



Humber and North Yorkshire
Health and Care Partnership

Children and Young People's Mental Health

Coproduction

2022-2023





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Nothing

About

Us

Without

Us

Coproduction

Never has coproduction been higher on the national agenda, and finally there is growing widespread understanding of the value and importance of lived experience in planning and shaping provision to meet the needs of all Children and Young People. However, this work takes time, resources, and flexibility, as well as adequate staffing and support. It is also important to ensure that we acknowledge and reward Children and Young People's commitment, time, and contribution, to ensure ethical engagement. It is key that decision-makers understand the complexities of this work and what a commitment to true coproduction really means, to ensure we avoid tokenism. It also requires planning, adaptability, and collaboration to remove barriers to participation and engagement to maximise the impact and benefits of coproduction.

Working with Children and Young People to transform mental health services and other support services working with vulnerable Children and Young People is incredibly exciting and has the potential to create meaningful change and improvement. An often-overlooked outcome of this work is that coproduction can be an early intervention, as Children and Young People learn more about mental health and wellbeing, feel valued, find a purpose, make new friends, learn new skills, and build trusting relationships with professionals.

Coproduction is one of our 6 ICB priorities for Children and Young People's Mental Health, and a key aspect of the Children and Young People's Trauma Informed Care Programme.

The key focus of our current coproduction work has been identified through our partnership and aims to:

- 1. Establish** a Children and Young People's ICS wide engagement and coproduction strategy and workplan for Children and Young People's Mental Health, which builds on and complements existing place-based activity, to capture and measure the engagement of Children and Young People and the impact of this
- 2. Implement** and coordinate regular communities of practice/networks with place-based engagement and coproduction leads/workers across the ICS partners, to ensure consistency of approach and peer to peer support and learning between services and partners
- 3. Provide** consultancy, advice, and guidance to a wide range of place-based services and partners, to support organisations to embed evidence-based practice to enable sustainability of delivery. This includes developing and sharing resources, skills, and knowledge across the ICS
- 4. Recruit**, train and support a team of young volunteers with lived experience from across the ICS geography, who will act as advisory groups to relevant steering groups, boards etc.



Progress so far

1. Establish a Children and Young People's ICS wide engagement and co-production strategy and workplan for Children and Young People's Mental Health

Over the last year we have worked with Young Minds (the national Children and Young People's Mental Health Charity) to map existing engagement and coproduction activity with Children and Young People across our 6 places. This work started with an initial workshop with key partners last summer, who identified the need for this work, and since has involved the delivery of a participation audit and extensive scoping calls with a wide range of engagement and coproduction partners to understand existing place-based needs, structures, partnerships, mechanisms for participation, strengths, challenges, areas for development and examples of best practice, etc.

Some key findings so far include:

- There is already a lot of good participation happening across the Humber and North Yorkshire ICS
- There are a few organisations in particular that shared great participation practice
- Participation audit respondents were from a mix of NHS/Health, Local Authority services and the Voluntary and Community Sector
- The responses spread the breadth of all six places with the highest number of responses from Hull and the lowest from North Yorkshire, which may reflect the varying levels of capacity and activity across the 6 places
- There is good evidence of participation from lots of different groups of young people, including those that are likely to experience marginalisation, but further support to engage these groups would be beneficial for organisations and services
- Some organisations could benefit from support to gain a greater understanding of participation in order to start their journey or begin again following organisational change
- There are areas where participation could be further enhanced with support to evaluate power dynamics in order to reach more young people experiencing marginalisation and open up opportunities for participation at more strategic levels
- Organisations would benefit from support around understanding power in participation and the opportunity to reflect on and understand more about the participation they are already doing and how to enhance it. In the analysis we ended up recategorising a lot of the participation happening e.g. respondents were categorising their work as strategic when it was operational, or that young people were leading on work when actually it was more contributory or collaborative. Supporting people to see where the gaps in the participation are could help them consider how they can enhance their participation and find opportunities to give more power to young people

A report on the mapping will be produced in the summer of 2023 and work is progressing to develop an ICS wide strategy and workplan by October 2023. This will ensure we have a system wide approach based on best practice and build on existing work at place, to ensure all organisations working with Children and Young People embed coproduction within their work.

2. Implement and coordinate regular communities of practice/networks with place-based engagement and coproduction leads/workers across the ICS

In December 2022 we held our first Children and Young People's Mental Health engagement event which was attended by 41 engagement and coproduction leads, and other relevant professionals, from across Health, Local Authorities and VCS organisations from across all 6 places in our ICS. At the event we worked together to coproduce the development of the network.

Over the next few months, the network grew to include over 170 staff members involved in engagement and coproduction. This network will:

- Build on existing engagement with Children and Young People
- Share learning, resources, and good practice
- Identify common themes and avoid duplication
- Identify/Action common goals implemented by all
- Develop consistency of approach to coproduction with Children and Young People
- Facilitate peer support and challenge
- Improve links and joint working between Education, VCS, Health, Local Authority, etc.
- Maximise capacity and efficiency within the system



Quotes from Partners

It was an absolute pleasure to participate in the Nothing About Us Without Us event. It was engaging, thought provoking and inspiring and the amazing attendance figures, from both young people and professionals, demonstrate the commitment to participation in the ICS areas. I'm excited to take the next steps on this project and work with people who are so passionate and dedicated to ensuring young people are an integral part of service development and improvement.

Kim Markham-Jones
Trainer Consultant
Young Minds

It was great to see so many services represented at the event and working together to consider ways to improve young people's participation across Humber and North Yorkshire. It was a good opportunity to network with one another and hear the voices of young people in the things that matter to them – they did a great job!

Darren Clarkson
Young Person's Participation and Engagement Coordinator
KIDS

It was brilliant. I personally left feeling overwhelmingly inspired, positive and motivated. The young people were brilliant, and I really enjoyed that the whole day was inclusive of all and focused and involved the young people. It was a breath of fresh air to go to such an informative, welcoming event that really catered to everyone's needs.

Assistant Education Mental Health Practitioner
With Me In Mind

I found the event useful and a great opportunity to hear young people's voices around mental health services and how we can all as professionals move forward. It was a springboard for us all to start really working together and improving mental health services for our young people. It was also a great opportunity for us as professionals to link up work that we're already working on.

Dave Brown
Volunteer Voice Supervisor and
Senior Youth Outreach Worker
ERVAS

Voice/co-production roles within local authority can often feel isolating, more often so when your role is specific to a group of young people such as those with SEND. Despite having good connections within York, SEND voice work is only allocated to one person, and I feel roles that focus on voice and co-production need huge amounts of creativity and often it can feel that you have exhausted options/ideas or simply just can't think of a solution. When the co-production leads network starts, Clair's role will have found a creative but supportive role in ensuring that those who work alone always have someone to bounce ideas from, to learn new things and not to get stuck in ruts. We had a discussion about how useful it would be even if others in the call are not specific to SEND, however I personally feel it will be a great way of developing new ideas that I can then amend to make it accessible and enjoyable for the young people I work with.

Laura Brown
Local Offer and
Participation Officer
City of York Council

3. Provide consultancy, advice, and guidance to a wide range of place-based services and partners to support organisations to embed evidence-based practice to enable sustainability of delivery

True transformation demands a shared dedication of a united community, so a huge part of my work relies on my ability to build trusting relationships and harness energy for change to effectively mobilise groups, identify shared goals, and lead people on a journey of collaboration. I accept resistance to change as part and parcel of that process, so I'm staggered to have this level of investment from a huge number of partners with such an appetite and willingness to work with me and each other, to be vulnerable and honest about their struggles and challenges, to support and learn from each other, and challenge their own practice and understanding of participation and coproduction. I feel honoured to be trusted by so many partners to work alongside them to develop existing practices, troubleshoot barriers, and establish partnerships to cooperatively improve outcomes for Children and Young People. This collective commitment to a whole system approach has enormous potential to create long-term impact but must be matched by an investment in adequate staffing and resources to be sustainable.

Clair Atherton
Children and Young People's Engagement and Coproduction Manager
Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism Collaborative

This work is ongoing and will be delivered through the professionals network meetings/communities of practice, which are in development, and through bespoke pieces of work identified by place/partners to support and empower them to embed coproduction within their own work and organisations. Some bespoke packages of support have already been provided to progress work at place. For example in North Yorkshire we are supporting the Youth Justice service to implement and embed participation and coproduction mechanisms. We have also identified training needs with courses planned to be delivered over the summer of 2023, including:

- 1 x Introduction to Participation and Involving Young People
- 1 x Involving Young People Facing Marginalisation and Barriers
- 1 x Involving Young People in Governance
- 1 x Creating a Participation Strategy and Evaluation Framework

I met Clair through attendance at the City of York Safeguarding Partnership Voice and Influence Subgroup. Clair's approach to the conversation stood out as meetings like this can naturally become quite inward thinking. Clair's approach and contribution encouraged the meeting to reconnect with the purpose for our attendance and our mandate. I met Clair separately to follow up her offer of talking through ways of working and engagement opportunities. It is refreshing to find someone in a senior role with such passion for meaningful engagement with young people and with such a will to help them make a difference with their contributions. I look forward to tapping into Clair's experience and feedback in the future.

Chris James
Lead Worker - Young Adult Carers &
Young Carers Team
York Carers Centre

Working with Clair offers and provides support with our youth volunteering project by providing me an opportunity to work with her and the now larger network of people who I was provided contact details to from Clair. The support that has been provided has proved vital with the youth volunteering project and Clair works hard to help provide more information, contacts and anything that has been needed and I look forward to our continued partnership for the future.

