



A Bridge to Children's Wellbeing Report



Projected funded by



Project profile

Funder	NHS City and Hackney CCG part of the CAMHS Alliance's Transformation Plan
Implementing partner	Hackney Council Voluntary Service
Project Title	A Bridge to Children's Wellbeing
Operational area	London Borough of Hackney
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Background

There is a bank of evidence that children from African Caribbean Heritage backgrounds are at risk of underachieving in education attainment targets and overrepresented in child and adolescent mental health services. ACH children are more likely to be affected by poverty, excluded from school due to behaviour conduct matters, be diagnosed late for special educational needs. Low-income households often have complex health and social care needs. The children are more likely to have a child in need plan.

As constant figures in children's lives, engaging parents and extended family networks are essential to any effective intervention. It is also essential to partner with African-led community organisations working to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of African families and communities.

A Bridge to Children's Wellbeing is a family engagement initiative led by Hackney CVS and supported by selected members of Community African Network and Hackney based family support organisations. The initiative, funded by the CCG in City and Hackney, is part of the CAMHS Alliance's Transformation Plan which aims to improve the wellbeing and mental health for all children in the local area.

Families from ACH and local organisations will connect with clinical health specialists to understand the key barriers parents have in engaging with available parenting programmes and develop culturally appropriate solutions. Community organisations will refresh evidence-based family engagement content so that support initiatives are culturally appropriate and reflect the lived experience of families. At the intersection of the impacts of immigration and racial inequality are limited English / speaking English as an additional language, poverty, trauma from fleeing war and conflict, and hidden challenges that now affect the health and wellbeing of families and communities. Parents Programme training participants will engage in facilitated meetings led by African heritage workers and drop-in sessions to give a voice to complex needs, share common concerns, and establish pathways to support services

Overall Aim

To increase ACH parents understanding of their children's emotional health and wellbeing support needs.

Objectives

1. To develop culturally appropriate resources and tools to lead family engagement activities. The project will create a bridge so that parents and relatives access the support needed to improve educational, social, health, and wellbeing outcomes.
2. To support networks and groups to connect African heritage families and communities with available resources. African families will have the space to unpack to hidden barriers that lead to low educational attainment and poor mental health outcomes.
3. To improve support services and develop best practices in working with vulnerable communities. Staff across organisations will collaborate to share learnings to both improve engagement strategies and increase uptake within the ACH community.

Project Report

Steering Group Meetings

We held 4 steering group meetings and representatives from ACH organisations attended to review the workplan and agree on activities for the project. These organisations actively recruited parents for the Taster sessions and attended most of the session. The organisations are Precious Lives, Rise Community Action, African Support & Project Centre, African Community School, Hackney Somali Community, Get a Helping Hand and National Parents and Youths Open Forum.

Parenting Programme Taster sessions

4 Taster parenting programme sessions were organised, and they all took place. These sessions were well attended by parents. Local ACH organisations participated actively in recruiting the parents for the sessions and attendance exceeded the target.

- Total of 30 parents attended the sessions. This has exceeded our target of 15 parents.
- 2 parents have signed up for parenting programme and several others have shown interest.
- Sessions were very lively and interactive.
- We had two facilitators from Community CAMHS attend on 23rd June to listen to parents and share about community based groups offered by First Steps (Chantal Newman) and CAMHS Disability (Sam Cowsaji)

- The last session on 30th June, we had 2 facilitators. An ACH organisation promoting a programme that supports mums and a Coach who spoke about supporting parents and children through coaching.
- Parents were open about the barriers to why African and Caribbean families do not access parenting programme.
- The feedbacks from parents were fantastic as the sessions gave them more insight about the parenting programmes on offer in Hackney.
- We have 4 Zoom videos that could be used for future introductory session for parents attending future programmes.

Taster Session One	3pm -4pm	Saturday 19 June 2021
Attendance (8)	Parenting Programmme	Barriers to accessing service
1. Oladapo - Coordinator 2. Kome – Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Violent Resistant • Safer Families, Safer Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited access to internet (digital divide) ▪ Access to digital devices (laptop, tablets, mobile). ▪ Language barrier ▪ Programme duration is too long. ▪ People sometimes prefer face to face programmes ▪ Sessions may be too complex for people with English as second language. ▪ Feeling of embarrassment for attending programme. ▪ Not clever
Taster Session Two	1pm - 2pm	Wednesday 23 June 2021
Attendance (21)	Parenting Programmme	Barriers to accessing service
1. Oladapo - Coordinator 2. Chantal, Facilitator 3. Sam, co-facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple P • Solihull Approach • Incredible Years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural beliefs in how to parent children. ▪ Misinformation about the parenting programmes. ▪ Fear of social services. ▪ Services being part of CAMHS is a barrier as it is part of mental health.
Taster Session Three	3pm - 4pm	Saturday 26 June 2021

