this to allow for that national picture to emerge so we can start to take advantage of all that's coming out. We started last year, and it is very much a partnership programme where Bristol City Council is one of the players here, but we also need to consider our partners in health, education, the voluntary sector particularly because all of these services need to come together to develop Family Hubs. And what's really imperative in all of this is that family voices are heard throughout and written in and designed in how we start to build these structures. When we started out, we spoke to a range of people already operating within a Family Hub model, so Doncaster and the Isle of Wight back along and engaged in a series of events earlier on last year to try and help improve our understanding to take our moving forward.

So, Bristol's Family Hub definition has been a real journey, and we're getting to a definition of what Family Hub is. I think that no matter who you speak to, you're

always going to get a slightly different vision. But fundamentally, when we started out, we thought that our Family Hubs would serve pre-birth to eleven.

But as we progress with the work we're understanding, the range really needed to be from that pre-birth all the way up to eighteen or twenty five, where there is SEND. And we initially found 0-11 because we felt that our spaces that we thought would become Family Hubs weren't really set up to deliver the sorts of services that were appropriate for the eleven plus space. And we also felt there was enough work just to be getting on with the 0-11 space before looking at that slightly older age range.

But that was very tied to the idea that we'd have a physical space as a Family Hub and some of the conversations earlier alluded to this where it doesn't have to be about this one central building. It's about developing an approach where all of these different spaces can become, in essence, a Family Hub and how do you set the scene to allow that to happen?

And so, we're still not quite decided on whether we're going to have a space which is a Family Hub, we're still not decided on whether a children's centre might become a Family Hub to create a central focal point for families. But we thought our energies was best spent in kind of getting us to a place where we're Family Hub ready.

And so, getting the right people around the table, around these sorts of themes, the right sorts of core partners, and get everyone talking about this in a really, really productive way. So, we're therefore now looking at a phased approach, 0-11 initially and a view to expand this further as our approach matures and we get further along.

And to deliver this, we've had a number of work streams spanning various areas, really good multi-agency representation, multi-scaled and some of these work streams have developed robust action plans which are coming into effect.

And some of them are kind of still in development and doing bits of work. So, we've been really flexible in how we approach the work. So, we think that's really important to take advantage of this emerging learning.

This is then a slide I really like, it illustrates our early thinking on the sorts of services that come together to support a Family Hub, and it very much aligns to the sorts of multiple services being cogs in one big Family Hub machine analogy. Our job as a Family Hub programme, then, is to try and get all of these cogs to start moving better together and get closer together and so, getting that service to a point where it is much more effective and simpler for families and makes sense, if you like. This is still focussing on that 0-11 space and as I said earlier, we're phasing it, I'll be using a similar slide to this to reflect the wider system and we're still thinking for us to do about how that works together.

Finally, on our Bristol context is that we've recently launched this governance model, and this is really what we're hoping will help us get that umbrella approach from the previous slide. This city wide strategic steering team in the middle here, we've managed to launch this back in September, and we're now hosting a range of workshops over the next couple of months to launch the area based teams.

Because a lot of our finding so far is that the way to get this work to progress and really embed itself is by getting the right people around talking to each other in a really focussed way around this and starting this conversation, mapping out what

needs to be done with the right level of influence within these groups to then embed these changes moving forward.

But you haven't come to talk about Bristol today, we're talking about co-production and for co-production, we need to determine who, what, how, when and as Dina touched on earlier, I think where is also really important in this, which I haven't got on my slides, but I'll start talking about bit as well.

And fundamentally, I think when framing co-production with Family Hubs, you've got to consider I think that there's two options you either say, we're going to go early and engage early to talk to families, or you say we're going to look across the system at what we already know, and what we already spoken to families about to then help us understand what we need to develop. And then once we're further down the line with that department, we can go to families to understand where there are gaps.

And in Bristol, we've chosen that second option, which I'll speak about in a bit more detail. Because I think that if you're doing a a wholesale relaunch of your model where you say, OK, this is where we were before, we're now in a Family Hubs model, which is different in a number of different ways, that's where it's really important, I think, to engage early with families. However, with us, we're very much doing this cogs in the machine.