Matthew Boast
Healthwatch Hull

It's been fantastic having Clair in post to support the youth voice work being undertaken by Volunteer Voice and the East Riding Youth Voice steering group, particularly in regard to progressing the young people's priority focused on improving mental health and emotional wellbeing, which I feel will benefit hugely from Clair's knowledge and experience.

Detty Tyler
Children and Young People's Services Coordinator
East Riding Voluntary Action Services (ERVAS) Ltd

4. Recruit, train and support a team of young volunteers with lived experience from across the ICS geography, who will act as advisory groups to relevant steering groups, boards etc.

In December 2022, 24 Children and Young People from across Humber and North Yorkshire attended the “Nothing About Us Without Us” Children and Young People’s Mental Health engagement event to coproduce the development of a Humber and North Yorkshire wide Children and Young People’s advisory group.



Over the next few months, the group grew to include over 200 young people aged up to 25, with lived experience of needing/accessing mental health support, from a diverse range of backgrounds and needs representing communities across Humber and North Yorkshire, living in urban and rural areas, including LGBTQ+ young people, neurodivergent young people, young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, young carers, care experienced young people, young people of colour, and young people from other underrepresented groups. All events/meetings are coproduced with young people to ensure they are accessible, and that young people are leading on what is discussed to ensure the issues that matter to and impact on them are addressed.

TOP PRIORITIES

Nothing About Us Without Us

Humber and North Yorkshire's Young People's Mental Health Advisory Group's Top Priorities for Improving the Mental Health of Children and Young People across Humber and North Yorkshire: -

1

Young people led awareness-raising and training, on the signs and symptoms of mental health problems, and issues impacting young people's mental health, including LGBTQ+, racism, etc.

2

Easier access to services

3

Young people leading on work and courses about children and young people's mental health, to ensure their voices are heard, their lived experience is valued, and they are not 'shrugged off' by professionals

4

Listen to us more

The advisory group of young people with an interest in/lived experience of mental health challenges, will meet frequently in their local area and twice a year across Humber and North Yorkshire, to influence mental health strategy, policy, and practice.

The group's agreed aims are:

- To inform decision making about young people's mental health services
- To make a change
- To hold services accountable
- To improve awareness and understanding of mental health
- To ensure that young people's experiences and opinions are embedded in decision making processes from start to finish

The young people's advisory group will also inform decision making by relevant steering groups such as the Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership Children and Young People's Mental Health Steering Group and the Strategic Alliance and Operational Steering Group.



Find out more about the Children and Young People's Advisory group in their own words here:
Nothing About Us Without Us

I had such a great time on Monday at the event and am pleased to say I was part of the start of this important project. It was so refreshing to see professionals and young people working together to start to make a change to ensure that decisions about youth mental health are made with us. Looking forward to seeing this opportunity progress.

Young Person

I learned that many opinions may be different, but you can still join together as a community to make something work.

Young Person

We got to meet new people from different places who want to also have our voices heard and all worked together to try and change it.

Young Person

It was an amazing experience not only as a young person, but to see so many professionals listening to a group of young people.

Young Person

I would like to say Clair is one of the most amazing people I've met in a long time. She is so passionate about her job and is there for young people every step of the way throughout. Since volunteering with Clair, she has really changed my life and has given me so many opportunities to be part of things I never thought I'd be a part of. She makes young people feel valued and that we are important. She has changed my life for the better and has had an influence in what I want to do as a career.

What I liked about this was that young people were included from the very beginning because that doesn't usually happen. I'm involved in different groups, and we only ever get invited to be involved once the professionals have already decided what they want. It's exciting to be involved like this and I look forward to our next meeting.

Young Person

I know what it's like to not feel like I have a voice and to not be listened to by services for my mental health. I have had my journey, and now I want to help other young people with theirs by helping these services improve so Children and Young People can get the help they need. It's taken me years to get where I am today and if someone had said that I'd be a part of this group helping make services better I wouldn't have believed them. I see all my friends moving on with their lives and I think to myself 'What am I doing?' but now I look at myself and see that I am actually doing so so well, and I am making such a positive difference on the other people and how much I have grown in confidence. I've had my down times and there'll be more, but I know that no matter what I am still making a difference and I'm getting somewhere in life.

Young Person

“Find out more about the Humber and North Yorkshire Children and Young People's Advisory group – “Nothing About Us Without Us” in their own words here:

<https://youtu.be/qMvlce6Falo>

If you would like to find out more information about the work of the Humber and North Yorkshire Children & Young People's Advisory group and our other involvement work please get in touch with **Clair.atherton@nhs.net**

Email: hnf-tr.hnymhpms@nhs.net
Visit our Programme website [here](#)

