

Session 8:

Growing Great Practice: Workforce Development for Stronger Early Childhood Outcomes



A mixed-methods evaluation of the Start for Life prompts for holding relationships in mind



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Background

- New guidance for practitioners published by DHSC (March 24)
- 3-step framework to help parents and carers reflect on their relationship with their baby
- 3 conversation prompts (Step 1)
- Implementation of the guidance is not mandatory



What 3 words or phrases
would you use to describe
your relationship with your
baby?

What brings you the most
joy in the relationship with
your baby?

What is your biggest fear
about your relationship
with your baby?

SPIRE Objectives

Aim: to evaluate **acceptability**, **feasibility**, and **impact** of the new parent-infant relationship prompts, to inform practice and policy.

The six key objectives are to:

- 1. Identify barriers and enablers to adopting the prompts
- 2. Describe how prompts are implemented within existing systems of support
- 3. Understand practitioner and parent experiences of the prompts
- 4. Understand how inequalities might influence implementation
- 5. Evaluate the impact of the prompts on referrals to relevant services
- 6. Develop co-produced guidance for equitable implementation of the prompts

Research design

- Mixed-methods multiple case study design
 - Qualitative interviews and focus groups
 - Quantitative analysis of referral data
 - A focus on inequalities and hearing from parents/caregivers from marginalised groups
- Sites:
 - Blackpool
 - Hull
 - Islington
 - Kent
 - Manchester
 - Sheffield



Blackpool parents/caregivers

- Direct approaches by Family Hub staff and via parent-baby groups
- Targeted Facebook adverts
- Approaches to a range of local community groups
 - E.g. AFRA - Blackpool African Caribbean Friends and Relations Association, Dad Matters Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre
- 4 participants (all mothers, children 0-3 years)

Blackpool practitioners

- 11 participants
- 5 from the Local Authority - a range of family hub workers
- 5 from PAIRS - a range of specialist health visitors, Parent Infant Therapists and Clinical Psychologists

Qualitative insights: **Conversational prompts**



Prompts can help open a conversation and standardise practice between practitioners

There are differences in opinion on the use of specific words such as 'joy' and 'fear' but they appear to be useful in identifying need

Qualitative insights: **Parents-practitioner interaction**

Trust in practitioners and parent understanding about what happens next is important to answering openly

Qualitative insights: **System integration**

Readiness of local system is key

The availability of locally-developed training and onward services helps build practitioner confidence to use the prompts and open conversations with parents

What's next?

- The qualitative and quantitative findings will be synthesised, building a picture of factors influencing implementation of the prompts and the wider context of parent-infant relationship support in, and across, SPIRE sites
- Online national stakeholder workshop to co-produce recommendations for integrating the prompts equitably into practice and what learning we can take forward
 - March 12th 10-12pm, ONLINE
 - Email spire-project@york.ac.uk to join the waiting list



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For more information or updates on the project please email: spire-project@york.ac.uk

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