Head, Heart, Hands: introducing social pedagogy into UK foster care

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ncas leavingcare.org

Head, Heart, Hands programme

- First major consideration of the impact of social pedagogy within foster care in the UK

- Programme being led by the Fostering Network

- Four years (2012-2016)

- Six demonstration sites across England and Scotland

- Delivered with a range of partners with unique expertise in social pedagogy

- Programme long term aim: to successfully introduce a social pedagogic approach and the impact this has on placement, stability, improvement of educational outcomes and life chances

The Evaluation Team

- **Centre for Child and Family Research**

  Evaluation Lead

- **The Colebrooke Centre for Evidence and Implementation**

  Implementation and Knowledge Transfer lead

- **National Care Advisory Service**

  Oversight of peer researchers

The overall evaluation approach

- **Action-oriented, co-production** approach focused on generation of findings and continuous feedback to stakeholders to improve & shape planning and practice

- **Flexible** 'modular' design created to adapt to demonstration sites' needs

- **Participatory** research methods designed to engage and include young people's perspectives

- **Innovative** and rigorous approach to the process of implementation

- **Independent perspective** not involved in developing or promoting social pedagogy

Evaluation questions

- Evaluation designed to explore whether the programme meets the aims
  - What changes does HHH offer children and young people in foster care?

  - What changes does HHH offer foster carers' and their practice?

  - What changes does HHH offer the system of supporting children and young people in foster care and their carers?

A brief overview of the evaluation design

- Four complimentary and overlapping modules
- Baseline and two follow up data collection points
  - **Module 1: Impact on children and young people**
    - » Face to face interviews with two cohorts of children and young people (n=60 and n=30)
      - Peer researcher methodology
    - » Analysis of management information systems data and additional case file information for children placed with HHH foster carers
    - » Use of the Cost Calculator for Children's Services for analysis
  - **Module 2: Impact on foster carers and on practice**
    - » On-line survey and telephone interviews with foster carers
    - » Chaired group discussions with practitioners
    - » Face-to-face interviews with social pedagogues
  - **Module 3: Implementation process, outcomes and changes in the system**
    - » Interviews with programme managers
    - » On-line survey with practitioners
    - » Case studies (includes face-to-face and telephone interviews)
  - **Module 4: Knowledge transfer – making the research useful**

Defining outcomes

So we are looking for:

- **Changes** that can **reasonably be attributed to the existence or activities of the HHH programme in each site**

- **Changes** that we can **expect to measure within the timeframe of the evaluation**

Development of an outcomes framework

- Logic model approach

  - Inputs

  - Outputs

  - Outcomes

Development of an outcomes framework

- Focus on outcomes for children and young people

NB. the following are preliminary and provide examples of the inputs, outputs and outcomes

- Inputs
  - HHH learning and development courses for foster carers
  - HHH social pedagogues
  - Social pedagogy consortium
- Outputs
  - Foster carers and social workers develop an understanding of social pedagogic principles and how they might be applied in practice
  - Foster carers are supported to apply the principles
- Outcomes
  - The Child or young person feels part of the foster family
  - The child feels able to contribute to decisions about their care
  - The child feels warmth and affection from the foster carers
  - The child's strengths are emphasised over their weaknesses

Development of an outcomes framework

- Inclusion of outcomes indicators that are measurable and collectable

- Comparison of HHH with foster care as usual

- Systemic and cultural change (use of Implementation Science approach)

- Logic model approach to link inputs with outputs and outcomes

- Ensure the data collection methods provide the evidence to address the evaluation questions

Contact details and further information

For further information about the HHH programme:

https://www.fostering.net/head-heart-hands

For further information about the HHH evaluation contact:

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