Attendance (17)	Parenting Programme	Barriers to accessing service
1. Oladapo - Coordinator 2. Kome – Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment for Parent • Contextual Safeguarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Misinterpretation of parenting programme. ▪ People are scared their children will be taken by social services. ▪ African parents are not familiar with parenting courses. ▪ Parents believe they know it all. ▪ Fixed in their ways of parenting. ▪ Lack of awareness of courses. ▪ No support to attend session (childcare, travel fare).
Taster Session Four	1pm - 2pm	Wednesday 30 June 2021
Attendance (13)	Parenting Programme	Barriers to accessing service
1. Oladapo - Coordinator 2. Fatou – Facilitator 3. Lizzy – Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence Academy for Mums • Coaching for Parents and Young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People may feel free courses are not good enough. ▪ Timing of the courses may not be convenient for some parents. ▪ Some courses do not have certificate of recognition or attendance. ▪ Parents may need incentives to attend courses. ▪ Need for more publicity. ▪ Feeling of uneasiness that they may be judged. ▪ What is there for me?

Fresh Connection exchange

The planned Fresh Connection exchange with CAMHS, Head teachers, ELFT team and WAMHS for **Monday 19th or Tuesday 20th July from 11am - 1pm** did not take place due to summer leave within CAMHS teams. There is an opportunity still to have this meeting in the Autumn.

Parents Open Space Session – Monthly Drop sessions

None of the parents has taken up this offer formally however there were informal telephone discussions with 3 parents

who wanted to confirm which programme is best suited for them based on the issues they are having with their children. In addition, one parent made a self-referral directly to First Steps (Community CAMHS) after Chantal's session on 23 June. Another parent made contact through her social worker, links were made with Chantal and the other facilitators to establish a referral pathway to Community CAMHS. We have a mother who did a referral for his son to a youth coaching programme we presented on 30th June.

Recommendations

- Culturally appropriate and accessible parent programmes. An opportunity to design courses that respond to unmet needs identified within the African and Caribbean heritage communities. The taster sessions provided insights to some of the barriers and constraints faced by ACH parents in accessing parent programmes.
- Bridging the digital divide by providing blended programmes and supporting struggling parents. Need for flexibility in programme delivery
- Involving ACH community organisations in planning and delivery of parenting programmes and other services targeted at ACH communities. Commissioning organisational development projects to train community organisation workers and increase their capacity to deliver parenting programmes.
- Increased funding resources and support for ACH community frontline organisations. This project has shown how partnership and collaboration could work to improve services. More knowledge of how to work in partnership to deliver funded programmes that address mental health.
- The need to promote more programme focusing on supporting young people around confidence building, goal setting, gangs, and violence. Need to explore joint programmes involving parents and young people.
- Piloting an ACH community CAMHS champion model. Trained champions will be available to support families one-on-one, advocacy work, give talks to small groups, signpost to services and referrals to specific programme.

Appendices

Workplan

Workstream	Activities	Outputs Sessions	Participants	Data collection	Proposed Outcomes	Task Indicators	Timelines
Steering Group	Periodic meeting to plan and implement project.	2	ACH members and other stakeholders. RISE Community Action Precious Lives ASPC National Parents and Youths Open Forum African Community School Akomolade Akwaaba Hackney Somali Community	Register Zoom video Meeting notes Workplan	The steering group and policy makers have better understanding of the hidden barriers to lack of engagement of African parents in programme offerings.	4 Steering group meetings Approve workplan Monitor and evaluate project	22 Feb 5 March 24 May 15 July (45mins)

Fresh Connection exchange	Meetings to identify appropriate parent support programmes for ACH parents.	1	15 participants Public sector x5 & ACH x10 Connect with Head teachers ELFT team and WAMHS	Register Zoom video Meeting notes Presentations	Identify and agree on range of approved parents support programmes. ACH staff increase their knowledge of community and professional support services. Public sector increase awareness of ACH children's support needs. Increased knowledge on referral pathways	1 meeting Identify 5 parent support programmes for ACH parents	19 July (2 hour 11am-1pm session on Zoom)
Parent Taster Courses	Parent support programmes taster session to ACH parents	4	15 parents	Register Post session survey Zoom video Presentations	ACH parents have greater awareness of the benefits of parent support courses and clearer pathways to community and professional support.	Parents Programmes Non Violence Resistance Contextual safeguarding, First Steps Incredible Years Solihull HENRY Safer Family Safer Community Empowerment for Parents Positive Parenting Confidence Academy for Mums	Tentative dates (Weds 1-2pm, Sats 3-4pm) 19 June 23 June 26 June 30 June 1 hour (Zoom)

Parents Open Space Session – Monthly Drop sessions	One on one session with parents to clarify issues after taster session.	4	6-8 parents Telephone / Zoom	Organisations Types of issues Case studies Translators	ACH Frontline Parent Level 60% of parents have increased knowledge of pathways to support and advocacy	Gathering challenges that affect parents	Sat 2-3pm June
Project Evaluation	ACH Parents Focus Group sessions	2	6-8 parents Online evaluation form	Evaluation forms Case studies	Better understanding of barriers to engagement by ACH parents. Develop support and advocacy plan	Response to online survey Mini report Case studies	Sat 2-3pm 19 - 23 July