

Case Study #6

THE LIFE PROGRAMME - Building New Lives for Individuals and Families to Enjoy

The Life Programme is a new initiative that aims to support and empower families in chronic crisis to develop their capabilities and build the lives they want to lead.



APPROACH

The programme has been developed with families going through tough times themselves and professionals who want to work with families in new ways. Life was designed through an intensive initial research process in which the Participle Team immersed themselves in the daily lives of 12 families in order to understand their lived reality. Based on these real experiences, the Life Programme was designed with the families and front-line staff. Often positioned as groundbreaking, in reality it is a common sense new application of resources, within systems that don't always work that way in that way. It is still early days, but Life is designed to scale nationally, and is now being run in 4 locations across the UK.

The Life Team workers aim to spend 80% of their time with their clients. The Life Programme identifies and works with families in chronic crisis who are open to change by inviting them to participate. It has been found that invitations have often been accepted where families were previously felt to be resistant to intervention. Resources are focused on building capabilities within families in order to support them to build the life they want to lead and help them move from being stuck in a cycle of expensive, reactive and crisis-driven state interventions to a more stable and fulfilling future. A series of simple and practical bespoke tools have been developed within the Life Programme that support and track the work with families. These tools help ensure that difficult conversations happen, plans are made and change happens at all stages of the work. These Life tools are gatekeepers between the programme stages, as well as informing the measures, and helping with recording process amongst the families. In addition to bespoke

measures, each Life Programme also tracks outcome and cost data at the local authority level. outcome and cost data at the local authority level.

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IMPACT

The Life Programme has resulted in clear benefits in terms of social care, education and employment. Amongst the families that the teams have been working alongside, there has been a 28% reduction in children with child protection plans and a 49% improvement in school attendance (where there had been an issue). Furthermore, there has been a 6% reduction families with no adults in employment and a 24% increase in families with a family member developing skills to be work-ready. On top of these gains, the Life Programme has seen a 36% reduction in families with family members reported to be involved in crime or antisocial behaviour. These social gains are coupled with significant financial savings, with the total cumulative cost reduction by the Life Programme estimated to be £727,890 at the beginning of 2013 (p56-58 Interim Report).



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