



Peace of Mind Toolkit

Aim of the project: Co-create a digital and hard copy Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkit for children and young people.


Area: Bassetlaw

Who was involved: Bassetlaw Placed Based Partnership, Bassetlaw's Children & Young People and Health Professionals.

Learning area: Co-creation of resources, the impact of coproduction on the people taking part.

Contents:

- Scope of this work
- The emotional impact of this coproduction approach

 This will take you 10 mins to read.

Introduction from the Coproduction Team...

In this series of case studies, we explore the positive emotional impact of coproduction for both staff and lived experience experts.

We want to encourage a coproduction approach by showcasing that it can be fun, rewarding and inspiring. Have a look through this case study and explore the top tips that will support you on your coproduction journey.

Full scope of the work...

- Develop a waiting well initiative in response to increased waiting times for children and young people's (CYP) mental health services.
- Co-produce a mental health resource and share with CYP, families/ carers on referral into a Bassetlaw CYP mental health service.
- Prevent crisis escalation, self-harm and suicide risk
- Increase resilience and build on strengths of CYP to support positive mental health and prevent illness.

How was the Peace of Mind Toolkit booklet created?

A cocreation approach was used involving children and young people and health professionals. The aim was to create content for the booklet that was relevant for children and young people to use.

15 children and young people co-created the content. They were aged between 14-21 years old.

To ensure the content of the booklet was clinically accurate, the children & young people worked in partnership with a:

- Clinical Psychologist
- GP
- Social Workers
- Doctor of exercise & nutrition
- Specialists in inequalities, LGBT & neurodiversity
- Founder of national suicide prevention charity R:ipple.

How did you create a safe space for young people to share sensitive feelings around mental health ?

We partnered with a young person's support service and attended the weekly support group session they run at a community youth setting.

The young people had trusted relationships with the staff at the service and viewed the youth group as their safe space.

To encourage effective and meaningful engagement and co-production we went to them as opposed to attempting to set something else up and expecting them to come to us.

We spent time engaging in icebreaker activities to start to build relationships and trust with the young people before progressing to sharing their experiences and developing the toolkit.

The staff at the service were mental health professionals and additional staff were present at the sessions to ensure they were able to provide any one-to-one support during or after the session for any young people that had been impacted by the discussions. We made sure that there were 3 rooms available for this at each session.

“If you want something that helps young people you need to involve young people to understand what that need to be, it has been amazing to have been part of this and I’m so proud of what we have created”.

Lived experience expert, aged between 14-21 years



Image from the launch event.

How did you approach each session?

At each session, we reinforced the support that was available from the staff at the service we had partnered with, outlining how the young people could keep themselves safe. Including, leaving the session at any point if they needed to.

We also:

- Split the sessions to ensure they had some recreational time at the youth group, not focused on the project.
- Developed an agreement with the young people. We agreed that their stories and views would not be shared outside of the session without their permission and that stories could be shared and viewed anonymously.
- Outlined the aim of the project and the equal partnership with the young people, reinforcing that their views and experiences were valued and would be actioned through joint decision-making.
- Talked openly about the limitations of the project and the financial envelope we had to work with.

Once the young people started to see their contributions and stories come to life in the toolkit their trust in us as health professionals increased and they were motivated to share more of their views and experiences.

“Effective and meaningful engagement requires time, commitment, and a willingness to be open to challenge and critique”.

Helen Azar, Bassetlaw Place Programme Manager - Head of Health Inequalities

What methods did you use to capture views?

- Table discussions with young people taking notes on flip chart.
- Young people made TikTok videos to share their stories and experiences that were shown in the session, with consent.

We also:

- Provided draft copies of content and graphics to each young person to take away and review.
- Used presentations to outline progress so far and gain feedback.
- Captured thoughts and suggestions on flip chart paper and post it notes during each session.
- Ended each session with reflections and key messages.
- Had a dedicated WhatsApp group led by the partner organisation (to ensure safeguarding and governance) for reviewing and sharing information between sessions.

Developing the booklet logo and name...

The logo & name of the booklet was designed by local children & young people, after a Bassetlaw wide competition. The 28 logo designs received were shortlisted by a panel of children & young people, with support from Bassetlaw Young Council & the Youth Mayor.



Image of a hard copy booklet

The content of the Peace of Mind Toolkit...

The co-created toolkit contains:

- Lived experience stories
- Coping strategies and 'top tips' from children and young people that have accessed mental health support.

- Evidence based prospective on mental health, nutrition, physical health, neurodiversity, self-harm, and suicide prevention.
- 36 QR codes linking readers to videos made by young people.
- Information that supports building resilience and maintaining positive mental health.
- Signposting to online and local support, including the NottAlone and Nottshelpyourself websites.

To ensure the toolkit was accessible to all, a text-only version of the Toolkit was created that can be translated into any language. This is available on the Bassetlaw mental health website.

The Toolkit was launched in October 2023, on World Mental Health Day.



Double click on the Digital Toolkit to view the contents.

Promoting the Toolkit...

5,000 printed booklets were distributed across mental health services, youth groups, schools and sports clubs, for use with and by children and young people accessing those services.

It was also distributed across Bassetlaw on bookmarks, highlighters and post-it notes with a QR code on.

Top Tips....

- Take time to create a safe space and build relationships before expecting children & young people to share their stories and experiences. You can do this by using services and staff that they already have a trusted relationship with.
- As a 'professional', take a step back. Listen and act on what you are told - use the insights to shape the resource.

Helen Azar, Bassetlaw Place Programme Manager - Head of Health Inequalities, told us that she felt:

"Honoured and privileged to have had the opportunity to work with so many amazing young people and be part of coproducing a resource for young people, that has been created by young people, aimed at supporting to improve mental health and wellbeing.

Incredibly proud, both of the resource itself and being part of empowering young people to lead and control the process. I feel privileged to have been able to watch the young people confidently take the lead and transform the toolkit into something genuinely impactful that incorporates their diverse experiences".

"I am happy we have made something that will have a positive impact"

Lived experience expert, aged between 14-21 years

The quotes on the next page capture the impact that coproducing the Toolkit had on the young people involved, in their words. They capture feeling:

- Grateful
- Proud
- Accomplished
- Productive
- Rewarded
- Inspired
- Happy

They also talked about the impact it had on them, including:

- Developing communication skills.
- Building confidence.
- Developing teamwork skills.
- Improved mental health.
- Learning about services available to them

"I feel I developed amazing teamwork skills and learnt how to communicate as a team making this toolkit, it gave me more insight into each other's perspective and I also learnt more about support services for young people in the area"

Lived experience expert, aged between 14-21 years

Thinking Points....

- How could you bring a similar approach into your work?
- What steps could you take in your next coproduction meeting to create a safe space to share?

How coproducing felt to the people taking part...

"Working on this toolkit made me feel I had a purpose, it was a great Serotonin boost"

"I felt very accomplished and rewarded once we had finished this project!"

"Knowing more about how my experiences can help other has made me think more about doing this for a career when I leave collage. I wouldn't have had the confidence to even think about going into support work before I was involved with this project. Being involved in this has made me realise how far I have come with my own mental health journey and being involved in something that helps others has really helped my own mental health too"

"Involving us means that its right for other just like us, I loved being able to work with information from the Drs and others but put it in a way that means something to us. The final toolkit is exactly what we said we wanted it to be like and we all love it"

"When they ask us about things like this, it shows interest in us and listening to our voices, so thank you!"

"I was able to use my negative experiences and turn them into something good to help other young people. I loved being part of this and making sure it was right for others, I wish I had something like this available to me when I needed it".

"Involving us means that its right for other just like us, I loved being able to work with information from the Drs and others but put it in a way that means something to us. The final toolkit is exactly what we said we wanted it to be like and we all love it"

"Working on this toolkit together felt really productive and very engaging, it was good to work together as a community on a new project that will have such a positive impact on those who use it"