Looking across all of our services and what they already know about trying to prove their families and trying to implement those quick wins and those getting our own house in order tasks before going up to families to engage in understanding what they want. I'll get a bit more detail in the 'what we're engaging about' section.

So, who? In my head when we were speaking about this, we partitioned families into four clear sections and so you've got in the top left, those who have high levels of need and are accessing both targeted and universal systems services through the system.

You then got the families with lower needs, so that access universal services, but we know about them. We then got families that you aren't accessing services, but we know about them and think they would probably benefit from services. And so, the families where we might have data on them and Bristol's got a really good data maturity, but we might not have them engaging in services where we think that there is a need for them to start accessing and tapping into those universal and targeted services.

And then finally, you've got your invisible families, so you don't know who they are or what their vulnerabilities are. They're not showing up in your data and they are flying under the radar where we don't know what support which people might need. And I think a common pitfall in engagement and co-production is going for an easy route where you say you see co-production or engagement as a tick-boxing exercise and you say,

OK, we're going to speak to the families who are already open. And therefore, if you base all your service design off speaking to those families, you're going to create a service skewed towards those families that shout the loudest, or the ones you already know about, which obviously has a number of pitfalls around it.

And so, I think it's really important to consider these as a whole and a different strategy to engage with each of these different groups to understand exactly what

sort of services they want to see being delivered and how they need to be delivered. I've said here that data is definitely your friend. You could use strategic level data to get a better understanding of your cohorts and implement the strategies to engage those people who you're missing.

For instance, if you know that there's a really diverse community, but you know that some ethnicities are underrepresented in the service delivery of children's centres in that area, you think really carefully about how you might engage with those, underrepresented groups to get their views on service design to try and help design a service which is applicable and useful for everyone, rather than just those who you already know about.

In terms of the 'what' then. This is really critically important and should form the core of the strategy here. And so, what is it you're trying to get by co-producing? Are you actually co-producing or are you just looking to engage families in something that you've already made your mind up on?

And I think fundamentally and most importantly, which is why we've been a bit cautious about going out to talk to families at this stage in Bristol, is that are you prepared to make the changes that families are telling you that they want to make. And so, with Bristol, as I'm sure with many of you as well, we have been guilty over the years of thinking about something going out and engaging on it, finding that the answers that we hear isn't quite what we want to hear. And then going ahead anyway. And that fosters, what Dina said, about distrust in the system, a kind of frustration that your views have been spoken but they haven't been enacted.

And so, we want to be really careful about how we engage with families. And so, we took the approach that the co-design of services falls at the point of responsibility for the services themselves. And so that's picked up through the continuous improvement of those services. They should be speaking to the families they serve and also the families that they're not serving about how their services need to improve.

And so, the function of the Family Hubs programme is to sit down look at what marginal gains we can make across the whole service. And so, by marginal gains I mean, the little tweaks that you can do to make the service make more sense for families. And so, we had little appetite to do a complete relaunch because of the capacity issues, issues around resources available. And so, we didn't want to do a big wholesale launch where we said, OK, Bristol is now in a Family Hub model, look at all of these buildings, which have been termed as Family Hubs.

We went for a slow development approach and so we could do small tweaks, track, and test how that's working. Is it delivering improved services for families? And then after we've got a really clear understanding of what we don't know, we then go to families at that point.

So, my word of warning here is don't rush off and engage too early, if you don't have a clear ask of what you're trying to understand. If you've got a really clear ask then that's brilliant, engage early. However, you don't want to get to a point where you can't deliver what families are telling you.

And the thing is, we already know a lot of the issues that are facing families. We know that people hate having to repeat their stories. We know that people don't like having to travel miles off to a random building, which I've never been to. They'd rather go to

the building, which is right in front of them. And so that's why we're doing the project. So, we thought we'd enact those sorts of changes initially, while then engaging later on.

I'm going to jump onto the how then. So, I'm going to pass over to Valdeep in a little bit to talk a bit about Participatory Action Research. The how very much depends on the who, the what, and the local context. And so, what you found out from your previous two steps.

