

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE



CREATING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

A fundamental change to the way local practitioners and partners work together to safeguard vulnerable children

CHALLENGE

North East Lincolnshire has seen a rise in the number of children identified as being 'in need', with a significant rise in the number of looked after children and child protection plans in recent years. A high proportion of these cases were repeat referral cases and this has put substantial strain on services in the region.

INNOVATION

The innovation brought together four established tools within social work and community practice: outcomes based accountability, restorative practices, Signs of Safety and Family Group Conferencing. This shift enabled practitioners to accurately identify risk and focus practice on conflict resolution at the earliest stage. Furthermore, it ensured there was mediated support for families and children, with a focus on outcomes, rather than processes, at the centre of support.

PARTNERS

- Humber-side Police
- Schools
- Health
- Voluntary Action NE Lincolnshire
- NSPCC
- Hull University
- Paul Carlile, Carlisle Education, ENABLE

OUR INNOVATION (NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL)

We created an innovative approach to social care called the 'Creating Stronger Communities' model, fundamentally changing the way local practitioners and partners work together to safeguard children.



OUTCOME BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

Focussing whole organisations on outcomes, rather than process. Staff were trained in the principles of outcomes based accountability (OBA), and an OBA Champions Network supported and cascaded good practice.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICE

Restorative Practice made a significant mark on operational practice areas across the authority with three-quarters (74%) of the 59 staff trained and who completed the survey indicating that it had changed the way they managed staff, and 88% indicated that they were actively using it to implement change.

SIGNS OF SAFETY

Signs of Safety enables practitioners across different disciplines to work collaboratively and in partnership with families and children, using the same language and methods. Action learning sets encouraged good practice and a new single assessment tool was fully embedded.

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING

The Family Group Conferencing team worked with 154 families and delivered 65 conferences since the service was expanded in November 2015. A total of 28 conferences were held over a 6-month period, reflecting increased efficiency of operation.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Leadership at all levels and across agencies

If we had to give only one essential factor in ensuring success, it would be to model the behaviour from the top! This is critical. Our Chief Executive ensured this happened, by rolling out Restorative Leadership to all managers and implementing Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) across the council, this has ensured that everyone understands the principles, uses the same simple and understandable language, and importantly, are achieving real and sustained improvements.

Whole system buy in

In order to achieve improved outcomes at 'whole population level' the whole system needs to be engaged. It is not just the Council that is responsible for the outcomes of children and families, every agency has a part to play. All partner agencies have been engaged from the start (this is key). We all own the changes that need to be made across the system. Key partners have been trained in OBA, Restorative Practice and Signs of Safety. Creating Strong Communities was instrumental in the development of an NELC Outcomes Framework which has given absolute clarity to staff, citizens and our partners on what our priorities are.

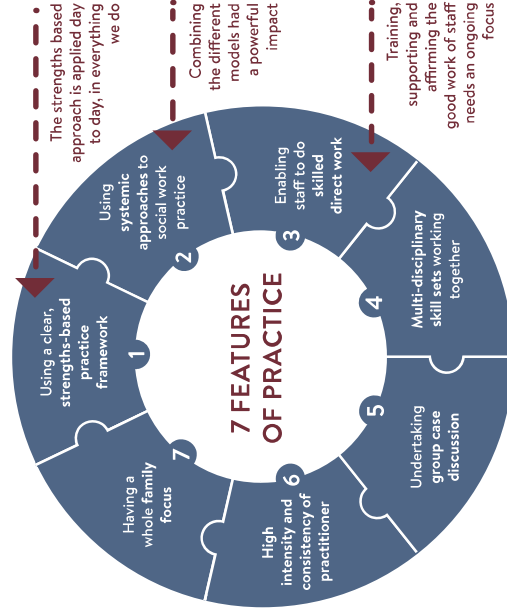
Workforce development

This programme is the foundation of a huge workforce development plan which is underway in NELC. 0.19 aims to change how the children's workforce integrate to deliver a different way of working. We 'do with' rather than 'doing for' or 'doing to'. This is a huge culture change, but it really makes a difference. Families are engaged from the start and understand the changes they need to make - they own the responsibility.

Partner agencies, managers and practitioners need to be part of the whole system changes that are being made. Engaging them early so they understand the model was what made a difference. Extensive training was rolled out, led from the top and maintained. It takes time to embed - culture change doesn't happen overnight!

Celebrating and affirming success

It's really important to shout about the successes that have been achieved - and keep doing it! It keeps everybody engaged and motivated and helps to bring more partners along that had perhaps struggled. We made a film, produced newsletters, showcased at events etc. It reminds everyone how important their role is in achieving real and sustained change



OUR IMPACT

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING:

Savings of £18.20 for every £1 support spent, were attributed to 20 family group conferences.



actively use restorative practice to implement change.



"I am glad we had the FGC it has made things better for us."

Family Group Conferencing service user

OF STAFF TRAINED: