

Delivery

Support Sessions



Key points from January/February 2023 sessions

Three more busy sessions full of experiences and helpful ideas - a great start to the year! There was lots of rich discussion, so many thanks to all of you who were able to attend for your time and contributions, and thank you for your patience when we ran over time! Your questions, thoughts and solutions have been summarised below, as a reminder and for those who weren't able to attend – please read in conjunction with our previous highlights as many of those points are always relevant.

It was clear that your enthusiasm for HENRY is as strong as ever - there was no shortage of 'speedy successes' and things going well, and it was striking that the value of these sessions lies in the fact that when in one area, for example, retention is a challenge, in another it's going well and we can learn from each other.

We've got solutions to share with you on everything from using skills and HENRY resources, recruitment and referrals, retention, managing groups and more!

Use of HENRY skills and resources

- Several of you told us how much you enjoyed seeing participants grow in confidence and open up as the programme progressed - a real credit to how you create a safe, welcoming environment and use your skills
- Some of you haven't yet had the opportunity to deliver a programme or workshop, but commented on the high quality of our resources and how useful they can be in other support work with families, including our website www.henry.org.uk/parents
- Others are preparing to deliver by using HENRY skills and resources in their personal/family life - such as a collective reward system
- Some of you have found that they can build their confidence by starting with delivery of a workshop, or to a smaller group
- It's frustrating if resources aren't received in time for a session. **Solutions:** We are currently still able to offer delivery of toolkits directly to families, albeit at a higher cost: please speak to your Coordinator if you think this might help. And do please let your Partnership Support Officer know if you think the delay is at our end!
- It's also frustrating if parents drop out of a programme, given the cost of toolkits. **Solutions:** Some areas only make toolkits available at session 2, as an incentive to continue; it's standard in face-to-face programmes to give out only the relevant part of the toolkit at each session and you may be able to do something similar for online programmes - maybe give it out in two batches

Recruitment and referrals

- Several areas are very happy to be returning to face-to-face delivery and finding that recruitment is going well, others are finding recruitment to face-to-face more difficult than for online programmes. **Solutions:** Workshops/taster sessions/meet and greet sessions or a phone call can all help give a flavour of HENRY, build parents' confidence and start that all-important development of a trusting relationship and partnership working.

- We were reminded that one area initially found recruitment difficult, but that numbers gradually built up from programme to programme, as word spread.
- It can be difficult to get referrals, for example to the Preparation for Parenthood programme if you have no direct contact with midwives. **Solutions:** Several areas go along to team meetings, to talk about HENRY. One area delivers a brief part of a session (eg boosting batteries, feelings/needs/behaviours) to colleagues and partners to show that HENRY is about more than food! Make the referral process as quick and easy as possible eg by using QR codes that link to a form that goes straight to a HENRY email address, and one area shared that they engage successfully with local community groups
- Posters, leaflets, displays of toolkits and the online recruitment resources can also support colleagues' knowledge, as can the 5 minute explainer video here: www.henry.org.uk/about
- In some areas, recruitment to the 5-12 programme *Healthy Families: Growing Up* is linked to the NCMP programme and leaflets for HFGU are included with the letters that parents get. In another area, a leaflet for *Healthy Families: Right from the Start* is given out as part of every 2-year check
- All the suggestions above help get the message across that HENRY isn't just about food - an important message when families may be struggling in the current economic climate and feel that they lack the skills or finances to eat healthily
- Show off the toolkit! It's really valued by parents.

Retention

- Some participants come with a particular issue and leave the programme if it isn't addressed in week one (or don't join the programme at all). **Solutions:** empathise (a lot!) so they know they have been heard, have an initial 'meet and greet' session to give an overview of the programme so they know that the issue will be addressed, and when, and explain how sessions build on each other and what doesn't seem immediately relevant is laying the foundations, and possibly grouping referrals so participants with similar issues are together and have some common ground. Remember that a 1-to-1 programme offers greater flexibility, so the main issue can be covered early on, in the first or second session. A 1-to-1 session may be more suitable than a group session if a child has particular needs, or need signposting to more specialised support. Remember that to deliver a 1-to-1 programme, you will need to have attended 1-to-1 training.
- Think about the iceberg - what might be going on under the surface for that participant who doesn't attend?
- Think about timing of sessions, to avoid school pickups/drop-offs, school holidays and to accommodate working parents - one area is trialling evening sessions
- Keeping in regular contact with participants is key - texts often work better than emails or phone calls, although a gentle exploring phone conversation can also be very helpful to work out how to engage most effectively
- One suggestion is to invite previous participants to come along to a taster or the first session to talk about their (great!) experience of the programme
- As above, distribute toolkits bit by bit to encourage attendance
- An initial phone call can help 'triage' a referral, to work out whether face-to-face or online might work best, or whether a programme at a later date might suit better
- We acknowledged that retention is generally lower on 1-to-1 programmes, when families are juggling many challenges, and may take longer to deliver over a greater number of weeks. Some Facilitators get the completion questionnaire done at the 5th session that a parent has attended if they think they might not attend future sessions - that way, it still adds to the evidence base

- 'Wellness' baskets was a very well-received suggestion from one area, with a tea light, mini hand cream or teabag etc at the end of each session
- One area has linked with a local food waste charity to provide participants with a recipe and box of ingredients each week
- Offering refreshments in face-to-face sessions (Family Time!) works well and can encourage attendance - it doesn't always have to be fruit, and sometimes something more filling like fruit bread and cheese, or a sandwich is helpful

Managing groups

- Group guidelines are a great way to agree how you will work together, including having cameras on (and making eye contact), paying attention to whoever is speaking ('how will we know someone is paying attention?' is a good way to encourage eye contact), keeping to time and staying 'on topic' where possible - and we were reminded that we can revisit these at any stage. For example, we can open a session by saying 'Let's revisit our Group Guidelines and see how well we think we're keeping to them...' And for 1-to-1 programmes, the introductory session is an opportunity to agree the equivalent of group guidelines, such as how many times you will attempt to contact someone, or how you will communicate if you have to cancel a session
- Several people suggest the use of attention attractors - and remember that in face-to-face groups, it's not the Facilitator who uses them!
- Noting something on a Car Park flipchart can move the group on from a topic, or close down a discussion whilst acknowledging and valuing contributions, as can offering a reward for sharing thoughts
- When it looks like you might overrun, choosing to make an activity 'whole group' rather than dividing into pairs or smaller groups is generally quicker
- It can be disheartening when participants say 'tried that, didn't work' . Think about the difference between 'Have you tried...' and 'What have you tried?' And suggestions from other members of the group can be particularly powerful, so don't be afraid to ask them
- Further Top Tips for Managing Groups are available on the 'hidden' practitioner pages and here:
https://www.henry.org.uk/sites/default/files/2017-12/7.Managing_group_dynamics.pdf

Creches and managing children

- Some areas find that provision of a creche attracts participants, while others find that parents who have gone through lockdown are reluctant to leave their children. ESP can help deal with this.. allowing parents to express their feelings
- Many areas don't have funding for a creche - one area ran a very successful face-to-face group for parents, with non-crawling babies in the room, where retention and engagement was high
- When working 1-to-1 in a parent's home, one Facilitator always has one or two toys or activities with them to keep the child occupied
- In one area, Early Years staff are able to run a creche just for one session of a programme
- If settling children into a creche delays the start of a session, see above re whole group versus small group activity to find a bit of extra time

Financial hardship and lack of cooking skills

- It can be very difficult for some families where local shops don't stock healthy food, or it is too expensive. **Solutions:** in one area, Facilitators visit the local food bank to see what's on offer and feed that back to the group during the session

- See tip above re any charity or other organisation (such as community fridges/larders www.voh.org.uk) who can offer recipes and ingredients
- One area delivers the Eating Well for Less workshop and links it with a session the following week on cooking skills
- 'A Girl Called Jack' is written by a mum who was on benefits and offers a wealth of cheap, nourishing recipes
- www.firststepsnutrition.org has a recipe book (which can be downloaded as a PDF) with very simple, easy to follow recipes using food bought with Healthy Start Vouchers. And check out the HENRY parent book and website for recipes, too

Facilitator capacity

- Do speak to your Coordinator about getting protected time to prepare your sessions
- One area suggested getting a resource box together in advance, with everything you need to deliver the programme
- In one area, Facilitators are responsible for restocking the resource box at the end of a programme, including adding a different reward system