I think it's really important to use if you've got community development teams within your council, to utilise them, because they've got a really good understanding of the communities they serve and who might be those underrepresented groups which you might be missing already. Utilise the VCS sector, so a critically important factor in our Family Hubs development and we have a real core partnership. I can see someone on the call today, which is really good they must have seen this presentation about fifty times,

I think I've done it to her but utilise your partners because they get access to a lot of the families that statutory services don't. And those families might have lost trust in their statutory services through their experience. And so, it's about trying to get a broader view and cast your net really wide. Speak to the families that you already know about whilst using data to identify those you don't know about. And then also the point I've been hammering on about. Look at what you already know, so if you've asked the same thing 100 times and you already know the answer, there's little value about going in asking those things again.

Finally, then, is the 'when'? And so, this illustrates a little bit about what we've been doing since we started, and it's been really busy. We've had limited capacity with only me really being the dedicated resource on this, while everybody else has been picking up the Family Hub development work as part of their wider roles.

And so, you've got to be realistic about understanding what you're doing and when to engage because we couldn't really fit in a really concerted engagement piece around all these other different bit of work around getting our own house in order and doing things which we knew would make a difference to families based on the stuff we already knew

And everything, as with all of this, work always takes longer than you anticipate it should take. And so, it's about thinking very carefully about when you have the capacity to engage and get that co-production elements in and taking that forward. So, that's me. Now happy to hand over to Valdeep to talk a bit about participatory research so I'll stop sharing my screen. Just saw a question, Sirona is our commissioned community health provider for Bristol City Council, so they do our school nursing, health visiting and are a core partner within it. Happy to pick up questions at the end as well.

Valdeep Gill – 00:25:32
- All right, thanks Harry. Can I just check if everyone sees the slides? Can someone let me know if they can see the slides? Great. So, my name is Valdeep Gill and I'm

part of the Ecorys evaluation team and we're doing a national evaluation of Family Hubs, and Bristol is one of the local authority sites that partnering with us.

We're using a range of different methods as part of our evaluation, and one of our methods is Participatory Action Research, which is a form of co-production. It's a very specific methodology. So, I'm going to present to you what the method is, how we're planning to use it in Bristol, and some considerations for others who are hoping to embark on a similar project and using this method. So as a starting point, I think it's helpful to just set out the Ecorys evaluation. We're partnering with five different local authorities across England.

And they have unique contexts and local populations and different approaches to their Family Hub models. We have some local authorities that are quite advanced and mature in their models and are implementing services at a stage at which we can focus on impact evaluation activities so we can assess outcomes for children and families.

And we also have some local authorities, like Bristol and Suffolk, in our partnership, which are at an earlier stage of implementation. So, the evaluation activities for those local authorities are focussed far more on early implementation and learning lessons about what's working well, and areas for improvement at early stage.

And this is where Participatory Action Research comes in. So, this method has got a strong history in public health research contexts. And the method basically involves researchers working alongside members of the community and in this case families to understand and develop insights about a particular issue or service, so in this case, Family Hubs. So, our plan is to work alongside a group of families in Bristol and in Suffolk and positioning them as experts in their own lives and experts of living in their local area and navigating a range of different services, Family Hubs as well as others. And it really draws on their expertise as families and services users and working alongside researchers rather than research being done to them. So, this method involves cycles of enquiry. So, identifying an issue or an area for exploration, collecting information about it and then reflecting on all the information that's being gathered to suggest small improvement changes for a service.

And we've chosen this method in Bristol and Suffolk for a few different reasons. One, Ecorys has a strong track record of using this method. We wanted to find ways to amplify families' voices within the evaluation and make sure that family experiences and views are the centre stage of the evaluation activities. We wanted to create meaningful ways to engage families in a really active way within the evaluation. And we wanted to make sure that we're gathering a range of insights. By involving families as co-researchers, we're hoping to gather insights that we might otherwise miss, if it's purely researcher-led.

So, here's a very high level plan for the work that we can be doing in Bristol, and we'll also be doing similar work in Suffolk as well. So, our first step will be to recruit families, train them so they feel confident in that researcher role and together with families plan and research projects. Families will then go out and collect data and there's two parts to this. First of all, they'll be documenting their own personal experiences of using Family Hubs, as well as other services in their localities, and documenting their experiences of that.

And the second part is doing community research so they will also be doing primary research with other family members, also with other professionals and staff teams. Once they've collected all of that data, the research team will be working with the family researchers to develop a set of conclusions and recommendations as really through the lens of the family's lived experiences of services.

