

GOOD PRACTICE STORY BOARD

Co-production of the Cygnet Programme

1. What are we improving?

- Cygnet is a licenced Barnado's parenting support programme for parents and carers of children/young people aged 5-18 who are awaiting or have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) is commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to provide this programme in Swindon, traditionally facilitated by two Educational Psychologists.
- Feedback from parents attending the Cygnet programme indicated that they would find it helpful if one of the course facilitators was also a parent of a child diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Conditions themselves, to provide the 'lived experience'.
- Other feedback from previous courses indicated that parents wanted the option of an evening course, as this would allow both parents to attend where possible and would be a more realistic option for working parents.

2. What has been delivered?

- As a result of this feedback from parents the EPS has recently commissioned and provided support for a parent representative (of children with ASC) from Swindon SEND Families Voice to co-facilitate the Cygnet course alongside an Educational Psychologist (EP). Additionally, the EPS is now offering the option of an evening course as well as daytime courses.
- The first two Cygnet courses co-facilitated by a parent/carer representative have now been delivered during the Autumn of 2020, and one of these was an evening course.

3. What has been the impact?

The impact of having a parent co-facilitating the Cygnet course has been very positive:

- Parents have felt well listened to and supported.
- Parents have benefitted from the parent co-facilitator's knowledge about local resources and activities available for children and young people with ASC in Swindon.
- Parents have benefitted from the 'top-tips' shared by the parent co-facilitator, including different strategies to use with their children.
- Some parents have felt able to stay in touch with the parent co-facilitator through Swindon SEND Families Voice, for ongoing advice and support.
- Consistent attendance of both courses (daytime and evening sessions) indicated that parents valued the option of the evening course which hasn't been on offer previously.

Within the post course evaluation of the 2 courses delivered in Autumn 2020, participants' average rating re the question 'How Helpful Were the Trainers?' was 9 (on a scale of 0-10).

4. What is the evidence?

Examples of comments from parents within the post-course evaluation surveys:

"Xxxx (EP) and Xxxx (parent facilitator) have been fabulous. They listened, they didn't judge, they pointed ways forward. I feel very lucky to have been given the opportunity to take part in the course."

"I will stay in touch with Xxxx (parent facilitator) which I am grateful for as she is very approachable and helpful."

"We know we aren't alone. Our journey before Cygnet was a lonely one. You feel as if no one is ever going to understand. To speak with people that 'get you' is reassuring and with us all at different stages of the journey it feels good to be able to share what has worked for us and also to learn from others."

"I feel like there is a weight lifted off my shoulders."

"I feel calmer interacting with my child."

"I found the course extremely helpful from start to finish. Thank you."