

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE



BRIGHTER FUTURES

Building consistent relationships around children to support them to get to where they want to be

CHALLENGE

Our traditional model of social work delivers standard results for very high unit cost. We know that what children and young people want is choice about the decisions that affect them: a consistent lead worker through their journey and adulthood; and to live locally with and near the people they trust. Our staff and foster carers share a high aspiration for young people, but our current model does not allow us to deliver this.

INNOVATION

The Brighter Futures programme is focused on building effective, consistent relationships with young people, families, communities and carers to bring about sustained change. We want to get better at supporting young people and families where there is a risk of breakdown, and to ensure that where children and young people are looked after by Ealing they can be placed with foster carers locally.

PARTNERS

Brighter Futures is a cross-agency partnership led by the London Borough of Ealing and including:

- West London Mental Health NHS Trust
- Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group

OUR INNOVATION (LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING)

We have reshaped the way we work with young people in and on the edge of care. The Brighter Futures model enables workers to build effective, consistent relationships with young people, families, communities and carers to bring about sustained change.

DEVOLVING POWER AND DECISION MAKING

We are testing a range of tools that give staff greater autonomy to make decisions and pull together a package of support for the children they know best. Each young person has an input in choosing who they want to help them on that journey.

RESHAPING THE WHOLE WORKFORCE

Two new types of multidisciplinary team have been created. The multi-agency support teams (MAST) work with families and young people at risk of becoming looked after. The Connect teams work with those young people who are already looked after. Both teams work in partnership with families.

CREATING A NEW COHORT OF ADVANCED FOSTER CARERS

We started with the aim of raising the bar of foster provision, and creating a better foster carer journey. We have provided intensive support to some of our foster carers to be 'fostering plus' carers, who are able to look after some of our most vulnerable young people.

A LEADERSHIP TEAM OF PARTNERS ACROSS THE SYSTEM

We are working in partnership across the system so decisions are made by the right people, in the right place, at the right time. All partner leads are clear that systems and organisations should follow practice.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Shared casework results in better support for professionals and young people alike

Reduced caseloads and increased administrative support have created time to dedicate to young people. The regular group supervision enables discussion of issues or cases improving the quality of decisions and ability for professionals such as youth workers to take action.

Creating a new team identity

The new model has created a culture where there is energy, enthusiasm and shared learning. Leaders and team members seek and consider multiple perspectives and views on work with children, families and young people and how the team is working together. An openness to and respect for knowledge and expertise from within and outside the team leads to more productive outcomes.

The value of the Dyadic Developmental Programme

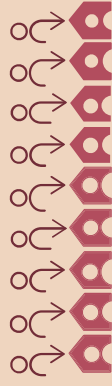
The Dyadic Developmental Programme has allowed workers to develop a shared language of PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy), which has been shared with foster carers. Staff and foster carers are able to use the tools learnt through DDP to suit a specific situation.

Giving flexibility to team leaders

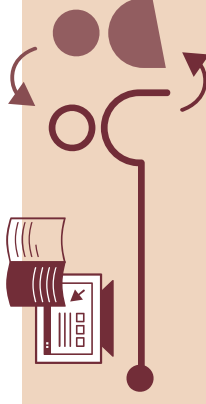
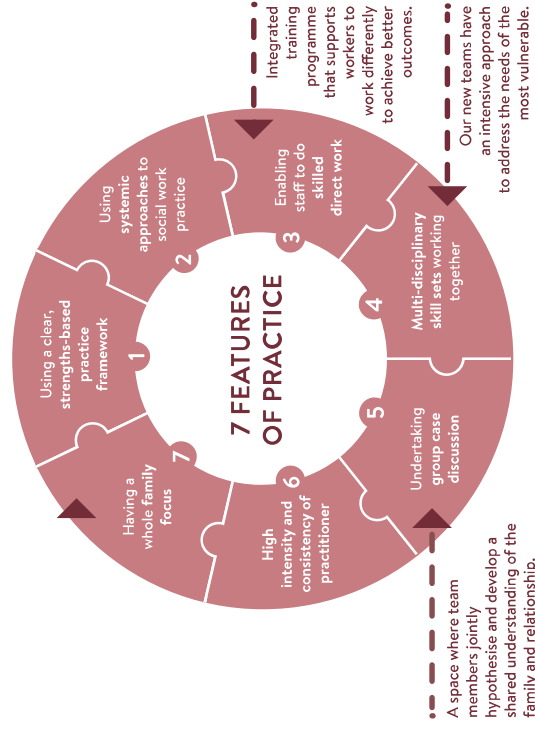
A core framework was developed for what each team could look like but the teams themselves were allowed flexibility. Now that the teams are bedded in, each works in a slightly different way. If things aren't working, the team can change it quickly.

OUR IMPACT

9 young people moved out of residential placements during the pilot



...with associated cost avoidance of around £800K



Foster carers report that the training has improved their interactions with their foster children and their ability to prevent situations escalating into crisis.

“The support I am getting, helps me to achieve new things that I wouldn't do before”

Young person