

TALKING BRADFORD: A collaborative approach to improving speech, language and communication

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Introduction and Background

Within the Bradford district, speech, language and communication (SLCN) delay is reported in 1 in 3 pre-school children. SLCN has to be recognised as a key public health issue.

Better Start Bradford is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund to improve outcomes for children aged 0-3 years, with reducing SLCN as a key outcome measure.

Aims of this Work

To create:

- An integrated approach to ensure professionals and families can access a clear pathway of support if concerned about a child's SLCN.
- A system whereby universal and targeted interventions are accessible to children who do not meet the threshold for specialist support.

Material and Methods

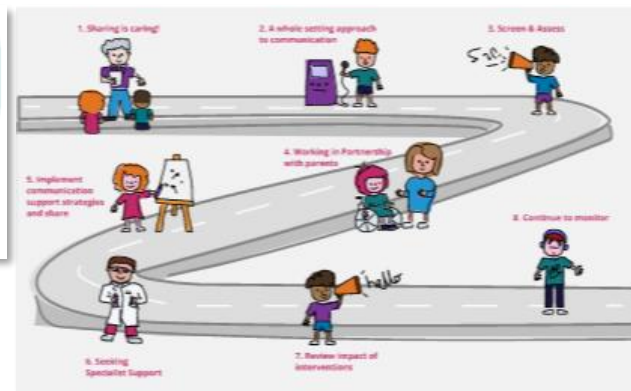
Better Start Bradford provided capacity and harnessed its learning and existing relationships to drive this work within the district, including:

- Bringing together key stakeholders to map shortfalls in service provision and bridge the gaps between universal, targeted and specialist services.
- Facilitating conversations between health professionals, the local authority, the voluntary and community sector and parent champions.
- Involving parents at all stages and listening and responding to their needs, through surveys, focus groups and picnics.



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Results / Outcomes

We are about to launch TALKING BRADFORD on the Families and Young Persons Information (FYI) website. This will be a fully-accessible platform for families, practitioners and health professionals to source information, guidance and signposting to all areas relating to SCLN in the early years. As a result of this:

- Parents/carers will feel able to help their child, access self-help resources and access further support if required.
- Educators, early years practitioners, and health and care professionals will be able to access free and appropriate training to enhance their practice.
- There is much greater recognition of the value of each strand of the workforce working in true partnership to enable all children and families to get access to the right support at the right time.

Identified Next Steps

- To build on existing assessments (i.e., the ELIM).
- To integrate with the Start for Life agenda.
- To empower parents to support their children.

Conclusion and Recommendations

- To ensure that TALKING BRADFORD is just the beginning of this collaborative approach and partnership working.
- To share this good practice as part of a targeted response to Bradford's Ofsted SEND inspection and use this learning to influence future work across the district.
- To ensure SLCN needs are recognised at a system-wide level and share the message that 'communication is everyone's business'. So, let's get TALKING BRADFORD!

Acknowledgements

None of this work could have happened without the strong team of passionate professionals and eager parents involved (too many to mention individually).

References

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