And we will also be supporting families as a final step to share their findings with decision makers within a Family Hubs context and local authority. And throughout all of this, something that's really key is that the Ecorys team will be working alongside family researchers closely to support and guide throughout, so they feel helped through the process.

And this can be a high quality output. So now I'm going to talk through some of these steps in more detail and talk through some of the practical considerations for us, but also for other services and local authorities, he might want to do a similar piece of work.

So, our first step will be to recruit families, and it's really important to think through who you want to include. So, this might be dependent on the type of project you'd like them to do.

We are hoping to recruit 12 to 15 parents or carers in Bristol and also a similar number in Suffolk as well. And we'll be identifying potential family members to become researchers through the support and close working with Bristol Family Hubs as well as their partner organisations. And what's key for us is that we want to make sure that we engage a range of families to be researchers to represent the wide range of views and experiences.

So, we want to make sure that families are living across the local authority, that we include families that have a range of needs and are accessing Family Hubs for a range of different reasons. And then we're going to be having three key touch points across the project lifecycle.

And I'll just talk you through our aims of each of those three core meeting points. The first one is really important and it's an opportunity for families to meet and get to know one another, as well as the Ecorys research team.

We'll be setting the scene for the national evaluation that we're conducting and how their work will fit into that. And then we will go about developing a research project together with families, so together with families, formulating research questions, so what are the questions that they think are really important to answer and how do they want to go about answering them. So, what methods they want to use and who they want to collect data from.

And something that's really key is that you have to provide a really strong programme of training and support for families, their family members, and they have lots of lived experiences of accessing services. And what you need to provide them with is the training and the skills, to feel confident in that researcher role, so they understand the context of the research, how to deliver the methods and also outlining the key ethical and safeguarding practices that they will have to keep in mind when they're doing the work.

And also acknowledging that families might be new to this researcher role, it's key that the Ecorys research team provide a suite of options, a framework for the types of

methods and approaches that families can use, that families really have scope within that to define what their project looks like.

So, we might suggest, for example, diary methods, interviews, observations, or creative methods that families really will have the final decision about what their project looks like. The second touch point will be an opportunity for families to come together and share their emerging findings.

So, from the data that they've collected through the community research and also their personal experiences, they can share early findings with one another. And together, the research team at Ecorys, together with the family members will make sense of the findings together and through the lens of the family's lived experiences of accessing services.

And start identifying the similarities and differences. And this is also a key point at which we can reflect back on the original research questions and methods and see if there's any gaps and whether these methods are fit for purpose. It's also a really important part of when you're doing this type of work that you create opportunities for family members to reflect on their experiences of being in the researcher role and how that feels for them, alongside still using services.

Also, a key point at which once families have gone out and started to do some data collection that you revisit some of the practical considerations about how you do research well and how do you maintain ethical and safeguarding boundaries as well.

So, it's an opportunity to revisit some of those training needs. And as a final step, a final workshop will be working with families to reflect on the range of evidence and information that they've gathered through their project and develop a final set of recommendations that we'll present back to the Family Hubs at Bristol and also in Suffolk.

And what's key is that the recommendations are grounded in the findings of the research project, and we will support families to feel confident in presenting and discussing their findings with the Family Hub steering group.

And there's an additional step. Something that we're really hoping to do is bring together the Family Research Group in Bristol and Suffolk for a virtual meeting so that they can share and discuss their respective research projects, and the recommendations as well, as a further learning opportunity.

So, as just a final point, I just thought it's worth outlining some of the considerations that we had and that you might have if you were planning to do similar work. So first of all, it's worth thinking through why you want to use this method. Is there a particular question or topic that you'd like insights on that you think is uniquely placed to be led by a group of family researchers as opposed to another group or professional?

It's worth thinking about how you're going to engage family members. So, families are accessing services because there is a need to do so, but they might not want to take on that researcher role. So, it's really worth thinking through what's in it for them and how you will engage families to make sure that they would like to give up their time to engage in activity like this, and how you might reimburse them for their time and really value the efforts that it would require for them to be involved.

