

Little Minds Matter

Delivered by **Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust and Family Action** from **April 2018 - March 2024**

Little Minds Matter: Bradford Infant Mental Health Service is a specialised parent-infant relationship service working with infants, their families, and associated professional networks during the first 1001 critical days (conception to two years).

How it was delivered

A multi-disciplinary team delivered four strands of work to embed early intervention support for Bradford families through direct clinical support, training, consultation and community engagement.

Practitioners built trusting relationships with families and the wider professional networks around families, to bolster and enhance support already available, fostering strong working relationships to ensure that families were held and supported through a collective network.

Why this project was developed

There is evidence to show that the quality of the parent-infant relationship, infant mental health, and children's longer term social and emotional development are closely linked. There is, however, a lack of evidence-based interventions that support the parent-infant relationship and/or protect against poor infant mental health. There are also gaps within the existing mental health services, with most services not accepting referrals for children under 2 years.

The project set out to:

- Improve maternal sensitivity and mind-mindedness and improve the quality of parent/child interactions at the integrated 2-year review.
- Positively impact toddlers' social and emotional development, with lower levels of aggression in pre-schoolers.
- Upskill the workforce to ensure they are highly-skilled to deal with parent-infant relationship concerns.

Impact and findings*

- Development of the team to include different specialisms and professions improved outreach. For example, the Specialist Midwife was key in linking up with the midwifery course at the University of Bradford. The team is excited to be looking at delivering teaching on Infant Mental Health across the curriculum and within both undergraduate and post-graduate courses.
- The age of infants referred into the service lowered over the course of the project, including an increase in referrals for babies not yet born. This indicates the service's strong reputation and the increased knowledge of the workforce through training.
- Little Minds Matter was shortlisted for two national awards reflecting the value in their work: CYP Now Awards 2024 - The Mental Health and Wellbeing Award; HSJ Awards 2024 - Early Intervention and Prevention for Children, Young People and Families Award.
- Infant Mental Health Awareness training is being delivered to the whole Children and Families Trust workforce, highlighting recognition of the importance of understanding infant mental health and supporting some of our most vulnerable babies.

*This section includes information from both the evaluation report/s and project

The service has received referrals for

301
FAMILIES

Infant Mental Health Awareness training was delivered to

872
PRACTITIONERS

688

consultation sessions provided to practitioners