And thirdly, I think it's really important to think through whether you can really invest in a strong training and support offer for families. In my experience of doing this research, it's really valuable, but it does require a lot of time and resource and dedicated support, so that the project keeps momentum, that it stays on track, and that families feel held throughout the process and can feel really confident in their role and empowered as researchers.

Julie Greer – 00:37:30
- A number of these have come up as questions so it would be really good to return to these in a few minutes, but if you can just wrap it up now, then we can move on to Andrea that would be brilliant, and I'll come back to you to respond to the questions that would be brilliant.

Valdeep Gill – 00:37:42
- Of course, we'll do that. Just a final consideration. It's worth thinking through how you're going to manage expectations, and I think Dina and Harry, have already mentioned this. On the service side, you might have feedback that is uncomfortable or unexpected, and it's worth thinking through how you might manage that and also thinking through your managing a family's expectations about, you know, whether it might not be possible that all the recommendations can be put forward.
But it's worth thinking about how you might manage that expectation so that families don't feel disengaged. And I will now hand over to Andrea. Thank you very much.

Andrea King – 00:38:23
- Thank you, Valdeep, that was so interesting, and we could have listened to you, I'm glad we'll get a chance to talk about questions in a little while.
I'm just stepping in today, colleagues. I'm the new clinical director for the Anna Freud Centre. I've been at Anna Freud for about a month and stepping in to cover a session that southeast colleagues would have contributed to, to talk about the work over the last year or so embedding relational practice as a tool for co-production across the whole of the southeast region to improve emotional mental health service access and the whole design of emotional mental health services for children, young people and for parents and carers.
In a year period, following significant co-design, the system's leaders, particularly directors of children's services and the directors in services, so the Health Care Trust and ICS commissioners, we embarked upon a process of starting to train, in the end, 6800 systems leaders across the police, schools, voluntary sector, social care, and the NHS, particularly mental health but also physical health, hospitals as well.
Within that number, we were also side-by-side training children and young people and parents and carers. And the raison d'etre that sat beneath that was how can we together understand the experience of children and young people trying to access

emotional mental health support locally in their community, knowing that we're not reaching everybody, knowing that it can be really stigmatising.

We used an approach which is very compatible with relational practice, a restorative approach to that training. We built long-term relationships which talk directly about how we can build relationships with children or people who currently won't access our services. So think about equity, diversity and inclusion. We break down the barriers around reading and writing.

We break down the barriers around stigmatising services and reached out to community groups to say, can we train you side-by-side? Can you help shape new services? So that was a significant reach.

Strategically, local transformation plans which are the core emotional mental health plans, for children, that's where all the money goes for emotional health redesign, that's how it's directed, changed significantly in response to what children and young people said.

Because children and young people are both going to train side-by-side with the most senior leaders in the system and operational managers, the power divide started to be dissipated. What was produced differed for different areas as it should, as it must in response to those local needs and gaps.

So, if you look at the Thames Valley area, you'll see a brand new early help, non-stigmatising, often voluntary sector run emotional health services, reaching out to children and young people.

If you drop down to the south coast, what you'll see is a completely new approach to neurodiversity supported by parents and carers and young people who are neurodiverse and they've often waited a very, very long time for assessment and then possibly support services. A whole, entire community approach to that, which transform schools is transforming home environments. It's very powerful approach, in parallel in that area, you'll also see a different approach to the most complex children and young people.

If you move over to the east coast, what you will see is, how this was applied to help us with suicide prevention. How this was applied to help our care leavers, to feel safe when they moved into university or higher education, a whole new approach to care with HEIs and further education institutes. So, the application of the approach was really different because of the scale of it, because of the ongoing co-production conversation that's resulted from this. There is a national evaluation underway, which will be published by the end of April 2022.

There's a lot of other regions interested in this approach, which brings together co-production and relational practice side-by-side and intentionally says, how will we transform services? What impact will we see and how do we reach a voice of children and young people, who otherwise we just don't hear from, who often have had very, very difficult experiences of accessing help and support, and also those children who appear apparently out of nowhere, so hidden children.

So, that evaluation will be shared in the near future and that thinking, alongside the excellent work Harry, thank you and Valdeep, from Bristol and from other areas, will be informing the toolkit that sits behind Family Hubs. Julie, I hope that was a helpful summary for colleagues, and I am happy to respond to any questions.